

The Case Quisling

By Arnold Raestad 1942

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Preface

The world you live is an odd one when one day you find that you have written a book about a person who does not interest you in the least, and that you publish it without being able to acknowledge your indebtedness to a lot of kind people who helped you with material and advice. The only valid reason for writing a book about Quisling, especially when you are a compatriot of his, is that you feel some contemporaries deserving your attention would like you, in the absence of anyone better to shed some light on the master episode of an age of political bewilderment.

The Quislings of many countries present light shed on the life and career of Vidkun Quisling. The nature of the procedures by which a home Nazi party is created and kept alive in a fundamentally democratic country, varies with the time and with the place, but the study of such procedures may profit from a knowledge of what happened in Norway.

I have formed no conclusion as the political lessons to be drawn from the activities of Quisling. My self-allotted case has been to provide the reader, who may want them for his enlightenment, some new facts. And as to my collaborators, alas, no word of mine is needed to explain why I do not name them here. All the same, I thank all of them most heartily.

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Arnold Raestad

1. Formative years

I met Fridtjof Nansen in Paris one day in 1919 towards the middle of March. Nansen's mind was then as nearly always keenly at work on international humanitarian problems. He had no fear of trying to base supranational organizations on the free collaboration of men inspired by the same generous ideas. Being at the same time a first rate planning organizer and a rather poor psychologist he did not normally embark upon a scheme before he had obtained advice from many quarters. But he was then sometimes unduly swayed by a poor argument simply because he liked the humanitarian approach of the person who presented it.

On that March day of 1919 Nansen disclosed to me that he was about to venture upon a great humanitarian work. General's Denikin and Yudenitch were just then marching on the interior of Ukraine and on Petrograd, and great misery prevailed in the wake of their armies. The idea was to bring medicine and food and other necessary supplies to the civilian populations of the territories through which Denikin's and Yudenitch's armies passed. There was no intention of carrying provisions of any kind to these armies, but only to help rescue the unhappy civilians in this rear from death and starvation. I remonstrated with Nansen that despite all precautions to the contrary the Bolshevik part of Russia would look upon such an expedition as help given to White Generals. Being on his way to see León Bourgeois the French statesman and member of the allied supreme council Nansen invited me to accompany him. In the car while the snow was falling slowly outside, we continued our conversation. In the office of León Bourgeois, the pros and cons were debated, and M. Bourgeois seemed to agree with me that the plan had better be postponed. A few days later, acting on the advice of Mr. Herbert Hoover the American statesman, Hansen nevertheless presented his plan to President Wilson as chairman of the Allied Supreme Council. The Council agreed on the plan on condition that its execution should wait until the cessation of hostilities in Russia. The Bolshevik authorities in Moscow replied that the hostilities were not of their making and would soon cease if the allies stopped supporting the Whites, and that

they could not sacrifice the future of the country for the obtaining of relief supplies, however badly these supplies were needed. So, finally, the realization of Nansen's plan had to be postponed.

In 1921, a famine ravaged the Russian Black Earth areas, which roughly comprise Southern Ukraine, the Volga Valley and the Northern Caucasus. In July 1921, the Soviet government authorized Mr. Gorki to appeal to Mr. Hoover, then president of the American Relief Administration (A.R.A), and in August 1921, Nansen was asked by an international conference in Geneva of delegates of 48 Red Cross societies and 12 governments to direct relief work in the famine areas of Russia. Nansen immediately went to Russia and on August 27, 1921, signed an agreement in Moscow with Chicherin, the Soviet Foreign Minister, regarding the methods of the relief work. The agreement was on the lines of that concluded for the relief work of the A.R.A., the most important of the foreign organizations furnishing relief. At that time, after the defeat of all the White leaders, the Bolsheviks were definitely installed as the de facto government of Russia, and in the course of 1921, the Soviet Government concluded their first trade agreements with occidental countries – England and Norway being in the lead.

For his famine relief work in Russia, Nansen got the financial support of a few European governments, like that of Norway, and of some sixty European charitable societies. During the remainder of the summer of 1921, he organized the Nansen Famine Relief Mission to Russia, and the Mission, which had its headquarters in Moscow, started working towards the end of 1921. Nansen appointed as the head of the branch in Ukraine, Captain Vidkun Quisling. Quisling arrived at his headquarters at Charkov in January 1922.

Who, then, was the man thus chosen by Nansen to do this important work on Russian soil?

Vidkun Quisling was born in July 1887, the first child of his parents, in Fyresdal, a parish of the county of Telemark. His father was a pastor of the Norwegian Lutheran State Church who, in 1887, happened to be in charge of a parish in his native Fyresdal.

Telemark is a district of valleys and rivers and canyons and of pinewoods drenched when the sun is out, in a deep greenish blue, beloved by artists. It is, in places, a rather out-of-the way country. Fyresdal is remote from the more populous parts of the district. Since the middle ages, the township of Fyresdal has constituted an outpost of permanent habitation on the fringe of an interior massif of barren lands and mountain deserts. Visitors, when Quisling was a boy, were few and far between.

The Quisling family, in the past, had produced officers, pastors and farmers. The family is an old one in the county and the name "Quisling" is explained as signifying "the secondary branch of a family". Quisling's father was the author of books on local history and of works of devotion, conceived in a pietistic strain. Quisling's mother, whose family name was Bang, came from Grimstad in Austagder, a county neighbouring that of Telemark. Grimstad, a little coastal town, was peopled mostly by the families of sailors. The Bangs were ship owners. The parents of Quisling's mother were comparatively wealthy people. Quisling's father, who died in 1930 was sixteen years older than the mother, who died in 1941. Quisling has two brothers; the older one was born in December 1888, sixteen months after the birth of Vidkun, and the younger one in 1898. There was also a sister, the next-youngest of the four children born to the parents of Vidkun Quisling. Vidkun's brothers are still alive, the sister died young.

Vidkun's family surroundings were quiet and harmonious. Of the two parents, the mother, although of a kindly disposition, was certainly a strong-willed person and, by far, the more commanding personality. The father, often absent on journeys in connection with his parochial duties, and more and more engrossed in historical and other studies, receded into the background of the household as compared to the mother. She, in turn, in Vidkun's early years, did not occupy herself very intensively with the children, who were left a great part of their time with servants, indulging freely in outdoor activities. In the Quisling household, as in so many households of Norwegian country pastors of fifty years ago, the care and responsibilities falling upon the wife were broad and varied, and she stood up to them. She also took an active part in social activities of interest to the small Fyresdal community.

Whatever may have been the reasons, no great intimacy sprang up between Vidkun and his parents or, as might have been more especially expected, between him and his mother. In their early days, the two older Quisling brothers never, as far as could be observed, evinced warmth or showed mutual attention although they enjoyed themselves in each other's company. They had some very apparent traits of family likeness. By observers, it came to be considered part of the Quisling family character to be cold and indifferent, although balanced and not unfriendly. At any rate Vidkun and his brother both possessed those characteristics. They had several other very apparent traits of family likeness. But even if, as children, the two brothers had much in common, Vidkun's character early developed along lines peculiar to himself.

In his Fyresdal surroundings Vidkun as a child had some very strong impressions of fear that left lasting marks on his mind. Young Vidkun especially contracted overwhelming fear of bears, of which there were many in the neighbourhood at that time. In the lonely Fyresdal countryside, a considerable part of current popular legends and of the stories and anecdotes recounted in the kitchen and stable turned on deeds or events of violence.

Although the growing Vidkun was fairly well sheltered as far as physical comfort is concerned he early made contact with events that are disturbing to a child. Once, sitting in the pouring rain on a horse-drawn cart between two grown-ups, each of whom held an umbrella, he let himself be soaked by the streams of water which ran down upon him from both sides without saying a word, until, at long last, the two discovered the plight he was in. On another occasion when he had been asked by a man to look after his horse, and they forgot all about it, Vidkun stood by the animal for hours without appealing to those near by to help him out of his predicament. The quality of stubbornness thus evinced by young Vidkun was greatly admired at the time. In his early years, Vidkun, as is often the case with ultra-quiet children, would now and then be seized with a prolonged and violent fit of rage. His mother had to be called in to quiet him.

Curiously enough, whereas Vidkun's brother, so close to him in age, early developed into a person of groomed demeanour and even a dandy, Vidkun, from his earliest years, has displayed a certain rusticity of manners

and appearance which, in the propaganda of his followers of today, is explained as evidence of his being of true Norwegian peasant stock. No doubt, in Quisling's case, the exterior is to some extent the clue to his inner being, but in the rusticity of Quisling there enters a taciturnity and seclusiveness developed beyond the average characteristics of a Norwegian mountain peasant conscious of belonging to the upper strata of his class.

From the very dawn of his conscious life, Vidkun was possessed of great self-esteem. In explaining the development of that self-esteem into something boundless, we should, perhaps, take stock of some facts characteristic of his surroundings. The Quisling fairly enjoyed the highest respect in the old-fashioned mountain community of Fyresdal and Vidkun's father, as the pastor of the parish, was a very important figure; besides this, to these impecunious villagers the comfortable financial circumstances of the Quisling household were impressive. Moreover, the child Vidkun in his early contacts with the outer world was not overshadowed by parents of stern tutors, nor by elder brothers or sisters. From the outset, Vidkun basked quietly in the acquiescence of others and his self-esteem became the more absolute, the more completely he was thrown back on his own resources for considerable periods at a stretch. In the devotion that Quisling has always felt for his parents there is perhaps more gratitude for the shelter thus accorded his infant vanity than there is the memory of near contacts or of a cherished example.

In 1893, when Vidkun was six years old, his father was transferred to Drammen where the boy first went to school. At thirteen, Vidkun was back again in Telemark, near Skien where his father had a parish from 1900. Here, at Skien, the birthplace of Ibsen, he went to college.

When, as a child of six or seven, Vidkun entered school at Drammen, he spoke, to the great amusement of his classmates, the very pronounced mountain dialect of Fyresdal. He was correspondingly ridiculed and morally tortured. Very ambitious, he was extremely grieved at getting law school marks to start with. In Fyresdal he had been used to receiving stunted respect as the eldest son of the pastor of the parish and scion of a prominent and, in the minds of the mountaineers, extremely rich family. In Drammen, an upstart industrial town, the young rascals in the class thought

nothing of the son of a simple pastor (let alone if he had been a bishop's son) nor of the economic forces at his disposal (the timber merchants and the ship owners, they were the rich people). Vidkun had to withstand a heavy strain. He fell back upon his power of sticking to his purposes and keeping silent. He grew into a worshipping lover of solitude in nature. No doubt assailed him as to own innate superiority and genius; but he realized that a lot of hard work lay before him. He took care to control his self-confidence and not betray it too much. Otherwise, the rascals around him would get the better of him. Even if only temporarily.

Thus, during the school years at Drammen, Quisling's feelings of superiority tended to be touched with bitterness and acid ran to the roots of his vanity which developed into a passive type. He did not draw close to any boy, he made no school friends. This was not because he was shy or bashful. He withdrew from his boy comrades revelling in imageries of superiority. No such boyhood happenings as a sound beating made him wake up and fall into the common line. He was physically strong, and therefore not easily attacked.

In 1900, Vidkun departed for Skien and for the surroundings that were new but not radically different from those he left. Skien, like Drammen is an industrial town. Moving to Skien, Quisling returned to his native Telemark in which county the town is situated. But to him, life in the town of Skien was like that in the town of Drammen and certainly bore no likeness to that which he had once enjoyed in Fyresdal.

In Skien, Quisling's adolescent days came and passed. He was studious. Intellectually he advanced, but as a personality he remained self-centered. He isolated himself. He did not mix with youngsters of his own age in such a collective designing of projects for life as so often groups human beings in the adolescent stage, that favourite period of the appearance of indestructible friendships. In exchange, he passed much of his time in the company of his one-year younger brother. Together, they indulged in exercises destined to train the will, a sort of yoga comprising, amongst other things, the feat of staring into each others' eyes for half an hour, or more, at a stretch.

During the year 1905, the year of the dissolution of the Union between Norway and Sweden, Quisling became a university student and entered the Royal Norwegian Officers' School. Although he was a pastor's son, and slightly religious, and a bookworm, this was for him a logical choice. His mental development up till then had prepared him for choosing the military career. Quisling without any outward sign of emotion, joined the mass movement which wanted Norway free of the union with Sweden. He was also the ardent patriot who wanted, if called upon, to do his bit. He obtained his officer's commission in 1908 and continued his studies at the Royal Norwegian Military Academy till 1911.

As a pupil at the Officer's School and at the Military Academy, Quisling passed six quiet years. He was extremely taciturn and reserved but was, at the same time, well liked by his comrades. He did not join them in their football games and outdoor exercises, but spent his spare time and excess energy in studying higher mathematics and Greek and generally in intellectual peregrination; that was his kind of recreation. He was kind and had dignity. He did not show any sign of feeling superior to anybody or having over-confidence in himself. On the other hand, it was evidently quite natural to himself, as it was to his fellows at School and Academy, that he should be the most advanced pupil and have the military distinctions attendant upon that quality. It came as a surprise to one of the fellow students when, in 1931, on Quisling's becoming a Cabinet Minister, and old officer who had been his and Quisling's professor, said that Quisling, although the most honoured, was not the most intelligent pupil in his class. In his School and Academy life, being without any blemish or reproach, he enjoyed a certain moral authority. He was not usually one of those cadets who band together to inflict on the others a rough and ready discipline, treating rather brutally anyone who shows lack of loyalty or comradeship. Thus, it made quite an impression on all of them when Quisling once quite exceptionally added his own reprobation of transgressor to that already expressed in a rather cruel way by the cadet leaders.

In his cadet days Quisling, while he to some extent kept aloof from the others, would indulge with comrades in long discussions. These bore generally on philosophical topics, and not on party politics. Quisling had no

interest in party politics. His partners, in their youthful eagerness, cared little that he himself never took the initiative to start the discussion. They were aware, however, that he was generally passive and non-reactive, as they would say, “neutral”. At that early stage of life deeper-seated oddities of character are easily blurred by the psychological freak traits, which appear inevitably in the course of a yet unfinished mental development; and his class mates probably never applied to him the appellation of crank although they noticed that he was out of the ordinary. The nicknames applied to him were good-natured, comrades sometimes called him by a twist of his family name so as to intimate how quick-witted they considered him to be, calling him “Quicksling” or “Quickstad”. He also for some time enjoyed the pet name a “Zachariassen” owing to the fact that a teacher of stenography, who had at a first lesson put down on a black-board symbols for the names of all the pupils in the class, boasting that he would not need to ask them their names any more, at the second lesson misread the “Quisling” that way.

In 1911, Quisling’s merits in passing the final examinations at the Military Academy were such as to cause the authorities of the Academy to recommend him to the attention of the King. Such a distinction had never before been accorded a pupil of the Academy. As an officer, he went to the field artillery.

In the years 1911 to 1918, Quisling was a hardworking officer, devoted to his calling. Parallel to his work he carried on studies in many fields. He delved into military science, history and mathematics. He devoured books on philosophy. His study of philosophy was, however, predominantly a reading of the works of German philosophers and poets. He held the view that Norway’s fate would soon be linked up with that of the Eastern world. He studied Russian, which he learned to read, and even made some progress in Chinese.

Living with fellow officers at the Oslo headquarters, or in the artillery barracks at Gardermoen, Quisling retained the peculiarities of manners and behaviour he had developed during boyhood. He retained them in their substance, although he naturally had to adapt them to his new surroundings. He would sit with the other officers as they were merry-making without

speaking for hours, except when spoken to. At the same time, he did not sulk; he was friendly or, at least, appeared so. He did not drink in the company of comrades, but would stay on in order to put out the kerosene lamp for all of them on leaving. He ate his meals with good appetite but did not take an undue interest in the quality of the food offered him. He did not smoke but his abstention was not due to an ascetic trend; he just did not care. He had no love affairs. This did not mean that he was perverted; he just took no interest. He executed his military duties to the satisfaction of his superiors. He was careful and, despite his inclination towards a scholarly life, was not unpractical in daily routine work. He offered ingenious solutions to problems of tactics. At field exercises, he showed both gifts of observation and power of physical endurance. He took part with other artillery officers in riding excursions and athletic exercises, although he was by no means prominent as a sporting man; for that purpose he was as the cavalry jargon goes too full in his trousers – too heavy. In his dealings with military subordinates, he was firm, but not arrogant, one would rather say kindly. His comrades, amazed at his encyclopaedic knowledge, jokingly called him “the Professor”.

Quisling’s taciturnity, carried to extremes, became legendary. Once, on a night ride which he carried through in the company of a younger officer, he kept silent the whole time and did not even say a word when, in the darkness, his horse got stuck in a quagmire; the officer, close by waited in vain to hear the Quisling’s voice as he worked hard to extricate his horse and himself.

Quisling’s brother officers thought that he was certainly going to make a brilliant career and “become a general”. On the other hand they thought he was a bit of a crank but not vindictive. They certainly would have been incredulous if told that this quiet and helpful comrade accumulated a bitterness of offended vanity against them. Later on, however, towards the close of his stay in Russia, Quisling would tell his listeners that these officers he knew in his youth were no good and just a rotten lot of incompetents who, all of them, dreaded him as a rival because of his superior powers and some of them also intrigued against him.

In his days as a young officer in Oslo, Quisling often expressed contempt of city life. He started spending vacations at a log cabin in the mountains of

Fyresdal on the edge of a lake, which his father had built for him and his brother. Here, he indulged in walking, rowing, meditating. As he wrote in 1930 in the University students' twenty-fifth-anniversary book, he brooded over the problems of the philosophy of life, on which he was anxious to furnish his contribution "before the great silence comes". At his mountain resort he did not indulge in hunting, shooting or fishing. He was too steeped in his own great schemes. He felt, no doubt, like that hero in a poem by Ibsen: "Heavy thought wrapped his brow as when the flitting rays of northern lights leap round the earth".

In after years, Quisling has always been very fond of quoting Ibsen. In this developing of a strong interest for Ibsen, there was no doubt, a strong element of egocentricity. Quisling felt himself intimately akin to the person of Ibsen – not the true one with whom he has so little in common, but an image familiar to Norwegians of his generation. As fancied by Quisling, Ibsen is the great national leader who, long meeting with no adequate appreciation at home, at last emerges in his world of splendour but then already fashioned, taciturn and remote, by years of voluntary exile. Quisling never quotes Ibsen in any of those magnificent passages where Ibsen expresses his belief in beauty as man's chief inspiration and his faith in the creative power of the individual the moment that individual, however humble, acts in freedom, and aware of his responsibility. Quisling's favourite quotation from Ibsen are the words which in his historic play "The Pretenders" Ibsen lays in the mouth of Duke Skule: "Norway was an empire, it shall become a nation". It takes a person verily obdurate to literary values thus to brandish the "kingly idea" which in the play, Skule, the barren-minded, steals from his happier rival, King Haakon. Altogether, the future traitor was early obsessed by the idea of having the mission to fulfil Norway's national unity. Thus Quisling early felt attracted by the poem Ibsen wrote in 1872 to the millennial festival commemorative of the unification of Norway. In 1941, he authorised his propaganda service to consecrate July 18th as the common anniversary of the battle of Hafsford (no historian ever knew if it really took place in 872, or on what date) and his own birth. Quisling early pictured himself in the role of a unifier of Norway, but the dragons of national disruption and decay which he dreamt of fighting he

never perceived except in the shape of vague generalisations such as those of class struggle, party strife etc. He never studied politics or worked out a political problem. He willingly went from the greatest abstraction – the national unity of the Norwegians supposed to be in danger – to the application of some specific remedies picked up at random in books of from foreign models. His lack of originality is all-pervading.

When he was a young officer of 25, Quisling had already developed the physical appearance which he has more or less retained up to the approaches of old age. Heavy, stocky, broad-shouldered, six feet high, his head is placed on his shoulders as though it were superimposed afterwards and not originally meant for that body. The head is too small in proportion, so that at any rate when he is seated, he is easily taken to be much shorter than he really is. His voice is deep and not unpleasant, although sometimes monotonous. His eyes are watery blue. He rarely looks anyone straight in the eyes, but when he does his gaze is quite fierce. Usually, however, his eyes are apt to wander as if he were unable to focus on anything in particular. The teeth are in places more widely separated than is usually the case. His hair, pale blondish, is straggling and unruly. The lines of his face never seem to catch up with his age. They always retain something of the infantile. His boyish smile is the redeeming feature and of this he is aware, smiling without restraint when an occasion presents itself.

In fact, in the physical domain, certain peculiarities of the person Quisling can have no more appropriate denomination than that of “infantilism”. Of course no competent person - biologist or psychologist - would be rash enough to maintain that to a given pattern of physical infantilism - like that of Quisling's - corresponds a given type of moral behaviour, whether it be called moral infantilism or otherwise. The one is not the function or reflex of the other; there is no linear relationship. On the other hand there can be no doubt that the physical infantilism of a person should have for its parallel or concomitant a certain non-moral development of the individual's moral life. There is, in other words, incompatibility between physical infantilism and normal morality. One typical moral infantilism - whether conditioned or not by an initial physical infantilism - is the behaviour in which the individual is spellbound by what he thinks he has discovered will come

about in virtue of already given causes to such an extent that he does not stop to inquire if it is morally right. In other words having once, at the threshold of mature age, recognized the inexorable nexus between causes and effects in nature, the individual remains dazzled by the impact lie thus receives, and whenever he becomes convinced that something is going to happen in a great way to humanity this conviction to him unreservedly implies that it is morally right to favour the development of it; being by him deemed necessary, it is to him desirable. At any rate Quisling's main moral reactions have since early manhood at each stage been governed by an idea of his to have discovered something which is bound to happen and towards the realisation of which he considers it a moral duty for him and everybody to collaborate; and in his egocentricity he is not aware of the fact that as he defines what is bound to happen, the concomitant moral duty of others to collaborate means enhancing the grandeur of Quisling himself.

In the early stages of his military career, Quisling had, once and for all, settled in a certain pattern of outward behaviour, which has withstood later contacts with many sets of people and with varying situations and long years of married life. Quisling has managed to carry over intact from boyhood and youth his self-esteem. He has a tranquil inner certainly on this point, which, so far, has never entirely failed him although, by now, it doubtless is subfused with a blind anger. Quisling's overwhelming self-esteem is disconcerting to anyone endowed with an average amount of power of introspection. As a rule, Quisling's outward behaviour is one of quiet self-confidence. Quisling probably has never been subject to any heavy prolonged state of mental depression. As his elation at his own transcendental gifts is quiet, and practically imperceptible to the observer, so his dark moods are just sombre and not absolutely black. Into that rusticity of Quisling's, which he has retained from childhood, rudeness does not enter. Quisling is courteous and low-voiced except for very rare outbursts. He is helpful towards individuals who look to him for assistance, and who have not offended him beforehand. He is, on occasions, even chivalrous. He is rustic in the sense of lacking that finish, that frankness and ready approach which are supposed to be the key value of urbane civilization. He is uncommunicative and clumsy. When Quisling talks in company, it is usually

at the instigation of others. Having once entered the conversation he will speak fluently and without animation for a while, then suddenly stop without obvious reasons, or change the subject. When he thus changes the subject it is not in order to be disagreeable or self-imposing, but because, in a way hidden to the others he, in his inner consciousness, has already learnt to link his new subject with the preceding one. On rare occasions, and mostly with intent on his part, having himself started talking to a person, he will dilate for a long while on the given subject.

During the years from 1916 to 1918, the two elder brothers Quisling both lived in Oslo. As part of the maternal fortune had been transferred to them they had no need to worry about money and they lived in relative comfort. They were both bachelors, but they did not share lodgings. As, however, they met mutual friends together, one could easily observe in which respects the brothers were morally alike and in which they differed. They were both given to speculations of a metaphysical or at least slightly abstruse character. The younger brother, who became a doctor, has published a bulky volume of philosophical ponderings along the lines of Hegelian dialectic conceptualism. The book has been translated into German and published under the title: "Philosophie: Das Anthropokosmische System". The Quisling brothers both abstained from smoking, and neither of them drank in the company of others. They were both of a cold and, so far, introverted disposition. But in some respects they appeared different to the world around them. Whereas the younger brother had a pleasing kind of humour and was well liked by everybody, Vidkun was secluded and if not devoid of humour, seldom showed it. Observers of that time judged both brothers to be rather queer fellows, the difference between them being chiefly that the dogmatic beliefs and paradoxes of Vidkun bore upon world politics and those of the brother upon problems of longevity and the presence of a threefold pattern in all human events. No observer probably, at that time, compared the brothers in terms of benevolence towards other human beings or of respect for human values. As a doctor, the younger brother could not possibly decline to regard his fellow-creatures as individuals and to call upon his power to feel sympathetic towards them. To Vidkun Quisling, the military man steeped in visions of world politics, human beings

mainly existed as members of collectivities of some sort.

The casual observer of 1916 or 1917 not probing too deeply, would put Quisling down as being basically good-natured. To that would seem to testify his quiet and unobtrusive behaviour and evenly maintained attitude of kindness and that he sometimes expanded into a boyish and very attractive smile. In fact, Quisling's boyish smile, a relieving contrast to the expression he usually wears of blankness and gloom, fits in with certain good qualities of his, as for instance his helpfulness and instances of chivalry. But who has not seen small boys exercise their terroristic urges to the accompaniment of a beaming smile?

Down the years, very few have been able rightly to gauge the moral eccentricity of Quisling's character. The observer of 1916 or 1917 would have had to be a very cynical person to realize that to Vidkun Quisling, despite his boyish smile, the happiness or unhappiness of his fellow creatures counted for very little.

As he emerges at the close of his formative years, Quisling, although not actively cruel, would always be able to prove to his own satisfaction that what he had discovered to be the good and right and necessary solution to a social or national problem, however painful this solution might be to the individual human beings involved, was conducive to their real happiness and should be accepted by them as such without further demur.

2. Russia

In 1911 Quisling joined the General Staff where he remained as a junior until 1915. He became adjutant to the Inspector General for the field artillery for one year. In 1917 he became a probationer for the General Staff. He was promoted a captain in the field artillery in 1917. He never passed the final examination necessary for receiving a commission as a General Staff Officer. In the General Staff, Quisling was put to work, amongst other things, on Russian problems. In the secluded atmosphere of the General Staff he probably felt happier than he had in the barrack room. He also was now engaged in activities where he could not doubt but that one day his superior gifts would get their recognition and rights. Later on, he retained, for years, some nostalgia for the General Staff.

Although no one probably ever expected him to become an effective diplomat, Quisling was sent in the spring of 1918 as a military attaché to Petrograd. What was most needed then in that post was a fresh mind capable of assessing the significance of the new Russian developments, in which political and the military factors were so inextricably mixed.

Quisling stayed in Petrograd till the end of 1918 and in 1919 went to Helsingfors, Finland; there for two years he combined the functions of a military attaché and secretary to the legation. Later, he worked for years in Russia as a representative of Nansen and in other capacities. For twelve years, from 1918 to 1930, Quisling spent most of his time in Russia and adjoining countries and paid only rare visits to his own country.

From 1921 to 1927, every time Quisling revisited his own country, he in some way or other took steps, half-heartedly it is true, to become reinstated in the services of the General Staff. Why did the General Staff never re-engage him? He never condescended to take such steps beforehand as would secure for him the right to return under conditions acceptable to him. He always counted upon being considered indispensable when once he presented himself again, enriched with new experience and knowledge. Before, in 1918 and 1919, he went out as a military attaché to Petrograd and Helsingfors, he took steps to return to the General Staff. When he, in 1921, agreed to work for Nansen in Russia, he did not prosecute his tentative

approaches to the General Staff. After the end of his relief to the Russia mission in December 1923 he likewise failed to enter into an agreement with the General Staff to resume work there. He just relied upon his work with Nansen being counted in his favour as equivalent to a service with the General Staff. Never on visits to Norway did he take time to pass his General Staff examination. And as the years went by, other officers who had passed their General Staff examinations and had served, obtained seniority and rank in the General Staff higher than Quisling was entitled to under the rules. If Quisling was to have his way, a special promotion would have to be accorded him whereby he bypassed officers who had worked their way in the regular course. And Quisling at no time negotiated beforehand with the General Staff for such treatment to be accorded him. He just counted upon his merits being recognized as so overwhelming as to override rules. Quisling, foreseeing the result himself in 1924 or 1925, once said to an old acquaintance that he did not really know why he bothered to solicit a commission in the General Staff, only to waste time on petty details, he who had been used to spend millions of kroner in the Nansen famine relief work. Colonel Bauck, head of the Norwegian General Staff throughout the twenties, had, on the contrary, a keen sense of justice in his dealings with subordinates, and consequently he spurned the idea of commissioning or promoting an officer outside of the established rules. Guided by this sense of justice, Bauck was not impressed by the arguments put forward by or on behalf of Quisling. In 1927, when spending a vacation at a summer resort, Bauck was assailed in private by a friendly interventionist who wanted him to reinstate Quisling with due rank and seniority. Bauck curtly dismissed his intervener with the remark that the General Staff had no use for a man of Quisling's type — whatever he meant by that. Some officers who had learned to admire Quisling thought that Bauck was unjust towards Quisling. But was he?

During his first period of diplomatic service, from 1918 to 1921, Quisling became acquainted on the spot with Russian and Finnish conditions. In Petrograd in 1918, Quisling first stayed for a few weeks in the same hotel as Captain Frederick Prytz, who was commercial attaché at the Norwegian Legation and knew Russia from having lived there for some

years; and for the remainder of the sojourn, the head of the Legation, who was a chargé d'affaires, Captain Prytz and Quisling lived in the same lodgings: Quisling was at that period as it would appear, absorbed in military matters to the exclusion of political problems, apart from such as would necessarily crop up in connection with a military analysis. Quisling visited, together with the other military attaches the Red Army camps. He had no very high opinion of the military value of the Red Army, as was perhaps natural at the time. He used to read his reports aloud to the other members of the Legation, but he expressed no desire to become acquainted with the contents of the political reports of the chargé d'affaires. He just, as the latter thought, was a professional man with no interest at all for general politics, at least of the day-to-day character. In the evening, serious conversation turned mostly on history, mathematics, abstract questions. Quisling took no interest in amusements of any kind, had no love affairs. Having taught himself to read Russian, in Norway, Quisling now learned to speak the language fluently, although not quite as a native Russian. As he was no more sociable in 1918 than he had been before or was to be later, Norwegians conversing with Quisling in Moscow in the later twenties came to speculate on how he had ever been able to learn to speak Russian so well. Probably, in 1981, he profited by the occasion and listened to interminable discussions amongst Russian military persons and to lengthy debates in Russian assemblies.

When in Helsingfors, from 1919 to 1921, Quisling became more and more engrossed in his work as a secretary to the Legation, and his reports as a military attaché, under the circumstances, became more tinged with politics than had been the case during his stay in Petrograd. The Norwegian Minister in Helsingfors at the time was Mr. Urbye, who came to appreciate Quisling's services and admire his intellectual qualities. When Quisling arrived in Finland, the civil war was more or less over; and in 1920, the Soviet Union concluded a treaty of peace and delimitation of frontiers with the new Finland. Helsingfors was for some time a vantage-point for the observation of Russian national development and politics. While in Helsingfors, Quisling continued studying the Russian world and generally the elements of the vast geo-political drama, which, to his mind, was unrolling itself with

the Nordic countries for a pivot. He continued to be taciturn in the extreme when mixing with people who did not coax him — like the Minister — into developing his ideas of political philosophy. Thus, in 1920, when a Norwegian diplomat on his way to take up a position in Moscow spent an evening at Mr. Urbye's house, and the conversation revolved round on all sorts of topics, not least on Russian conditions, Quisling did not say a single word beyond yes or no the whole time. The travelling diplomat, taking leave of Mr. Urbye the day after, could not refrain from adding: "But what a queer type of military attaché you have got". But the Minister, who had got used to Quisling's manners to the point of not noticing the queerness of them, retorted by extolling the good qualities of Quisling; and the diplomat thought he had just misread the character of Quisling. Mr. Urbye, who later on was Quisling's chief in Moscow, long persisted in his admiration for him. In 1937, he jokingly told an interviewer that in Helsingfors when he walked to his office in the mornings together with Quisling, he used to try and work out some problem so difficult that Quisling could not solve it; and he added that in his opinion, Quisling was one of the most intelligent people he had ever met. In truth, receptivity and capacity for storing information is often confounded with intelligence.

As a military attaché in Petrograd and Helsingfors from 1918 to 1921, Quisling no doubt started out with a great interest in technical details. In fact, his mind had always been impregnated by a twofold set of images — details, and breathtaking visions. In the course of the years, Quisling's mastery of military details, instead of maturing into military science, remained uncoordinated, and he leapt from administrative or social details to vast political combinations. As far as Russia is concerned, where the knowledge of Quisling, later on, has proved adequate is in the field of such political-administrative matters as the organization of the Russian State Police (G.P.U.). For some obscure psychological reason, Quisling, the expert, never studied the military lessons to be drawn from the Russian civil war campaigns nor was his curiosity aroused by subsequent Russian military experiments. He was more attracted by the political problems involved in the organization of the Red Army than the military ones inherent in its status and prospects as a military machine. Similarly, his knowledge of the structure

of the Bolshevik State in turn proved to be inferior to his knowledge of the Russian Communist Party and the Communist Internationale. In an unconscious effort at self-justification in 1926, when engaged in the services of an industrial concern, he spoke about the military profession with some contempt only surpassed by that which he expressed for the activities of a businessman.

During those years of diplomatic service, as far as could be judged by those who met him, he had nothing against the Russians or their political endeavour, but he looked contemptuously on the future of the Russian nation. He never understood any nation otherwise than from the angle of technical efficiency, and he considered Russian agencies and contrivance hopelessly outclassed by the corresponding ones in Germany and elsewhere. What then remained to him as an observer of Russian conditions was to concentrate on the fields where even the technically inferior nation can accomplish newfangled and startling exploits. One such field is the political. However inferior a nation may be in the military arts, it may base its political system on a highly rationalized use of violence. By its achievements in this field, the inferior nation may even become dangerous to the superior nations by a reason of the fact that political effect, in contradistinction to military, can be obtained by long-distance infection.

During the years 1918 to 1921, Quisling met and became acquainted with, or known to, quite a number of Norwegian officials abroad, and he left, generally upon them the impression of being reliable and efficient. His superiors abroad and at home felt satisfied at the quality and quantity of work put forth by him. So, when asked by a prospective employer about the qualification of Quisling, they would give him the best of recommendations.

When Quisling's term as a military attaché came to an end in 1921, he planned to return to Norway when he hoped to be accepted for renewed service on the General Staff, but in August and September 1921, Nansen passed through Helsingfors on his way to and from Russia. He was searching for collaborators to help him in his Russian famine relief work. Nansen had when first passing through Helsingfors, seen Minister Urbye who had mentioned Quisling to him. Nansen found that Quisling's

knowledge of Russia and mastery of the Russian and German languages as well as his General Staff training, made him a promising choice. And Quisling, who had not been able to complete arrangements with the General Staff, very strongly felt the appeal to join.

At the time Nansen was back in Oslo in September 1921 he had really made up his mind. All the same as he wanted to check up on his choice, he mentioned Quisling to me, who then was Foreign Minister of my country. I had to confess that I knew very little about Quisling, apart from his official record, and asked Nansen to see the diplomat who had been our Chargé d'Affaires in Petrograd in 1918 when Quisling for some months was military attaché there, and now held a position in the ministry. Nansen so did, and this diplomat gave Quisling quite a good testimony, the more so as Nansen said he had already fixed upon him for the job. Quisling went to Kharkov in January 1922, and had his residence there until the latter part of 1923, as head of a branch of the Nansen famine relief work in Russia.

As I have already noted, Nansen was not a very good psychologist, and if one relies exclusively upon laudatory remarks of his about Quisling, one might get the impression that he admired Quisling unreservedly. In many respects, Quisling gave every satisfaction to Nansen, and he certainly felt no temptation to disparage the work by the man he had chosen. On the other hand, Nansen was too conscious of the importance of the famine relief work he had undertaken, and also too well aware of the need for not impairing his own prestige by the use of the wrong men or of a man in wrong place, not to define very carefully the nature of the work to which he could put a man without overtaxing his competence. Nansen used Quisling as a collaborator in the Russian famine relief work within rather narrow limits. Quisling was not directly responsible to Nansen but to Nansen's chief representative in Moscow, Mr. J. H. Gorvin. Thus Quisling did not report directly to Nansen. Further, his task was limited to Ukraine and the adjoining parts of the lower Volga valley, where the land, as in Norway, was then divided into small freehold farms and conditions on the land generally were similar to those with which Quisling as a Fyresdal peasant, was familiar. In Ukraine, knowledge of the German language was useful also. On the other hand, Quisling's work was limited to the relief work pure and simple

and was not extended into any of the other fields into which the Nansen enterprise branched off, as for instance the mechanical farming experiments in Saratov and South Ukraine, the rehabilitation of Don Cossacks returning from Constantinople and Bulgaria, the restocking of Russian university libraries and laboratories and assistance to professors, the general care of transport of relief supplies, public health and medical assistance. On the spot, there were questions of relationship in relief responsibilities between local political authorities, the representatives of the Moscow government and the foreign relief organizations; and Nansen thought that Quisling would be good at straightening out such difficulties, because of his non-political, entirely matter of fact temperament. For cooperating with other charitable organizations such as the German Red Cross Quisling's knowledge of German was helpful. Nansen deliberately kept Quisling out of all questions liable to create political complications, and he kept him out of all overhead and general planning. Nansen considered Quisling to be an efficient technician possessed of some rare competences and useful gifts, but a technician to be confined according to his limitations within a comparatively narrow field of action.

Quisling himself, being of a passive type, did not for a moment try to break the limitations and enlarge the scope of his work. He was quite happy to work on the task allotted to him. His collaborators in Russia considered him to be loyal to them and devoted to his task. He contributed in a tight corner to the work out of his own pocket. He sometimes came to Moscow where he discussed matters with Nansen's chief representative and others, always along very objective lines. He joined the other members of the Nansen Mission in Moscow socially, and was friendly although silent. Political problems were often dwelt upon by the others in conversation; but Quisling never evinced any interest in political questions. He sometimes went to see the head of the Norwegian Trade Mission then established in Moscow under the same diplomat who had been so struck, in Helsingfors, by Quisling's taciturnity. The members of the Trade Mission were naturally very anxious to have Quisling tell about his experiences in Ukraine, and he readily did so; but he never showed any interest in the work of the Trade Mission nor started discussions with his compatriots about matters outside

of his won sphere of interests. The extreme narrowness of his conception of the job in hand may perhaps explain that to at least one person engaged in the same kind of activity – representative of the Swedish Red Cross – he appeared arrogant and difficult to deal with and perfectly capable of deserting a fellow-working in sickness and distress.

Some peculiarities of Quisling's character stood him in good stead during his work in Ukraine. In his book, "International Tramps", Nansen's English secretary T.F. Johnson, cites as an example of Quisling's dogged perseverance, how he overcame the hesitation of a Ukraine Railway Station Commandant, of whom he asked the favour of having a train set up for the dispatch of some supplies. As the Station Commandant thought he could do nothing except under orders from Moscow, he asked Quisling to come back in a few days. Quisling said nothing, and merely sat down in the Stations Commandant's office. He accepted tea and cigarettes when offered, but sat on, immobile and mute, merely vouchsafing the remark that "he was staying there until he got his train". "And get it he did – his sphinx-like menace so got on the frayed nerves of the station official, that even the threats of dire punishment from Moscow seemed small in comparison". Johnson wrote this in 1938; he adds: "Quisling has lately become a Fascist leader in Norway; to me his silence would be infinitely more terrifying than the hysteric belchings of other Fascist leaders".

In Ukraine, as Quisling went through the horrors of a deadly famine, he certainly did not develop into a more communicative person than he had been before. The German Red Cross was strongly represented in Russia at the time – a relic of the Brest –Litowsk peace period and the German Red Cross had delegates at Kharkov, an important place to them. Quisling who spoke German spent much of his time in Kharkov in the company of Germans. He was hard-working and effective. He earned the written thanks of the Ukrainian Red Cross Society. Later on, looking back on famine relief work in Ukraine, Quisling described it as having been "of the nature of General Staff work". It certainly was work under circumstances as horrifying as any war could provide. In the photos from Ukraine of this time, as published, for instance, by Alfred Rosenberg in 1922 and by Quisling himself in 1930, the extent of the misery becomes vividly apparent even to the mind

of to-day.

While on service in Russia, Quisling contracted malaria and probably has suffered ever since from the residual consequences of this malady.

During his stay in Kharkov, an incident arose, trifling in a sense but illustrative of his passive attitude in regard to politics at that time. In 1922, Poland's chargé d'affaires at Kharkov complained to his Government that Quisling, under the cloak of humanitarian work, partook in communist activities of a political character – was a “communisant”. In due course, the Polish Foreign Office laid the complaint before the Norwegian Minister in Warsaw, and the Norwegian Government, in their turn asked for Quisling's own comment. He not only defended himself vigorously in his reply to the Oslo Government, but on the first occasion, when meeting the Polish representative at Kharkov, gave way to a violent outburst of wrath at being made the object of such an accusation. And profoundly sincere he no doubt was. But it was rather curious to those who then in 1922, listened to his professions of being a non-political man (like Nansen) to find him, some years later, acting in his country as an instigator of anti-communistic politics.

In the propaganda services, which Quisling has maintained ever since 1930, the importance of the famine work in Southern Ukarine and the lower Volga basin plays a prominent part. It could not be otherwise. There is no reason to disparage his achievements. But it is at the same time indispensable, when reviewing the facts, to bear in mind that also here, Quisling is to Quisling the centre of the universe. As we have seen Quisling's role never exceeded that of an important executive acting on the general instructions of the leader. In matters of relief policy he never influenced or even attempted to influence Nansen. Nansen made voyages to Russia in 1921, 1922 and 1923 and he saw all the leading Russian statesmen and even many higher officials of the day. Nansen, when home in Norway or traveling, entertained a correspondence with Russian national leaders, with his representatives in Moscow, later on with the local managers of his model farms, etc. Nansen himself made the decisions of policy arising out of his agreements with the Soviet Government regarding supplies of food, teaching material for schools, medical supplies for hospitals, etc. In his book “Russia and Peace” which

he published towards the end of 1923, Nansen mentions occasionally a report from Quisling as he mentions reports from his other representatives and especially Mr. Garvin, his head representative in Moscow, a capable organiser. In this book, at the same time, Nansen makes it quite clear on what chief sources of inspiration he had drawn for his relief policy. Quisling had no part here. Nansen's outlook on Russian problems was mainly derived from impressions gathered during pre-war travels and from the influence exercised on him by Russians with whom he made personal contacts on the spot in 1921, 1922 and 1923. Quisling's place in the scheme was analogous to that of the head of an ordering and dispatch and distraction section of a General Staff working with an army in the field. If it is true that Quisling's work in Southern Ukraine was General Staff work, it should be added that it was that of a special branch of a General Staff.

During his stay in Ukraine, Quisling married. Not only once, but twice. He was married both times according to Russian law. No record exists of his having been divorced from his first wife, but the simple consent of the parties was sufficient according to Russian law. Quisling's first marriage, in 1922, was a so-called compassion marriage, entered into for the purpose of getting the woman out of Russia where she was in danger. As a representative of Nansen, Quisling enjoyed diplomatic privileges. She later got out of the country. His second marriage, to Maria Vasilievna Passek, was concluded in Kharkov in September 1923. This time also, the matrimonial history at first developed in a way calculated to convey the impression that Quisling had again entered into a compassion marriage. When, for the second time in the course of a year, the door-man, announcing the visit exclaimed: "Oh, Sir, here is Captain Quisling again with a new Russian wife ! ". The personnel of the Legation, amused, thought that Quisling, in the goodness of his heart and the vastness of his conceptions, had turned champion of all the distressed ladies in Russia. Later on, when Quisling stopped at his second marriage, the story got abroad that Maria Vasilievna, courted by Quisling in Ukraine, had made it a condition that, before she would become his wife, he must first go through a form of marriage with a friend of hers in order that she might escape from Russia. Some people, improving on the story, said that the lady thus married in the

first instance was the sister of the second wife; a version discredited by the fact that the first Mrs. Quisling was fair and slim, of a Nordic type, whereas the second Mrs. Quisling is a dark a heavily built person of Georgian type. Quisling later on generously kept his first wife, who was very young, at a school at Lausanne and once or twice visited her there.

Whatever may have been the motives of Quisling at the moment of contracting his marriages, he did nothing to dispel the mystery in which they were shrouded. On the contrary, his career of a mystery man started here.

Thus although he paid for visits not infrequently to Moscow in 1922 and 1923 after his first and second marriage, he never mentioned his first marriage either to his Norwegian compatriots at the Trade Mission or to his colleagues of the Nansen Mission, nor did he mention his second marriage to the Norwegians. In fact, the Norwegian diplomat in charge of the Trade Mission never knew that Quisling was married until several years later, in 1929 when he was Norwegian Minister in Helsingfors, and Quisling and Mrs. Quisling passed through that city on their way home to Norway from Russia and Quisling called upon him to clear up some formalities.

In being enigmatic, Quisling's purpose never was merely to enjoy the confusion of others, their wild guesses, and the conflicting stories. He takes himself altogether too seriously, and has too much of the peasant's sense of decency to make a dual marriage of his own a matter of common mystification. A mysterious attitude has been natural to him always; and he has in the course of a life of ill-defined scope come to rely consciously upon the power which the mystery surrounding a man has to make people attach increased importance to him.

Quisling accompanied his second wife out of Russia shortly after their marriage in 1923. His object was to visit Nansen in Norway. He returned swiftly, but without Mrs. Quisling. He continued for some months to work in the Ukraine and the Volga basin. Mrs. Quisling therefore stayed away from Russia for four consecutive years until 1927. She stayed most of the time in Paris with a friend – another Russian woman who also was married to a Norwegian. During this time she may occasionally have met Quisling, going to Norway for a summer holiday when he also happened to be there.

Mrs. Quisling wrote letters to Quisling in Russia, but facilities for correspondence were scanty and Quisling himself apparently never replied by letter. Mr. Quisling had, during the famine in Ukraine, been subjected to malnutrition, and for some years was in delicate health, resting most of the day.

During the years 1924 to 1926, Quisling worked for Nansen and the League of Nations on Russian problems. In 1924, 1925 and 1926, he assisted in the attempt to create a national home for Armenian refugees in Erivan, Armenia. First, he was a secretary to a Committee which was set up by the International Labour Office in the autumn of 1924, with Nansen as its chairman, and which handed in its report in the late summer of 1925. Thereafter he became one of the experts, and the liaison officer for dealing with the Russian authorities, of a Commission appointed by the Council of the League of Nations in the autumn of 1925 and having for its chairman the French Senator Pams. In his capacity as a secretary to the Nansen Committee, during the spring and summer of 1925, Quisling followed the Committee on a trip to Armenia and, when Nansen parted from the other members, followed him through the Caucasus back to Russia proper and Norway. When serving on the Pams Commission from October 1925 to April 1926, Quisling, working from Moscow as headquarters, made a four months' trip to Armenia. While in Moscow in the autumn of 1925, with the permission of Mr. Urbye, from 1924 to 1939 Norwegian Minister in Russia, Quisling took up his residence at the Norwegian Legation and returned to live there in March 1926. In 1927, the League of Nations published the Pams Commission report on Armenia; among the appendizes to which were reports by Quisling on his Armenian trip. In 1928, Nansen published a book, "Armenia and the Middle East", on the Armenian refugees' problem and the attempts to solve it. He praises the initiative of his colleagues on the Committee; he mentions Quisling, but only in trivial connections (translations into Russian etc.).

At the termination of his work for the Pams Commission in April 1926, Quisling tried to become reinstated in the services of the Norwegian General Staff, but met with no success. From that time on he considered himself as having broken with the General Staff, and he nourished a great hatred of

the ring-leaders in the army. In a letter to the King in November 1927, conveying his resignation as an army officer, he complained of the obstinacy of the head of the General Staff in turning down his application for some prolongation of his appointment there. Judging from utterances of his to Norwegian Communist leaders in 1925 and to others, both then and later, he saw in this the effect of intrigues directed against his person. His resignation became effective as from first of July 1928, after which date he was an officer on half pay. Later, in 1931, he went on the reserve list with the rank of Major. In the spring of 1926, seeing the doors of the General Staff closed, Quisling accepted an offer to enter the service of some private Norwegian citizens carrying on business in Russia.

Lenin had, in 1921, introduced his “new economic policy” (NEP), and, as a result, a few combined Russian and foreign companies had been created. One of them was the Russo-Norwegian Onega Wood Company (Russnorvegoles) established in 1924. The Russian half of the capital was provided in saw mills, old stocks of sawn goods and large land concessions; the other half was provided by the non-Russian, mostly Norwegian, shareholders giving up their claim to the properties, which once had been theirs. The general manager of the company was a Norwegian, Captain Fredrik Prytz. This gentleman has played a great role and, in many respects, a decisive one in the life of Quisling.

Fredrik Prytz was a few years older than Quisling, was born in 1878 in England where his father was a pastor of the Seamens’ mission. He had a good school education in England and Norway and became an officer in the Norwegian army in 1902. He had met Quisling at army field exercises and came to admire his intelligence and ability. Prytz soon left active service in the Norwegian army and went into business. He turned his attention to Czarist Russia, and having no fortune of his own, participated with others in acquiring important timber properties in Onega in the North of Russia. The Norwegians at that time were pioneers in the exploitation of timber resources. Having first rationalised their methods in the difficult natural conditions of their home land, they when the timber resources of Norway proved inadequate, in the latter part of the 19th century, started pushing eastward. They created wood companies of different kinds (saw

mills, wood pulp factories, etc.), in Sweden and Finland and finally in Russia. There was a minor boom in this trade before the first World War. Frederik Prytz was enterprising and successful; he extended gradually his own interests although he mostly worked as a salaried man. Prytz lived in the north of Russia in the Onega district from 1911; he was made a Vice-Consul for Norway. During the years 1914-1916, the Allies attached importance to the Norwegian timber properties and saw mills in Russia as a source of war supplies; and the activities of Captain (as he then was) Prytz were highly valued. Then came the Bolshevik Revolution, and the Nationalization decrees of 1917, and the Brest – Litovsk Peace between Russia and Germany in January 1918. Captain Prytz and those engaged with him in the Russian timber business stood to lose on a heavy scale unless they could in some way or other obtain a compensation not provided for in the Nationalization Decrees. Captain Prytz, besides representing his own rather small interests, obtained full authority from the other interested parties to represent their claims, and later on started a campaign to interest the Norwegian Government in pressing these claims. But in the turmoil of the day, with “White” generals and admirals still fighting on the soil of Russia against the Bolshevik not yet recognised as the legal or even the de facto rulers of the Russian State, Prytz could not expect the Norwegian or indeed any Government to achieve much by the traditional methods of diplomatic protection. So he placed his services at the disposal of the Norwegian Government in case they could use his knowledge of Russia and Russian economic conditions. In 1938 Captain Prytz was appointed commercial attaché and secretary to the Royal Norwegian Legation at Petrograd. The titular head of the Legation having returned to Norway a chargé d’affaires arrived in April of that year, accompanied by Quisling as the military attaché of Norway. As the Bolshevik Government had not yet been recognised by Norway, the Legation at Petrograd was maintained only provisionally to take care of the interests of Norway and to represent those of some other countries. In the summer of 1918 when the chargé d’affaires was absent from Petrograd for some weeks Captain Prytz was placed in charge of the Legation and thus became for a short while the superior of Quisling. The Petrograd Legation was closed in 1919 and from

1919 Prytz had resided in Norway for two or more years, he laboured with a tenacity that no set-back could damp to obtain from the Norwegian Government that they include a settlement of his claims against the Bolsheviks in proposals for international agreement submitted to the Soviet Government.

After the introduction of NEP, Prytz had got together the Norwegians and the Englishmen who owned the old Onega company, and had been the driving power behind the organisation of the Russnorvogoles. In the spring of 1926 Prytz appointed Quisling the representative of the Onega Company in Moscow. Commenting on the appointment to an older official of the company, Prytz said: "Quisling does not know the first thing about all this, but he will know more about it than any of you in a short time".

As I have already stated, Quisling, from the end of 1925 had lodgings at the Norwegian Legation in Moscow. He occupied a wing of the Legation Building, first alone, and then together with a young Norwegian couple, until the autumn of 1926. He then for some months stayed at a hotel where his wife, returning from Paris, joined him in June 1927, after the rupture of the diplomatic relations between England and Russia. In the summer of 1927 he and Mrs. Quisling moved to a building, which, formerly used by the British Trade Mission, now formed an annex to the British Legation (which was turned into an Embassy only at the resumption of diplomatic relations in 1929). On the rupture of the diplomatic relations, this building had, along with the main Legation building, been evacuated by its occupants, and part of it was now provisionally turned over to be used by the Norwegian Legation in charge of British interests. In these successive lodgings Quisling received Captain Prytz when the latter was on one of his many visits to Moscow.

Observing Quisling's behaviour towards Prytz in Moscow in 1926 and 1927, compatriots who considered Quisling the intellectually superior of the two, were surprised to find that he was very obsequious to his chief, and they had some difficulty in explaining to themselves the reasons for this. One reason, of course, was that Prytz was the older officer who had once before, in Petrograd, been Quisling's chief. Another was that, in their common dealings with the outer world, Prytz was naturally the man who

headed their every enterprise – affable and glib, a man of the world, taking the lead in conversations where Quisling was present, even when the subject was one in which Quisling was supposed to be the greater authority such as racial theories. A third reason and psychologically perhaps the one most responsible for the obsequious attitude of Quisling towards Prytz was that of the two Prytz was the active type, Quisling the passive one. Prytz had from the very beginning of the Soviet rule in Russia had definite political opinions however rudimentary they may have been in this regard, whereas Quisling's mind had been, politically speaking, a blank. And of the two obsessions, that of Prytz to settle his accounts with the Bosheviks who had “stolen” his property, and that of Quisling, wronged by the “incompetent officers” at home, Prytz's obsession was the more simplest clear-cut and powerful.

In Moscow, in 1926 and 1927, Quisling and Prytz would sit for hours together to work out some scheme in the interests of the Onega Company or draft some documents to be submitted to the Bolshevik authorities. When not thus occupied, Quisling was not exactly hard-working. He spent much time reading and meditating. He studied – or thought he studied – Russian history. He devoured all sorts of treaties of political theory. Having always felt attracted by mathematics, he now particularly spent much time on astronomy. A great astronomer, now living, is responsible for the saying that each time he meets a new amateur astronomer, he suspects the health of mind of his interlocutor; for on his estimate, out of 20 non-professionals enquiring into astronomy, only one is of sound mind. Unlike most persons with a real mathematical gift, Quisling has no interest for music or for the dramatico– musical arts. In Moscow in 1926 and 1927, Quisling would sometimes follow Prytz or functionaries of the Onega Company or of the legation to some playhouse performance or even a night club; but that was in passive submission to what the occasion required. He had no real interest in or understanding of the figurative arts. He would not drink in a large company, but he was not averse to having a glass or two in an intimate group. In his lodgings at the British Legation he would treat guests to excellent wine. He had no love affairs. As before, he showed no interest that way. Nor has he ever since.

In 1926 and 1927, the Norwegian colony of businessmen in Russia was still comparatively large. On this group, Quisling left the impression of a man much absorbed in his own thoughts and not very sociable. He could sit for hours without speaking, or else deliver long monologues, especially on Russian history and politics. Unlike most of the businessmen around him, he was not much interested in making money for himself. He bought icons and old paintings. One Frans Hals found its way to America and Quisling's claim to a part in the much higher price obtained at a later sale was the subject of a litigation before an American court in 1937. In Oslo, about the same time, Quisling unsuccessfully sued an art dealer for having cheated him in the sale of other pictures. As to the collection of icons he still has in Oslo, expert opinion differs. At least one expert takes the view that the collection is a very valuable one. At the time of Quisling's stay in Moscow, from 1926 to 1929, no foreigner considered it wrong to buy, as Quisling bought icons, old furniture, antiques and curiosities of every kind. Nearly every foreigner in Russia who had the money did so. Quisling brought icons and other valuables out of the country for himself and others more as a kind of sport or as a routine in order to gain money quickly. Really severe restrictions on the exportation of objects of art from Russia only came into force on the 1st of January 1930, and Quisling had left Russia a few days earlier.

To the Norwegian colony of businessmen in Russia in 1926 and 1927, Quisling appeared as a firm believer in the "strong arm" and the authority from above. He was not, however, usually arrogant and brutal with subordinates, although at times he may have thought that he had to be harsh towards Russian male subordinates. He admired Bolshevik methods as well fitted to meet Russian needs, but he would add that Russia was one hundred years behind the times. He readily professed his contempt, and even his hatred, of the Jews. On this point, his feelings may, consciously or not, have been shaped in imitation of a prevalent Russian attitude. Although opposed to racial discrimination of any sort, Bolshevism had not yet completely uprooted the age-long attitude of the average Russian to his Jewish compatriots. Quisling uttered contempt for the English as being too much a nation of shopkeepers and, in general, for the business man's

occupation. At the same time, he did not spare the military profession. His admiration was reserved for the great and forceful political leader.

When, in June 1927, Quisling's wife returned to live with him in Moscow, people around them soon found that she was devoted to him and probably more so than he was to her. For some time after her return, Mrs. Quisling, still in rather poor health, appeared to be very much afraid of him. That attitude, however, wore off. Mrs. Quisling's health improved, and after a while, she seemed to elicit from her husband whatever concessions she wanted in order to lead an agreeable existence and to be able, at the same time, to retain for herself a large amount of liberty of movement. Mrs. Quisling could not move freely in Russian society, for, on the proscription list of G.P.U., she could not have returned to Russia at all, had it not been for her husband's diplomatic privileges as an ad hoc secretary to the Norwegian Legation. She frequented the homes of Russian ladies married to foreign diplomats and liked tea parties and was sociable. Mrs. Quisling, on the whole, appeared more in society than did Quisling himself. She was ambitious on behalf of her husband and, at the same time, not capable, it was considered of grasping more than the simplest of political concepts.

Quisling was correct toward his wife and even polite but would easily become irritated by some remark of hers, if it could be constructed as a reflection on him or his conduct. He never made a gesture or said a word that would suggest that he had warmer feelings for her. Once when somebody innocently asked him if he was not going to have a child sometime, Quisling scowling and white with rage, burst forth: "Not if I can help it."

Anyhow, in 1926 and 1927, most of the Norwegian who lived in Moscow, looked upon Quisling with sympathy. Their sympathy probably was of the kind often extended to persons who although they never give, always seem to promise. His Russian maid servant, before the return of Mrs. Quisling, has pictured him as a quiet person, who never made a row or a fuss and, who was easy to satisfy. Quisling seemed to like children, and more than once joined small Norwegian boys at their indoor games. To persons whose knowledge of Quisling dates from having seen him in Moscow in 1926 and 1927, the Quisling of 1940 is not the same person as the inoffensive and quiet Quisling of old – "the pawned peasant boy" (as

some Norwegians would call him after a personage in one of the comedies of Holberg, who is helpless in the sophisticated surroundings of a big town). Successively, however, trouble gathered in the relations of Quisling to the other Norwegians in Moscow. It started when, during the year of 1927, the so-called Prytz rouble exchange scandal was exposed and it turned out that Quisling had helped Prytz while being at the same time a temporary secretary to the Norwegian Legation in Moscow.

When in May 1927 the British Government broke off their diplomatic relations with Russia, they asked the Norwegian Government to represent their interests in Russia. In June 1927, Quisling was appointed a temporary secretary to the Norwegian Legation to handle British affairs. The British Government paid his salary. He now went to stay in the British Legation building. The Norwegian communists later on, in 1932, professed to believe that during the break in diplomatic relations between England and Russia, Quisling had helped the British pursue their imperialistic policy in Russia, and thus, under the veil of a diplomatic function, he had really been the secret agent of the British. Quisling's part however, was a very modest one, being in all his activities subordinated to the authority of the Minister or, in his absence, the Chargé d'affaires. Thus, the negotiations for the resumption of diplomatic relations in 1929 were, in the absence of the minister, carried out by the Chargé d'affaires and not by Quisling. Owing to the need felt, at the Norwegian Legation, for Quisling's assistance in other lines of work, from June 1927 to May 1928, one of the regular secretaries was more particularly in charge of British affairs. Whether it was so intended by Minister Urbye or not, this was at the same time a favour shown Quisling; for the British affairs were, most of them, rather dull business, concerning, passports or the fate of individuals and personal belongings.

In May 1928, a new secretary to the Norwegian Legation arrived in Moscow, and from then on, Quisling took over in earnest the handling of the British affairs. It is doubtful whether, at that time, Quisling considered this change as a favour. He rather came to consider the new secretary as being unduly favoured by the Minister for personal reasons. As a matter of fact the Minister's attitude to Quisling had changed quite naturally as a

result of the latter's involvement in the Prytz rouble exchange scandal.

The Onega Company had most of its expenses in Russia and in roubles and got most of its income in England in sterling, as payment for exported goods. When the company was set up in 1924, Prytz was undoubtedly aware that under the Government control of exchange rates established in Russia (a fact antedating the Bolshevik regime) the Company's financial existence depended upon an arrangement being arrived at which might or might not be in variance with the official exchange rates. Before the summer of 1927, arrangement made seems to have been rather cumbersome, involving the introduction of third parties in Persia or other foreign countries. With the break in the diplomatic relations between England and Russia, a new vista opened itself up to the resourceful Prytz. He arranged to have pounds sterling in small notes brought to Moscow in the diplomatic bag and exchanged there at a rate favourable to him. On the whole, from 1924 to 1927, by these exchange manipulations, Prytz managed to considerably reduce the expenses of his company and thus keep it financially afloat although, according to all reports, most of the profits went to Prytz and a certain Mr S in London. They transacted rouble exchange dealings on a joint account over a period of years. The total benefits to the two partners have been estimated at about 300000 pounds. In that part of the rouble exchange transactions carried out in Moscow since April 1926, Quisling was a key worker, although he probably never touched a commission or any other direct financial benefit.

The Onega Company, shipping from the White Sea, effected delivery of accumulated winter stocks in England in June and July, when cash was received, and part of it brought to Russia. In the summer of 1927 Prytz and Quisling got certain black bourse buyers of sterling notes to give roubles for sterling in a higher proportion than that fixed in the official Russian rate of exchange. These illegal exchange dealings were at least partly carried through in Quisling's lodgings at the British Legation. This, of course, was naïve and recklessness on the part of Quisling. The G.P.U. got wind of the deal through spies; but if that had not been the case, the Russian Government, who were stockholders in the company, would have noticed that Russnorvegoles were not asking for roubles through the Russian Exchange

Board in quantities sufficient to cover its very large payments. Prytz managed to get out of Russia just before the G.P.U. got on to the case in the Autumn of 1927.

Quisling was called in to give testimony to the Moscow police court. Before he left for the examination, he just grinned and did not attach great importance to the affair. He despised the Russians generally and thought their exchange control rules so unreasonable as not to call for observation on the part of anybody. He was considerably changed when he returned from the police court after inquiry lasting some four hours. However for reasons of their own, the G.P.U. did not come down upon Quisling on account of the contraventions of Russian law to which he had been a party. One reason, obviously, was that Quisling as secretary to the Norwegian Legation (although he did not act in that capacity when he participated in the illegal transactions) had diplomatic immunity. That immunity, if completely exercised, could have served to exempt Quisling from even being examined by the Russian police. Minister Urbye might not think it right to invoke the diplomatic privileges of Quisling in order to prevent the Russians from investigating illegalities, if any, to which Quisling had been a party as a functionary of *Russnorvegoles*, but Mr. Urbye might still invoke the diplomatic immunity of Quisling if the Russian authorities, judging him guilty, tried to prosecute him; and the Russian Government wanted to avoid incidents. In the connection a consideration of some importance was that the Chief Prytz had left and was out of reach. Another reason may have been that Quisling, up till barely two years earlier, had been the representative of Nansen, the "only person outside Russia whom the Russians trusted", and had himself enjoyed the confidence of the Bolshevik authorities in his endeavours to arrange for the repatriation of Russian and Armenian refugees.

Although the Prytz rouble exchange dealings were considered by many as nothing extraordinary, in view of the fact that the enforcement of the official rate of exchange would render the NEP largely nugatory, Quisling's participation in it was judged severely by some of his compatriots. It may not have been reported officially home, but when on a visit home in 1928, a member of the Legation told officials of the Norwegian Foreign Office that Quisling was now less popular with the Russians than he used to be. Minis-

ter Urbye could no longer be blind to that effect of the Prytz rouble exchange scandal. He later chose other young Norwegian diplomats instead of Quisling for the important work at the Legation. Altogether, a strain developed in the relations between Quisling and his chief. These relations became less and less cordial during the remainder of Quisling's stay in Moscow, although Minister Urbye persevered in acknowledging the talents and assiduity of his collaborator.

When the Prytz rouble exchange transactions were discovered the Russians in practice took over the Onega Company and dismissed the Norwegian employees; but some of them, and probably Quisling amongst others, were retained to assist in the winding up of its affairs. The Russians continued to carry on the Onega Company's business for a couple of years afterwards. They paid the Company's debts, which were quite considerable, some several hundred thousand pounds, and finally gave what might be termed an *ex gratia* payment of 20000 pounds to the old shareholders. The Company thus passed out of existence.

In 1929, Prytz's associate S. had dealings with the Russian Government on a props contract, and in reply to a wire sent by the firm of S. to an address where they expected to find Prytz, they received a reply signed "Quisling". As they were worried about this, they got the assurance from Prytz, now in Norway, that Quisling was his assistant and they could trust Quisling as they could trust Prytz himself.

As for the question of how Quisling could be in the pay of Russonorvegoles until the Russians took over the Company by the end of 1927, and later on assist the Russians in the liquidation, the answer probably is that this officially was in order in view of the fact that at the Norwegian Legation, Quisling was only a temporary secretary enlisted for a particular job; and it never was contemplated to apply to him the full strictures of the service regulation preventing diplomatic agents from engaging in business.

Although Quisling in Moscow enjoyed the justified reputation of having done excellent work during the Ukraine famine and had, by his silence of otherwise, encouraged the development and circulation of legends exaggerating the facts, he did not impress the foreign diplomats and other officials with whom he came in contact during his two years in Moscow as being in

any sense a capable negotiator. Quisling never acquired any of the diplomatic techniques, which Western Europe has evolved. He never really imbibed either French or English culture. By career diplomatists he was considered too bluff and stiff to be able to make things move smoothly.

Somehow or other, Quisling's passage from the essentially business and comradely milieu of 1926 and 1927 to the predominantly diplomatic milieu of 1928 and 1929 seems to have been marked by his manners becoming more boorish than ever. What usually happened when Quisling attended a social reception in Moscow was that he arrived well groomed, his hair brushed and in order, whereupon he settled down in a quiet corner either alone or with somebody else as silent as himself. He would later emerge, having unconsciously ruffled his hair, and promptly leave.

When it became known in diplomatic circles in Moscow in 1931 that he had become Cabinet Minister at home, those who had met him could not understand it. They could not make it tally with the fact that Quisling in Russia had seemed to be altogether disinterested in politics; and they perhaps without reason thought that in order to be a member of the Government in a parliamentary country, one must be able to participate in a conversation and even occasionally talk to other people on one's own initiative. Minister Urbye got the news of Quisling's appointment as he alighted from a train at a Moscow railway station, returning from a visit to Iran, where he was also accredited. Without saying a word, he deposited a bag he was carrying on the platform and – what seldom happened to him – looked worried. He was thinking of the effects such an appointment might have on the future relations of his country and Russia.

3. Preparing for politics

In the thirties, when accused of copying blindly Fascist models for his political tenets, Quisling declared that he had developed his ideas in an original way in Russia. Over-emphasising this point, Prytz, in 1941, insisted that he had had the good luck to cooperate with Quisling in evolving the basic ideas of their common creed when they both lived in Petrograd in 1918 and 1919, thus at a period when Hitler had not yet embarked upon his political career and Mussolini was just laying the foundations of Fascism. In this vindication by Prytz of Quisling's political originality, one troublesome point is of course that, before the ways of the two met again in 1926, the political ideas of Prytz and of Quisling had developed along radically different lines none of which pointed in the direction of present-day Nazism. Prytz, the company promoter and jobber in finance, when turning up in London in 1924 as the powerful head of Russnorvegoles, had formed certain political conclusions of his own which he delighted in expounding to Norwegian acquaintances in the British capital. One political theory of his was undoubtedly an original one but not exactly on Nazi lines, being a kind of biracial theory to the effect that the future world belongs to two races, the fair Nordic one and the dark Jewish one, which should work together. At the time, Prytz prided himself on the strain of Jewish blood in his veins and impressed a certain satisfaction at his personal embodiment of the desired conjunction. Diluting his own originality, Prytz on the other hand favoured financial and capitalist initiatives and fiercely anti-communist. Quisling, in 1921, startled people, who never knew he had a political opinion at all, by being somewhat communistic in his leanings and sympathies. He struck a Norwegian business man who saw him in Helsingfors as being fairly "red", and he gave his fellow officers in Norway a mild shock when, lecturing at the Officers' Club (Militaere Samfund) in Oslo in 1921, he carried his appreciation of the Bolshevik system to what they felt were dangerous lengths. He continued to give the impression of communist leanings at least up to the time when, in 1926, he again met Prytz. He combined this attitude with a display of anti-Semitism.

A second difficulty beset this attempt to prove the originality of Quisling's

political conceptions in the sense that it is incompatible with the legend of Quisling enjoying the confidence and sharing the general ideas of Nansen. Anyone who will take the trouble to read Nansen's book "Russia and Peace", published in 1923, will see for himself that Nansen had none of the ideas regarding the future relations of Russia and the Western World which Quisling has not ceased propounding since 1930. To Nansen, the great task was to restore forever between Russia and Western Europe, irrespective of any judgment passed on the Bolshevik system, the relations of good and friendly neighbours. He not only had great sympathy for the Russians in their sufferings – he admired their sterling qualities and treasured the idea of finding and creating openings for their vast possibilities in the interest of all mankind. As he says in the concluding words of the book, "Governments change, but the people, and the spirit of the people remain". If Quisling still had similar ideas in 1923, then his Nazi doctrines do not go back to 1918 – 1919, nor are they original. He drifted away from Nansen by adopting them. If, on the other hand, Quisling had evolved a doctrine mixing communism, militarism and the world hegemony of selected Nordic races already in 1923, then he never was in spiritual harmony with Nansen. Was he, it may be asked, original? No, for his political ideas never got out of the nebulous stage before they, in the contact with those of Fascism and Nazism, just remained traces of provincialism similar to those which in clothes are left by an inexperienced tailor working after an imported model.

In reviewing the case Quisling, we can hardly be surprised that he should have failed to turn into an original political thinker. He has none of the essentials which go to make such a person.

As a rule, Quisling, when he is on a particular job of some duration, does not put forth a great deal of energy in dealing with that job, for his attention soon becomes more and more attracted by something else. In Russia, he successively was military attaché, Nansen representative, business employee, special diplomatic secretary, but he was part of the time trying to be reinstated in the service of the Norwegian General Staff and all the time dreaming of playing the part of a national political leader in his homeland. It may well be that in Quisling's efforts to be readmitted a member of the General Staff, Nansen could not help him very much, even if he had

tried to do so; and probably, he was never asked. Too late, Quisling became aware that his chances had passed away. But why did he not try to have the support of Nansen when reaching out for that other goal, a successful political career?

To a man protected by Nansen, a natural line of approach would have been to rely upon that protection, and if Quisling did not do so, it was not because of false pride or excessive modesty. The reason simply was that at the time Quisling came to need such assistance the relations of Nansen and Quisling had ceased to be that of protector and the favoured young protégé and collaborator.

The end of the Pams Commission, in April 1926, marks also the end of the period during which Quisling was in close contact with Nansen. Nansen died in May 1930. Since that time, Quisling has more than once been at pains to persuade the Norwegian public that he enjoyed to the last the confidence of the great patriot. He harps on that string in the present tragic phase of his life. The Norwegian public has, however, instinctively never believed in the reality of this sympathy. At the outset, Nansen no doubt had great faith in his gifted and strong-willed assistant. In after dinner speeches, Nansen would give expression to the satisfaction he derived from the excellence of the work performed by Quisling. In his books "Russia and Peace" (1923) and "Armenia and the Middle East" (1928), Nansen occasionally mentions Quisling's merits. In his book about the voyage of 1925 from the Caucasus to the Volga (written and published in 1929), Nansen thanks Quisling for "his untiring kindness as travelling companion and for the valuable help he has given the author through his knowledge of Russian and his many-sided attainments." Nansen's English secretary, T.F. Johnson, reports that Nansen held Quisling in very high esteem, adding: "Quisling was always supposed to reciprocate Nansen's sentiments, I am unaware how that became known, as Quisling seldom spoke."

On the other hand, there is ample evidence that the opinion of Nansen about Quisling quickly cooled. From conversations with Nansen, whom I saw from time to time in the pursuit of common interests during the twenties, I gathered that in Nansen's view Quisling wandered into unproductive fields of abstruse political thought. When in 1929 a Norwegian University profes-

sor suggested to Nansen, on a visit to his house, that he propose Quisling for the Knight's Cross of the Order of St. Olav in recognition of his merits, Nansen showed no enthusiasm, and as the visitor, in an effort to explain his initiative, reported how in far away Moscow, lonely Quisling felt sore at remaining unappreciated at home, Nansen at last said in substance: "I do not trust Quisling; he is too mysterious for me; people do not understand what he is aiming at; I certainly do not." And the conversation dropped.

In fact, Nansen could not, as the years went by, fail to become estranged from Quisling, as Quisling from him, on the major issue of the outlook on Communist Russia. For, however much Nansen, an old-fashioned patriot on the international scene, he was an uncompromising believer in the fundamental equality of all races and the necessity for toleration of any political system in which another nation chooses to seek its salvation. In his later years, or, more precisely, from the middle of 1926 to his death in 1930, Nansen had no sustained personal contact with Quisling. Nansen did not propose Quisling for any one of the many international or national functions for which he had the right, or occasion, to propose a candidate.

What had created, in the mind of Nansen, the feeling that the ways of Quisling were becoming more and more mysterious? Apart from the accumulation of such minor mysteries as that surrounding Quisling's dual marriage, we may have the clue in some events which took place a few years before the conversation of 1929, alluded to above.

In 1924 and 1925, Quisling, who was then secretary to the Nansen Committee for Armenian refugees, made two or three visits to Norway, and in 1926, after he had finished his work on behalf of the Pams Commission, he also visited his homeland. In 1924, he took steps to contact the Norwegian Labour Party, and in 1925 and 1926, he was in parleys with the leaders of the Norwegian Communist Party. At this time, the Communist and even labour Party agitation was rather violent in Norway. The agitation remained verbal, but sometimes also took effect in deeds, and the more pugnacious Rightist elements, having for their chief spokesman the newspaper editor Mr. Aadahl (whose name we are going to meet again), were contemplating the formation of "white guards" to protect industries against excesses on the part of organized labour. Quisling was anxious to place his experience

at the disposal of the labour parties and help them in the forming of armed storm troops – “red guards” – and the setting up of a properly organized intelligence service and a more efficient propaganda machine. In 1925, he wrote in a Norwegian Communist paper a laudatory article on the policy pursued by the Moscow Government in the Ukraine and part of which consisted in safeguarding the use of the Ukrainian national language. But the Labour Party was not interested in organizing “red guards”, and the Communist Party distrusted Quisling, fearing to find in him a contra-revolutionary spy or an agent of some foreign power inimical to the Soviet Union. As the Communists explained in a pamphlet published in 1932, back in 1925 and 1926 they had felt that in Norway Quisling might become a useful instrument of France and England in a future war directed by these powers against the Soviet Union. Quisling thus achieved nothing by his repeated efforts to establish connections with the Laborites of Norway in 1924, 1925 and 1926. He had at the same time – and here we are back to Nansen – neglected to keep him, who in 1924 and 1925 was still his employer, informed of his incursions into the political field. Conscious or not that Nansen would disapprove of his politically, he was utterly unaware that loyalty to Nansen might command his disclosure to him of what he was doing.

Quisling, thus lacking in loyalty to Nansen, was only true to his nature. It is equally characteristic of him that he did not believe that he had been rebuffed by Norwegian Labour parties or at any rate, did not believe that this rebuff was a final one. At every turn of his career, Quisling has been utterly convinced that his superior gifts make him an invaluable collaborator to anybody to whom he cares to offer his services. On his return to Norway during the last days of 1929, he could not conceal from himself the fact that both Norwegian Laborite Parties rejected his collaboration and his reaction was that of stunned surprise. Even then, it did not enter his head that they rejected his basic idea. Perhaps he had for this attitude as only justification a shadowy idea in his own mind that somehow, an alliance between Fascist and Communist elements was a natural one in Norway.

Writing about “Quisling, the Fascist” in 1936, the Norwegian poet and dramatist Nordahl Grieg traces the conversion of Quisling to Fascism to

the Russian police investigation of the Prytz rouble exchange dealings. According to Nordahl Grieg, up to the time of the enquiry, Quisling had believed sincerely in the excellence of Communism. He had not been lying to the Norwegian Communists in 1925 and 1926. But Quisling felt greatly hurt in his personal pride, when, called in for examination by the G.P.U., he realized that suspicion was thrown upon him personally. Quisling, with no originality of mind and no firmness of character, and suddenly confronted with the flagrant incoherence of his acts, was under an unconscious urge to re-establish the unity of his personality. In a natural reaction of moral self-defence, Quisling took the offensive and passed on to express a very harsh condemnation of the whole Soviet system and of Bolshevik methods. Nordahl Grieg, in conclusion, stresses the great influence exercised by Prytz in shaping the career of Quisling from 1926 onwards. With the greater mass of information now at our disposal, we may be able to correct a few points in the penetrating analysis of Nordahl Grieg. But he is undoubtedly right in rating highly the influence of Prytz on Quisling. And, obviously, the disclosure of the illegal rouble dealings strengthened the ties between Prytz and Quisling, Prytz having been placed under a great moral obligation to his associate.

What did, in the innermost recesses of Quisling's mind, decide him to attempt working as a soldier of fortune with the laborites of Norway? Did he believe in Communism as a doctrine? He certainly did not. He just sought a breach in the lines through which to enter the place forte of Norwegian national politics. He had arrived at the firm conviction on an assessment of facts, that democracy in Europe was dead and buried. The political situation in Europe, distracted as it really was, presented itself as outright chaotic when looked at through the intervening lens of Russian conditions; and, in Quisling's mind, for the chaos, no other remedy was possible than some political action based on force and violence. As an agency for the rationalized application of violence, Communism was one possible solution. But it was not the only one. So at the close of 1927, when the discovery of the illegal rouble dealings had made him suspect to the Soviet authorities, Quisling had probably satisfied himself that the Fascist way was an equally acceptable cause for him to endorse.

Quisling naturally is an unrepenting opportunist and has remained so, although within an always narrower range of choices. Such being his type, in 1926, he would have liked to work in Norway with the Communists rather than with other parties because he, from his Russian experience, knew more about the methods of violence elaborated on the basis of the Marxist doctrine than he knew about the corresponding Fascist methods. But from 1926 onwards he was preparing for the day when he would have to choose between the two alternatives. Instead of being the army man of Norwegian organized labour, he might quite as well add his own name to the list of national leaders who, turning their country into a Fascist State, had won world fame as destroyers of Communism. The situation was no more difficult for him than it was difficult for the German General Staff to contemplate in the early thirties as equally acceptable alternatives the Russian and the Italian alliances. In the meantime, Quisling remained opportunistic in defining his attitude to the already existing political parties in Norway. In 1930, he at the same time wrote political articles in an independent liberal paper and contributed an electioneering pamphlet to the Conservative Party, only to become member of an Agrarian Ministry in 1931. His political allegiance was undefined even then, and he reserved his freedom of action, until the very moment he no longer had any choice, finding himself at the head of a party of his own.

Quisling's opportunism in politics was that of a very ambitious person, anxious not to miss any of the great chances in life. There is no contradiction in the fact that at the same time he tried to escape from reality through abstruse speculations and lost himself in mysticism. In 1929, when deeply engaged in preparing to realize political ambitions, he wrote in Russia and published in Norway a paper on "the importance to our philosophy of life of the certitude that other celestial bodies than our earth are inhabited by rational beings." Politics and astronomy have proved to be a lasting combination. It corresponds, in Quisling's mind, to the two irrepressible factors of ambition and inclination to move in the realms of the abstract.

In 1926, Quisling had accepted provisionally work in Russia for private business. But only provisionally. In 1927, his new diplomatic commission was also in its nature a provisional one. Quisling's main job now was to

visualize the possible roads along which to direct his struggle to create a political future for himself. He studied the political philosophies of fascism and national socialism. His reading must have included, directly or indirectly, the works of Stewart Houston Chamberlain, Arthur Moeller van der Bruck, and Alfred Rosenberg. These authors had stressed the importance of race in history and the superiority of the Nordic race and of Northern European civilization. Rosenberg, as early as 1922, set out to prove that Bolshevism, as a political creed, is indissolubly linked up with the racial characteristics of the Jews. In Quisling, contempt and hatred of the Jews had already taken root when he first met Rosenberg, the Jew-baiter. According to competent observers, Quisling's only personal friends – if he has the tie of friendship with anybody at all – are Prytz and Rosenberg.

In Russia Lenin died in 1924. Trotsky's school of world revolutionary Communism could not appeal to Quisling. Stalin's school of national Communism was too Russian to convey any meaning to a Norwegian regarding everything from his own, necessarily Norway-turned ambition. Quisling was thus necessarily in Russia as a political student an isolated foreigner. His contacts of political discussion, restricted, as they were anyhow, by virtue of his mental peculiarities, were largely confined to compatriots – young or old, men or women – who happened to take an interest in his theories. They all of them, as it happens, were rather uncritical. They easily admired him for his seemingly boundless wealth of knowledge.

When towards the end of 1929, Quisling was preparing to return to Norway, political conditions there seemed very similar to those in most European democracies at the time. In some particular aspects the Norwegian situation differed from that of other democratic European countries; but it certainly did not enter the mind of Quisling that, in order to acquire for himself a leading place in the politics of his country, he ought to study beforehand the situation in detail and map out a plan of campaign accordingly. Such a procedure would have been in the line of the democratic approach to political problems, but Quisling was no democrat. Such a procedure would have appealed to the scientifically minded politician; but, with all his platonic love of mathematics, Quisling never touched science. To Quisling, the only reasonable thesis to start from was that he himself had in him the

ideas, and the only ones, capable of inspiring the new political regime for which the Norwegians were craving. That the Norwegians might not be craving at all for a radically new regime did not occur. In any event, he did not care. He had had two great disillusioning comments already, the first and greatest with “the incompetent General Staff” and the second with the Labour Parties, not to mention such disillusion as he may have felt at not being recognized as a great diplomat in Moscow and having failed to retain the full favour of his Minister; and he was quite prepared to act on the conviction that you cannot talk people into reason. If the Norwegians should happen to spurn his new non-parliamentarian regime, why they would have to be forced.

Quisling in Russia developed certain ways of behaviour, which he has retained ever since and which, to some extent, makes him appear reliable to listeners. He never was arrogant when replying to questions and dispelling doubts, he never was afraid to falter when trying to explain something, he relied upon facts and details to prove his conclusions more than upon the logic of his reasoning. He always postulated as a political goal at least some of those vague political desires which haunted his listener. It was outside of his Russian experience to be contradicted.

In Russia, no one ever questioned his methods of drawing conclusions from facts. If scientific criticism of a statement is an examination of the method employed in arriving at the statement, Quisling in Russia never was submitted to scientific criticism. At the same time, the apparent naiveté and uncertainty of Quisling’s exposés, his absence of dogmatism and of personal attacks and somewhat wavering manner created the impression of a man less hard-boiled and ruthless than he really was – and is. Consciously or not, he was thus fortified in the conviction of having hit upon a method to persuade a whole nation or at least a decisive part of it.

At the next turning point of his career, Quisling emerges a fanatic anti-Communist, a protagonist of the superiority of the Nordic race, and the mystic believer in the God-sent mission of some nations, to govern the world. Provisionally, however, his anti-Semitism and reliance on the use of violence as a political method is relegated to the second place, when he is back in Norway.

4. Back in Norway and Political Messiah.

On his return to Norway towards the end of 1929, Quisling was taken in charge by Captain Prytz, who agreed with him in thinking that he, Quisling, was the coming political leader of Norway. Prytz was a reactionary by natural instinct and training, and anti-Communist both in the name of capitalist business and for personal reasons on his own. Having himself violated the laws of communistic Russia, he was the more anxious to maintain that Communism was the negation of all laws and that any law promulgated by a communistic country merited to be broken. Being both a wealthy man and a gastronomic expert, Prytz gave parties, the refinement of which greatly appealed to his guests, and at which Quisling was the guest of honour. At a convenient hour of the evening, Quisling would expound his ideas on the superior race, of which the Norwegians constituted the backbone, and on the best way to fight Communism.

Prytz, bent upon introducing Quisling as a political Messiah to Norway, acted with a characteristic mixture of obstinacy and astuteness. He organised a veritable campaign, the avowed object being to rally all anti-communist forces in Norway. He saw to it that Quisling now made contact with influential persons, the direct or indirect friends of Captain Prytz. J.B.Hjort, a young barrister and politician, whose mother was German born, helped Quisling to get a foothold in political organizations. Major Hvoslef, leader of an anti-subversive association, called the "Samfundsvernet" (Guardians of Society) was a useful intermediary for access to the politically minded upper-class people grouped in that association. The newspaper editor Aadahl was a considerable force both in the press and in the councils of the Agrarian party. The philosopher Herman Harris Aali, and the university professor Gjelsvik, both violently pro-German, and the arctic explorer Adolf Hoel, helped him, as experts, elaborating and formulating political programmes. The chemist, Gulbrand Lunde, and the journalist Mehle, were zealous political propagandists. The shipowner Thorvald Halvorsen, the cigarette manufacturer Conrad Langaard (Mrs. Langaard, née Quisling, is a cousin of Vidkun), the barrister Eckbo, were contributors, although not on a very

large scale, to anti-Communist organisations. The bank official Fritz Jenson, the architect Hustad, the Police Commissioner Jonas Lie, the Captain on the General Staff A.F. Munthe, were willing collaborators. No very great names were included in the group, which was always a small one.

Quisling and his Russian wife often met the most reactionary of the Russian refugees living in Oslo. After the German invasion of Norway, visitors have seen in the homes of these Russians, hung in between the icons of the saints, the portraits of Hitler and Quisling. Apart from Quisling's mother and brother and old acquaintances from Moscow who happened to pass through Oslo, and Prytz, the Quisling household received practically nobody. Mrs. Quisling was much occupied with keeping house; she was on good terms with her mother-in-law.

Back in Norway, Quisling first started to work with a non-partisan patriotic organization, founded a few years earlier, in 1925, by Christian Michelsen and Fridtjof Nansen, the "Fedrelandslaget" (League of Patriots). In the course of its existence, this League had come to be considered by many, a Fascist organization. Quisling did not invoke the name of Nansen in order to rise in the ranks of the "Fedrelandslaget". Mr. Hjort, the friend of Captain Prytz, had been president of the Oslo Section of the "Patriots' League". He proposed Quisling to succeed him, and Quisling, very little known then, was elected on the recommendation. He spoke on several occasions, and when pounding heavily at Bolshevism and exposing Communist methods of world propaganda, he could not fail disclosing extensive personal knowledge of the question he was treating. He impressed his listeners, especially the young ones.

The "Fedrelandslaget" was anti-Communist but, being a non-partisan organization created primarily in the interest of national defence, relied on support from many different sources. Quisling chafed under the shackles thus laid upon the freedom of his propaganda. He wanted the "Fedrelandslaget" turned into a political party. Not able to force his way with the Patriots' League, he set out in March 1931, to form a political organization of his own, called the "Nordisk Folkereising" ("Nordic Peoples Arise."). He formed the new party without informing the leaders of "Fedrelandslaget" under whom he had been serving until then, and this lack

of loyalty and frankness on his part brought about a lasting personal estrangement between Quisling and the “Fedrelandslaget” leaders. Quisling relinquished the leadership of the “Nordisk Folkereisning” on entering the Government of the country as Minister of Defence in May 1931.

When Quisling became a Cabinet Minister in 1931, he was chiefly known to the public for a few newspaper articles he had written. In a newspaper article published in May, 1930, on the occasion of Nansen’s death, Quisling recalled that Nansen had been the protagonist of a Norway liberated from class strife and party politics and achieving true national unity. Quisling lamented the alleged spread of Bolshevism and subversive tendencies all over the country. He proposed the organization of a Scandinavian Federal State, and of a Nordic Alliance. He wanted to see the formation in Norway of a new political party of National Unity, welded tightly together under determined leadership, and capable of snatching from the hands which now abandoned it, the standard of the nation, of mobilizing all the forces and unreservedly throwing itself into the fray.

During the autumn of 1930, Quisling developed similar ideas in a series of newspaper articles entitled “Russia and Ourselves”. In the middle ages, the Russian state created by Scandinavian Vikings received all its element of vigour from the Nordic ruling class and all its weakness from Byzantium and the Orient. The Norwegians and the other Scandinavian peoples constitute the nucleus of the Nordic master race, which is called upon to resist the Jewish-Oriental or Slav-Asiatic wave now represented by Russian Communism and to regenerate the world. For the Nordic peoples, this is to fulfil a God-ordained mission, for it is a divine law that the best racial strain shall dominate the evolution of mankind. One day, all the nations of the earth will be united in the common bond of the Nordic civilization. Bolshevism is a system based on the exploitation of the lowest instincts of man, which lead to murder and robbery. In practice, Bolshevism is a combination of preparations for a world revolution and the old imperialistic foreign policy of the Czars. Bolshevist Russia constitutes a very great danger to the rest of Europe, and has to be stopped. The duty of the Nordic States is to promote the collapse of the Bolshevik system by their intervention, and then to proceed to the recreation of Russia. The natural

alliance for that purpose is one between Scandinavia, England, Finland and Holland, supplemented later by Germany and, perhaps the British Dominions and the United States of America. In a just combination of individualism and collectivism lies the key to the progress of humanity. It is not to be thought that the Bolshevik system in Russia will disappear rapidly without intervention from outside but given such intervention, a vast majority of the Russian population will be in favour of returning to a freer and Nordic system.

In March, 1931, introducing his new political organization, the “Nordisk Folkereising”, he reiterated the same ideas. Norwegian politics ought to be, as Bolshevism is, a politico-religious movement. The Norwegians constitute, together with the other Scandinavian peoples, the nucleus of the great Nordic race, the most valuable racial element of humanity. The Nordic spirit should be revived. World civilization, being essentially the creation of the Nordic race, or the result of its action on other races, can be saved from ruin only if the Nordic and Nordic-minded nations unite for the organization and peaceful development of the world.

That the political ideas thus presented by Quisling bore a strange resemblance to certain tenets of the new Nazi philosophy was widely recognized at the time, although Quisling himself was profoundly convinced that he was presenting original and far-reaching truths. When bringing his articles on Russia to the newspaper, which published them, Quisling insisted upon reading them out to the chief editor word for word. He read them out in a loud and solemn voice, to the amusement of journalists crowding outside the door to listen, and to the great despair of the editor whose precious time was thus wasted and who did not dare to stop the performance.

What surprises the informed reader in Quisling’s articles on Russia is not so much the number of facts and details he marshals (anyone who had lived for some time in Russia would have been able to pick up such published data), nor his lines of political reasoning which are entirely borrowed from German and Western European reactionaries or Russian refugees or other opponents of the Soviet system, nor his strange reasoning making uncoordinated rows of odd – often false or incomplete – details lead up to

vast unwarranted conclusions, nor the politico-religious bias of his appeal, nor his mixed technique of General Staff report and soap-box oratory, all of which is typically Quisling. What surprised is above all that he who has spent so much time reading books and articles on Russia, and lived in the very centre of Russian national life, should be profoundly ignorant both of the greater implications of the facts of Russian history and of the proper interpretation of particular facts.

In fact, his historical exposé is in places ridiculous. That Quisling decidedly lacks the historian's sense for assessing the relative importance of factors and forces behind historical events is apparent also when he treads on more homely ground – as when he pictures the Norwegian influence on the history of the British Isles or pleads Norway's right to occupy Greenland and other outlying possessions once comprised under Greater Norway.

Whence came the followers of Quisling as the preacher of a political gospel? What appealed to the simple-minded was chiefly that he wanted to put an end to all political parties, and thus incidentally, but not solely, to the Communist Party. He was against parties, against parliament. Here he met with response from some people who, while not doubting that the Rightist Parties were anxious and able to defeat Communism, had come to loathe party politics as such.

The weaknesses of the parliamentary system as practiced in Norway were evident. They were the same as in most other democratic countries. The efficiency of national government was reduced by Parliamentary Committees, meddling in executive work. The unwillingness of Government and executive officers to face responsibility and take action was depressing to anybody familiar with modern methods or business or of collective science. And the more the world economic crisis, which started in 1929, made its effects felt in Norway, a country of cosmopolitan outlook in trade and finance, the more the discontent grew. 1931 was a year of grave economic crisis. After a 10 days spell of Government in 1928 the Official Labour Party, in 1930, revitalized their general election programme by stressing the revolutionary and proletarian character of the party. Thus, apparently, the democratic principle itself was in jeopardy. That would,

however, be to regard as convulsions what was in reality only surface movements. In local government and in the manifold branches of state activity, the democratic spirit worked successfully, and no forces really capable of overturning democracy were apparent anywhere. Even if a revision of the Norwegian democratic ways was widely demanded, no popular cry called for the abolition of democracy in Norway. And even if the number of those in the prime of life who felt frustrated in their political ambitions assumed disquieting proportions, the number and weight of compensating factors also grew as the life of the nation developed on more dignified lines than had been known before. Local government technology and science attracted a growing mass of energetic young people. But, such as it was, the current of antipathy to party politics had a not inconsiderable strength in the country.

In a democratic country, a certain number of citizens and youngsters will always be found willing to listen to an extravagant political creed, which happens to fit in with the apathy or the antipathies prevalent at the moment. The multiplication of political parties in times of political bewilderment can be compared to the pullulation of religious sects in times of religious bewilderment. A few years before the first public appearance of Quisling in Norway a Norwegian commodity broker, as speculative in business as he was in politics, had created a Fascist party with himself as personal leader, and surrounded himself with a body-guard led by a wrestler who had turned circus director. He had polled in Oslo some 5000 votes at the the general elections of 1927. In Norway, when Quisling stepped forth, Mr. Dywad-Brochmann was preaching another political gospel, the tenets of which were founded upon a combination of technocracy and the Bible. He created a party called "The Party of the Whole Society" (Samfundspartiet); and at the general elections of 1936 this party even succeeded in getting one of its candidates elected to Parliament, a feat never achieved by Quisling. In Denmark, and other countries, similar freak parties arose. And the common reason for their emergence is that in democracies, especially perhaps in the older ones, a small part of the population will always be ready to join a new political party sufficiently impressive and out of the ordinary in order to achieve the very human purpose of breaking life's

intellectual dreariness or venting a romantic impulse.

Besides, the economic crisis, which was weakening popular confidence in the established political system, increased the recruiting capacity of any new theory or recipe of government. Who then were the rank and file of the followers of Quisling? At the outset (in 1930 and 1931) the nucleus was composed of such persons of all ages as I have just alluded to – persons who are willing to flock to any startling new political programme. Barring a few who originally intended to make use of Quisling's wider appeal for the furtherance of their own political aims, such upper-class people as rallied to Quisling for their leader in 1930 or 1931, were politically inexperienced. Most of them were persons who had been frustrated in personal ambitions or had had some difficulty in placing their services anywhere. Some were simply idealists dreaming of a future in which the government of the nation should have been purified of the dross of party politics. A few were fanatics of the Nazi type.

Considering the upheavals of the time and the antagonism created by the violent attitude of the communists in the quinquennium 1925 – 1930, it may be put down as a testimony to the political maturity of the Norwegian nation that neither Quisling nor any other political Messiah ever had more than a very small following in the country, nor at any time exercised influence in Parliament or any other council of the nation.

During the year and a half which elapsed from the time Quisling arrived in Norway till he, rather unexpectedly, was made a member of the Government, he did not succeed in establishing himself as a politician of note. Nothing came of the "Nordisk Folkereising", and most critics looked upon it as one of these mushroom political creations which succeed, one the other in unsettled times. Other young men seemed more likely than Quisling to be destined for a political future as leaders of Fascist or fascistoid parties; thus J.B. Hjort was considered a coming political leader by many to whom Quisling was utterly unknown. Quisling attracted more particularly those who saw in paramount force the essence of the exercise of political power, who, in other terms, envisaged as a possible political solution the progressive militarization of modern societies. In such minds – as exemplified by Aadahl – Quisling's articles on "Russia and ourselves"

made an impression out of all proportion to the informative value of the work, which is practically nil. With them, Quisling's messianic message made an impression because it fell on responsive ears.

Like any one of us, Quisling tries to escape from a life of compromise and of occasional concessions. But while most of us retain a glimmer of the truth, if only in a vanishing display of the power of introspection, Quisling escapes completely idealizing himself to the full extent. In an autobiographical notice written in the summer of 1930 for the University Students' twenty-fifth anniversary book, he pictured himself as he would then like to appear in the opinion of others: "I have a strong, maybe universal, interest in politics and science. In politics, I have been mainly interested in Russia with which country my activities have been more or less closely connected for the last twelve years. In the fields of science I have, apart from military science, mainly studied history, languages and natural science, as well as mathematics, which at one time was my favourite study. In recent years these divided interests have concentrated around philosophy as their common multiple. The question of a universal explanation of Life, built on science and experience and which can reconcile religion, has in recent years been my ever more consuming interest apart from my daily duties. Disturbed conditions of life and other unfavourable circumstances have hitherto prevented me from displaying public activities of a literary and scientific nature." This varnish of self-complacency removed what is the truth?

During this period, from the beginning of 1930 to May 1931, Quisling tried his hand at a lot of different political ventures like a gambler who hopes to win a big prize. He worked for the "Fedrelandslaget" and set about forming a new party, wrote newspaper articles and an electioneering pamphlet for the Conservative Party. He incidentally turned his interest towards a literary production based on his past experiences. In this connection, he may have planned, as reported by some people to publish extracts from Nansen's correspondence.

In 1930 or 1931, he probably met Rosenberg for the first time. This event has proved important by virtue of the fact that a friendship – or, on Quisling's side, something like it sprang up between the two men. As may

be seen from his published works Rosenberg, like Quisling is also an idolater of myths. Rosenberg differs from Quisling in being to some extent also an inventor of myths or at least is an expert in spreading myths developed by more original thinkers. Quisling however never rises above the level of a compiler. Rosenberg also has the wider political vision and a least some considerable element of what goes to make a capable politician, whereas Quisling remains at the stage of a cunning political plotter who prefers to work in the dark, as a mystagogue. Under the circumstances it was inevitable that from the beginning Rosenberg had a psychic ascendancy over Quisling and, although Rosenberg certainly never fails to have, above all, the possible benefits of his actions to the Nazi cause he has on the other hand, always been an unswerving supporter of his friend. Rosenberg has himself known what it means to be rejected and to live under a cloud, and that may have drawn him closer to Quisling, who has always felt like that.

During the period under review, in 1930 and 1931, Quisling remained, as always, obsessed by fixed ideas even in petty details of behaviour. One day when he was working in the offices of “Fedrelanslaget” a secretary surprised him alone occupied in the difficult game of throwing a pen knife from some distance at a small square drawn on the wall, and he did not interrupt his efforts on being disturbed obsessed by some similar fixed idea he would take care to walk on a particular side of the street and to step each time in the middle of the pavement – squares. “It is of importance” he said to the astonished secretary who accompanied him, and who also had surprised him at his knife-throwing exercise.

In a democracy, the Party in power sometimes conceives quite clearly that the solution of a certain case may be incumbent upon the Government, but when it comes to the selection of the individual Minister, who is to be entrusted with that task, no sound method consciously laid down guarantees that the right individual may be chosen. The selection may come about through the intervention of some coincidence and independent of the principles of logic. Moreover persons whose intervention determines the choice may have in view a somewhat different task from that of the others who concur in the selection of the individual. In the case of Quisling, the laws of hazard working in his favour, a chance recommendation brought him to the

fore in spite of the lack of esteem, in which he was held by most persons who had met him personally at that time. By a coincidence, the like of which often occurs in a democracy, but seldom with such spectacular effects, Quisling was carried from the limbo of political cranks to the High Councils of the State.

5. Minister of the Crown

When the Agrarian leader P.L. Kolstad formed a new Government in May, 1931, it was on the advice of Mr. Aadahl, editor of the chief Agrarian newspaper, that he chose Quisling for his Minister of Defence. Mr Kolstad, who was a personal friend of mine, mentioned to me, before the final formation of the Ministry, that he was planning to include Quisling in the Ministry. To some observations on my part, Kolstad replied that he wanted to have as Minister of Defence a competent officer, who, at the same time, was versed in international politics (he had chosen as his Foreign Minister, a man lacking in diplomatic experience). Mr. Kolstad saw in the then popular international disarmament movement a very great danger for his country, which he wanted to combat. To tackle the defence problems now on hand, he wanted to have a Defence Minister as perspicacious and strong-willed as Georg Stang had been in preparing the country's defences before 1905 (at the time of the dissolution of the union between Norway and Sweden). He thought it wise to strengthen his Cabinet on this point by bringing in a fresh mind. He chose Quisling.

Quisling was Minister of Defence from May 12 1931 to March 3 1933. When appointed he was very little known to the public, but he was received with certain goodwill. The public generally liked to see a professional soldier at the head of the Ministry of Defense. Quisling's brilliant record at the Military Academy was recalled, and due credit was given to his work on behalf of Nansen in Russia. The public also realized the difficulties which confronted him when attempting to strengthen the defence preparedness of the country. Bourgeois politicians vied with each other in proposing reductions in the budget for the armed forces. The Government's own party commanded only a minority in parliament and had to rely upon the support of those very politicians who proposed a reduction in the national defence budget. What exactly was needed under the circumstances was a man of inventiveness, steadfastness of purpose, and of a broad national appeal, far-reaching enough to override the hesitations and petty calculations of politicians. In preparing his countrymen for taking a strong stand in the Dissolution struggle with Sweden, Georg Stang had had no easy task either.

But he had been of a different mettle. Quisling proved to be an efficient administrative chief of his Department. But otherwise it was difficult to form an opinion about him. It was indeed as hopeless to find out what he had in his mind as to make him look one straight in the eyes. He exuded the impression of a lonely man. He surely had no wide national appeal. Whatever he soon turned out to be in the field of demagoguery, he was in matters military no new Georg Stang. The Defence Organization Act of February 10, 1933, which slightly modified was in force at the time of the German invasion, certainly was a weak piece of work even from the purely technical point of view. It is a poor excuse for Quisling that in elaborating the provisions of the Act he based himself mostly upon the work of his predecessors. The basic reason for his failure to achieve anything more outstanding in the field of defence organisation, was that his mind was already working less on the specific problems of the country's defence than on far-reaching schemes of general politics.

Quisling, in the summer of 1931, used troops to quell strike-riots. In order to explain this step, which he probably might have justified by other arguments intended he maintained that the Menstad riots had been fomented by Communists and were to prepare the way for a general uprising of the proletariat. This was, to say the very least, altogether unlikely and the labouring classes, who knew little about Quisling beforehand, came to hate him for being in their eyes a liar, a provocateur and a brute.

In February 1932, he created a sensation by pretending that he had been attacked by two persons, presumably Communists, while working in the Ministry late one evening. He had been rendered unconscious and on recovering consciousness some hours later he went home in the night and called Captain Prytz and Captain Munthe. The doctors issued a bulletin testifying that he had received wounds. The explanation most favourable to Quisling, which could be reconciled with the known facts, would be that in a fit of hysteria, due to the consequences of malaria, he inflicted the wounds on himself with the idea of getting publicity as the martyr of Communist terrorism. Others believe that Quisling, alone or together with Prytz (the behaviour of Munthe after the event seems to have been one of sincere confusion), engineered the whole plot; and in confirmation it may be mentio-

ned that the Oslo Police warned some newspaper men privately engaged in an investigation of the affair that a continuation of their efforts could only be harmful to the Cabinet (whom their newspaper supported politically). Anyhow, Quisling's own version did not gain credence, and he could not follow up his original plan. He succeeded, however, in leaving the general public in a state of bewilderment. In the uproar of public discussion that followed, grave accusations were hurled against Quisling, but most of them were not supported by evidence. Many people – myself amongst them – thought that Quisling was being treated unfairly, and tried to show sympathy. He maintained silence or muttered condemnation of his enemies.

On April 7, 1932, unexpectedly and without having warned his colleagues in the Government, Quisling delivered in the Norwegian Parliament a set speech of a general political character. In this speech, he accused the Norwegian Labour Parties (not distinguishing very carefully between the Labour Party and the Communist Party) of receiving financial support from Moscow of being in general dependent upon instructions from the Communist Internationale, and of having engaged in the contraband arms traffic. The Labour Party leaders he said acted in such a way that in order properly to describe their actions, one might have to use “that terrible word” (treason). The Labour Parties were preparing for a general revolution by the proletariat. The speech created a sensation. A Parliamentary Committee was appointed to look into the question of how far Quisling had proved – or could prove – his allegations. Criminal Court proceedings were instituted. The bourgeois members of the Committee acquitted Quisling of gross slander, of which he was undoubtedly guilty, in regard to the Labour Party. Some bourgeois Parliamentarians thought, as one of them said, that Quisling was an idealist. All of them wanted to damage their great political rival, the Labour Party, and the Communists. As regards the very small Communist Party, Quisling had revealed nothing new. In the autumn of 1932, Quisling followed up his move by proposing that criminal proceedings for high treason be instituted against an army officer, who was also an active pacifist, and against certain prominent members of the Labour Party. Quisling got the publicity, at which he had been aiming, as the star anti-communist of the country. To some people, a member of the

Government who was willing to go to the length of dissolving the Labour Parties was, by that very token, a man of action and, as such, valuable to the country.

In the course of his efforts to collect proofs against the Labour Parties, Quisling sent Captain Munthe on a secret mission to Copenhagen and the only result was that he collected some information of a general political character irrelevant to the charges Quisling had made. He also sent Jonas Lie on a spying mission along the Norwegian coast where clandestine importation of arms was supposed to have taken place, instead of falling back on the ordinary procedure of police investigation. In Parliament, his earlier efforts to approach the Official Labour Party and Communists, were recalled. Amongst the documents produced by Quisling, was an opinion by an anonymous lawyer to the effect that under the Norwegian Constitution, the King possessed wide powers he should revive now that Communists traitors were allowed to vote at political elections, making these elections unlawful. Quisling decidedly was moving outside his province as a Minister of Defence. It was remarked that he frequented, rather assiduously, the German Legation. Quisling had accused Labour Leaders of high treason when speaking of their dealings with Moscow. But what was he himself doing? He had accused the Labour Parties of preparing revolution. What was he himself planning? On their side Quisling and his followers divided their efforts between legalistic argument and efforts to prove that the country was on the brink of revolution. The question naturally arises what was, under such conditions, the position of Quisling inside the Government of which he was a member.

Mr Kolstad, Quisling's first chief in the Government, although he had made a mistake in the choice of his Minister of Defence, was a upright and courageous man and would not in the long run have recoiled from a show-down with Quisling, whose habitual disloyalty he would not have been willing to tolerate. But Mr Kolstad had been ailing in health since the autumn of 1931 and had died at the beginning of March 1932. His successor, Mr. Hundseid, has lived to prove after the German invasion of Norway, that Quisling was right when, during the winter 1932-1933 he denounced, Mr. Hundseid to the King as a person of no character. The circumstances

leading into this episode are characteristic of Quisling.

Inside the Government, most members were indignant that Quisling should have started a general political debate in Parliament without consulting his colleagues or even warning his chief. But when the case came under discussion, a couple of Quisling's colleagues sided with him so strongly on the merits of the issue that they were willing to condone his lack of consideration for his colleagues. One of the Ministers supporting him was the then Minister in charge of the Ecclesiastical and Education Department. It will be remembered that Quisling professed to be a religious man and easily speaks with unction, exalting the values of religion, invoking the will of the Deity. Amongst his followers he had been able to count a few clergymen. He obtained from the Government permission to use several thousand Kroner to complete his investigations into the alleged subversive activities of the Labour Parties, and as he extended somewhat arbitrarily the scope of these investigations, making them bear on general political question, he eventually succeeded in alleging inside the Government, the indignation aroused by his breach of loyalty. The new head of the Government, Mr. Hundseid, although he had been a member of the Cabinet all along, took no strong action when made Premier on the death of Mr. Kolstad. Nevertheless Mr. Hundseid who had been one of those in the Cabinet who disapproved on Quisling's methods, continued to dislike the way Quisling persevered in these during his tenure of office.

Quisling soon dissented from Mr. Hundseid on questions of general policy and taxed his chief with laxness. Quisling was, like the Minister for Ecclesiastical affairs and Education, a fervent advocate of a strong Norwegian stand in the dispute with Denmark over Eastern Greenland, and when Mr. Hundseid allowed himself to be drawn personally into an effort of appeasement staged by persons outside the Government, Quisling attacked him violently.

In the winter 1932-1933 believing that the political grievances, he could now muck against Mr. Hundseid, would by their combined weight ruin his chief's position, Quisling took the extraordinary step of writing a letter to the King in which he set forth that Mr. Hundseid was altogether too weak-willed a person to be allowed to continue in office as Prime Minister. No

wonder that, when the Agrarian Ministry was overthrown in March 1933, rumours had for some time past predicted the separate resignation of Quisling.

The Agrarian party had never before in Norway been called upon to form a Government and that of Mr Hundseid proved such a failure that the fortunes of the party declined sharply. The Agrarians did not return to power or participate in any Government between March 1933 and the German invasion of Norway. After the invasion, Mr. Hundseid, anxious to avoid the revenge of his old enemy Quisling, fearing for his position as Sheriff of the county of Buskerud and possibly for his life, hastened to apply for membership in Quisling's party "Nasjonal Samling", a step which no other Norwegian of standing has taken.

As a member of the Government, Quisling displayed great interest in matters of interpretation of law and was a fervent advocate of criminal proceedings and the application of penal law in cases where most Ministers would favour a more humane course of a civil law action. In regard to the interpretation and application of law, Quisling's attitude is the one well known to lawyers, of a person who, although really inept to think along the lines of the living law, believes in law as a purveyor of results on which he has set his heart, and therefore misinterprets the text and wrestles with forms and procedures; the classic examples being, of course, the small freeholder who quarrels with his neighbour over boundary rectifications not worth either the time or the expense involved and the village cobbler who produces and defends new interpretations of old laws. Quisling is of a litigious type as evidenced by his lawsuits in Norway and in America.

In the Councils of the Government, Quisling would combine in his person the behaviour of a man of action and that of a believer in the magic of the law. Once on a complicated problem of legislation, his opinion was summarily impressed in the two words: "Punishment, prison". In subsequent years, as leader of a political party, he excelled in sending proposals of constitutional or other legal reforms to the King (he always had a predilection for addressing the Head of the State directly); and after the German invasion of Norway, Quisling's harangues to the people have invariably foreshadowed: "punishment, prison".

In the seven years which elapsed between his resignation as Minister of Defence in March, 1933, and the German invasion of Norway in April, 1940, Quisling held no official position; but he was active as the leader – “foerer” – of a new political party called the Party of National Unity (Nasjonal Samling). This party tried to have representatives elected to the Storting at the General Election of 1933, but failed to obtain a single seat. They tried again in 1936 but with the same negative result. The party has never been represented in the Storting. At the general political election of 1936, and the municipal elections of 1937, the party secured some 20000 votes out of a million or more. It has had a few representatives in municipal courts. In the eyes of Quisling, the Nasjonal Samling had to sustain the combined fury of the Communists, the Labour Party, and the bourgeois parties, whereas in reality it constituted just a mere ripple on the ocean of Norwegian party politics and most of the time was hardly noticed by the general public. But, as leader of that party, he acted when the Germans invaded Norway. As leader of that party he performed the work which made him known the world over as the arch-traitor of our times.

6. Quislingism

There was nothing in Vidkun Quisling's career to attract general interest or to fascinate the lover of romance when he suddenly leapt into world disrepute. He had not become known for the effectiveness or scale of any action of his. Why, then was his name so soon on everybody's lips? Humanity had become aware of the existence of a new kind of treachery and wanted a name for it. Quisling's personality and achievement were at hand as a typical example. His name, with its uncanny whistling sound effect, seemed to fit into the frame. Such typical name – Herostratus, Judas, etc are chosen for historical and not for logical reasons.

The type of treachery, which is personified in Quisling does not demand for its conception a highly organized brain or for its perpetration, a commanding personality. It is a subservient form of treachery. Quislingism will, perhaps, never form a specific category of punishable crimes, as do high treason, murder etc. Even so, from a psychological point of view, Quislingism may constitute something specific in the sense of denoting a peculiar type of behaviour or activity.

In the every day usage of the word, Quislingism has come to be applied to any black and abject way of betraying the interests of one's country. Mussolini is being called the Quisling of Italy, Laval that of France, etc. It may perhaps be worthwhile to define the word more clearly as an expression of psychological phenomenon.

Keeping close to the essential facts of the case one may say Quislingism is the betrayal of one's country to a foreign and aggressive militarized Power by abetting that power's efforts to create a new political order according to which one's own country will be subordinated to the menacing power and chief beneficiary will be not the leader of the Quisling movement but that foreign power.

In terms of psychology, one may say the leader of the Quisling movement is a man who wants to impose his own views on his countrymen, and who in order to do so is prepared to use violence and, if necessary, consents to violence being employed by a foreign group in the interest, primarily, of

that group. It should be added, that in proceeding to put his plans into effect the master Quisling will be prompted by the certainty in which he feels of being able to draw followers from that not inconsiderable part of the community who feel frustrated because they have not succeeded in achieving the position in society for which they consider themselves qualified. They can only succeed in a new kind of society where brutal force is employed to break down former barriers to their career. My definition, on the other hand, excludes those political leaders of a nation who, like Laval, collaborate with a military out of shrewd and calculating willingness to confine the issue to one of political arithmetic only. Their ignoring, is briefly, that of an excessive “collaborationism”.

So defined, a master Quisling obviously must belong to a peculiar psychological type, whether one uses the psycho-analytical method approach or another more classical one. In a paper on “The Psychology of Quislingism” Ernest Jones, the English psycho-analyst has defined the Quisling type according to psycho-analytical methods. As defined by me above the Quisling’s mental structure must be an unbalanced one for reasons similar to those that lead one to say that any person guilty of premeditated parricide must be of unbalanced mind.

That statement, however, does not imply that a Quisling’s past actions can always be safely reconstructed in cases where only part of the facts are known, or that his future behaviour can always be surely foreseen, for in many cases, the Quisling will be found to be acting not only in the interest of a foreign Power, but also in conjunction with a person of a stronger will or a more coherent personality. Look, for instance, at the combination Prytz-Quisling, or perhaps even Rosenberg-Quisling. The other party in the constellation does not need to be a Quisling in the psychological sense, or in any sense, of the word. Further, it may turn out that the Quislingist group exists before the Quisling leader appears, each member of the group having all or some of the elements, which go to make a Quisling. In both cases, the behaviour of the Quisling is influenced by his personality being merged with another and stronger one.

In history, high treason appears in different settings and is perpetrated in different ways.

High treason in its classical form is what you find in persons like the 17th century characters Coriolanus (Shakespeare) and Corfitz Ulfeldt (Danish history). Both of them turn against their own country, Coriolanus at the head of enemy troops and Ulfeldt in secret negotiation with the enemy. In the case of each, the ambitions of a would-be ruler overpowers the pre-existing ties of loyalty. Another type makes its appearance in the 18th century with traitors like Benedict Arnold: a revolutionary party having been formed, its government is betrayed to the legitimate government by one of its adherents.

Quislingism is again something new. Quislingism, according to our definition, is the betrayal of ones' country to a foreign and aggressive militarised Power abetting this power's efforts to create a new political order. Thus, Quislingism is a subservient form of treachery, the chief beneficiary being not the traitor himself or a collectivity to which he dedicates himself, but the foreign master. The Quisling movement in a country is a movement subservient to the interests of a foreign and aggressive militarised Power. The triumph of Quislingism is when the new political order is established without any violence being employed against one's own country, as in the case of Rumania (Antonescu). But the hard core of the Quisling mentality, and thus the extent to which the Quislingists are separated from the rest of the nation, appears when the foreign power employs violence and the Quislingists are obliged to come forth and side with the enemy.

According to the level of abstraction on which the disquisition is carried out, we may assert, or deny, that Quislingsm has had its parallels in former times. If we limit our attention to the attitude taken up by leaders in a menaced nation against a militarily overwhelming foreign power, we may well say that such historical parallels exist. Students of the history of Europe during the Viking era will know that in France under the successors of Charlemagne, a certain number of nobles and officials of the crown, although not directly under attack by the Vikings, were subservient to them for years running. These Quislings were able to serve their own ends and ambitions by becoming integrated in a vast political system; they regained a supremacy they were on the point of losing to new forces in society, or they obtained a release from the observation of allegiance to their Emperor. The Mongols

in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries had their Quisling collaborators in countries and town which, although not occupied by their forces, were visited only by their emissaries and tax collectors. If we, on the other hand, introduce into our disquisition also an analysis of the disintegrating forces at work inside the menaced nation, then, of course, modern Quislingism is something new and distinctive. The social and economic conflicts of our epoch of history as compared to those of earlier epochs are sufficiently peculiar to produce new and specific phenomena in the general field of Quislingism. The weaknesses of the centripetal forces of modern societies being what they are, Quislingism both exploits them and is formed in their image.

In the modern world, in the nineteen thirties, the reappearance of the German military machine of the Hohenzollern type, created a situation in the menaced nations rich in promise for those who, until then, had seen their own aims of political achievement frustrated. As long as Italy from 1925 to 1933 was the only militarised Great Power in Europe none of them developed into the fully-fledged type of Quislingism as known today, although political movements of the fascist brand did appear. Obviously no country as yet felt sufficiently menaced. But no sooner had the Nazis in 1933 established themselves firmly, than a Quislingism of some sort rapidly appeared in all the menaced European countries, great and small. In the Soviet Union the Quislingism was recognized as such long before a similar perception dawned upon democratic Western Europe. The Russian Quislingists were principally represented in the Army, which was accordingly purged. In Spain, the Quislingists subservient to that new order which was to be created in Europe by Germany, were also to be found in the army; only the magnitude of the ruins created by the Civil War 1936-1939 has so far prevented them from acting according to their faith.

In Western Europe, from 1935 onwards, the political parties calling themselves Fascists or National Socialists were in reality subservient to one foreign and aggressive militarised Great Power – Germany. Between the Italian “Fascismo” and the German “National-Sozialismus”, a certain difference of doctrines may be detected, For instance, whereas the Italians stress the authority of the State, the Germans concentrate on the indisputable

right to domination which a superior race possesses. In Western Europe, of the two, The German thesis lent itself more readily than the Italian to popular propagandising, but the issue was decided by the very factor which gave impetus to the Quisling movement in these countries, namely the reappearance of German military might bent on conquest.

In 1933, year of the advent of Nazi rule in Germany, a number of new Fascist organisations were created in other countries, and the activities of the old ones invigorated.

In 1935, or more precisely, after the conclusion of the Anglo-German Naval Pact in that year, the scope of the published German programme of conquest was enlarged. Up to that time, the Nazi programme had been a division of Europe into four spheres of power – the British, French, Italian and German, the last one to expand in the Eastern direction (speeches by Rosenberg in 1932 and 1934). From 1935 to 1936, the Nazis openly professed their aim to dominate the bulk of continental Europe, preferring, to that end, an alliance with England which would give a conquering Germany a free hand, but accepting, as the second best alternative, an alliance with Italy (article in *Die Wehr* 1937-1938).

In 1938 and 1939, the Nazis taxed their diplomatic ingenuity in an effort simultaneously to draw profits from the alliance with Italy, and to parry English resentment. In 1939, a war in the West was forced upon a Germany trying to confine its war to the East, and world domination became necessary to the Nazis if they were to guard what they had won.

Simultaneously with the progressive expansion of the publicised German programme of conquest, a parallel evolution took place on the Quislingist fronts of the different countries. In 1933 and 1934, Fascist and home Nazi organisations in Western Europe started expressing their decision to resort, if necessary, to violence on the national plan in order to enforce upon a recalcitrant population an anti-Communist political order. At that time, Quislingist movements did not yet connect this statement of policy – this “*théorie de la violence*” – with any programme of a Nazi new order in Europe. The facts of the German military might had not revealed themselves and, to some extent, were no yet there. So far, the home Nazis of Austria, Holland, Norway only repeated what the Fascists of Italy and the National

Socialists of Germany had said before them. As the German military might steadily rose in Europe, some of the Fascist or home Nazi parties took fright and receded into the limbo of ordinary patriotic leagues. Others remained in the Nazi Internationale and became subservient for the rest of their existence to the politics of aggression of militarised Germany. The sifting out process was completed about 1935. From 1935 onwards, the home Nazi organisations in Europe were to all intents and purposes Quislingist organisations, because by the publicised ambition had world-wide ramifications and they were no longer content with placing Die Reich alongside other spheres of power in Europe (the British, French, etc.). The home Nazi organisations in Europe became fully-fledged Quisling movements accepting, as a matter of programme, the inclusion of their own country and nation in the future German-dominated political order in Europe. The individual members of these organisations acted as Quislingites by preparing themselves for executing, in collaboration the Germans, the German programme of a new order for Europe.

One of the freedoms inherent in democracy is the freedom of the citizen to conceive new forms of Government and that of groups of citizens to advocate the introduction of such a new form of government. This freedom holds good even if the form aimed at obviously cannot be reconciled with the continuance of the democratic system. Successive waves of propagandists have availed themselves of this freedom in democratic Western Europe. The Communists were only the penultimate ones in the series. In all the democracies, any threat of violence expressed by a political party was resented as incompatible with a "Government of the people by the people for the people". But, on the other hand, if the authorities of the nation repressed any political party using threats of violence in its propaganda their action only resulted in increasing the importance and recruiting capacity of that propaganda. Consequently, in most democratic Western countries, such repression had stopped before the Nazi era.

Even after 1933, in Western Europe, threats of violence by political parties still provoked public resentment. Now, however, such threats were chiefly resented not as threats directed against democracy, but as threats levelled against defined interests. In their turn, the threats of the home Nazi

parties provoked resentment in large circles. The scope of the resentment was wide insofar as the threat was directed both against the material interests of the labouring classes and against anybody's interest in upholding the free institutions and the political independence of the nation. But the means of reaction at the disposal of those who felt resentment were not particularly powerful. In most democracies, the labouring classes were represented by parties that, as a result of long drawn-out political fights, were temperamentally isolated from the rest of the nation. When the home Nazi parties entered the field of international politics, the only possible reply for the Governments of most of these countries was reiterated insistence upon neutrality, which was to be the country's attitude in any conflict between the great powers. For if the Government had replied to the home Nazi threats by advocating an outright alliance with the enemies of Germany, it would, in its turn, have been isolated and forced to retreat. Under these circumstances, they were forced with two alternatives: either the Quislingist organisations would have to be declared illegal, or they would have to be treated as unimportant to the nation, ignored as a symptom and neglected as a disease. The democracies chose the latter alternative. Not only Norway, but all the European democracies.

In the Nazi nineteen thirties, the weakness of the European democracies, as far as fight for survival goes, was their inherent incapacity to measure the strength of the anti-democratic forces at work in the world, and to visualise the peculiar nature of that strength and those forces. Seeing in the economic processes the model of political procedures and in the economic crisis cycle the prototype of political crises, the leaders of European democracies had no sure understanding of any other method of political fight than an appeal to reason, nor for any other kind of crisis than such as would ultimately be resolved by the entry into play of compensating forces and the restoration of an equilibrium. To the leaders of European democracies, it was incredible that in a civilised society, a group of trained experts should deliberately choose to rule by violence, nor did it seem possible that in the heart of Europe, one nation would choose to impose by violence its domination on recalcitrant populations. Perhaps even today the leaders of democracies have not fully learnt to measure the extent to which

moral restraints are absent from the minds of the leaders of modern totalitarian States as soon as their power is at stake.

Quislingism enters when, in the convulsions of a bloodstained age, subserviency, or, as the psychologists of birds call it, B-tendencies combined with terrorism. Subservient individuals and groups feel called upon to force their nation into a greater political order dominated by a foreign power. The quality of a Quisling is derived partly from the subserviency of the individual, partly from the terrorists in him. On the other hand, meanness, or self-seeking and self-indulgence, is not an obvious characteristic of a Quisling. If meanness occurs, it is just an incidence of the general depravity of the personality.

In a dictatorship, your attention is focused on the personality of the dictator. In Quislingism, the leader or the master Quisling, has the importance of an actor who plays his part or of a producer who stages the effects rather than that of the author who wrote the script. The Quislings are, moreover, destined to be very few in the history of mankind. Dictators may succeed one another in a country, but he who succeeds the initial Quisling in any country is just another official henchman of the leaders of the master Power. The Quisling is the man who happens to lead the home Nazi group in the decisive moments when their subserviency becomes effective; and after the institution of the new political order, no new Quisling is needed. In no country was the master Quisling himself an originating and inspiring centre of large-scale political action. There is in the very nature of Quislingism something imitative; and mimicry is as incompatible with political as with any other leadership. Moreover, in the final stages of the tragedy, whatever originality the home Nazi movement might have possessed at the outset, will disappear under the pressure of events.

7. The Party of National Unity

Considering the aggressive attitude he had taken inside the Agrarian Cabinet, Quisling, on the resignation of that Cabinet, had no reason to associate himself any longer with the Agrarian Party to which he had never belonged. There was, on the other hand, some reason to believe that the time was ripe for him to form a political party of his own on anti-parliamentary lines. While in office he had retained most of his original followers and even obtained some new ones. He had made himself hated in many quarters, but he had advanced, he thought, from a point of isolation to a position in the centre of political forces in the country. All the same, when Quisling left his post as a Cabinet Minister in March 1933, he, with customary passivity and lack of vitality despite his deep-burning ambition, did not himself launch a new political move. He was pushed on by persons who now flocked to him. Quisling was surrounded at this time partly by the same persons who had listened to him in 1930 and 1931, and partly by new-comers. Those new-comers were persons of a considerably less responsible type than were the members of the earlier group, and included persons like the director Harry Høst, the lawyer Fuglesang, the business manager Ragnar Möllhausen, the teacher Orvar Saether, the forest owner Oliver Möstad, etc. They had for chief political luggage an intense personal admiration for Quisling. They joined with some of the older groups in urging Quisling to preside over the organisation of a new political party, as soon as a last effort to convert the Fedrelandslaget into a Fascist party had failed.

And did not conditions in the country call for a courageous lead towards new political horizons?

The two years 1931 and 1932 had been years of deep economic depression and of banking and other financial calamities. In October 1931, an association called The Farmer's Crisis League (Bygdefolkets Krisehjelp) had been formed with a programme which called for a reversal of the monetary policy followed up till then and a determined devaluation of the krone, the abolition of farm foreclosures; in general, an economic policy

adapted to the needs of the primary industries. This association had been able to draw adherents from the Agrarians, The Communists and the Labour Party. There were other phenomena of a similar kind.

When nevertheless, Quisling's new party foundered miserably after a few initial successes it was not only because Quisling, as soon became manifest, lacked some essential qualities necessary in any leader of a movement exceeding the limits of a conspiracy, it was also because after all the new party arrived too late. In 1933, sobered by international events and amongst other things by Hitler's advent to power in Germany, the Labour Party revised their election programme on moderate lines, dropping the 1930 provocative call to revolution. As a consequence, the scare subsided, and at the same time the Communist Party, which had been wiped out in the elections of 1930, did not recover. In 1933, prosperity coming back to the country, both in consequence of the calmer political atmosphere at home and because of better conditions in the world's markets. When, in 1935 a Government of members of the Labour Party took office, the business world was entirely unaffected. The new Government refrained from political and fiscal innovations, acted like a moderately advance bourgeois party, and was considered a guarantee of peace and tranquillity in the field of labour. The wind was thus taken out of the sails of the agitators, including Quisling. But back in 1933 he had already mapped out his course.

In May, 1933, in the invitation to join the party of National Unity (Nasjonal Samling) Quisling and his group defined the object of the new political organisation as that of superseding the old parties which were all of them, more or less, class parties. Thus placing himself in a sense above the parties. Nasjonal Samling purported to dedicate itself to a policy of national conciliation and unity and, in short, to be the common party of the whole nation. The new party was in favour of social and economic reconstruction. Its aim was to create a new society, a new State.

In the consultations of the Rightist Parties prior to the General Election of the autumn of 1933, Quisling's new political party was represented by himself. Pressed in a discussion, he admitted that his party did not believe in democracy. Showing total disregard for his pledged word, he published news confidentially imparted to him presented candidates of his own when

he had agreed not to do so etc. After a while, his co-confererees (amongst them were some of his old associates of the Patriots' League) left him out of their consultations. In the county of Telemark, the Nasjonal Samling concluded an election agreement with the semi-revolutionary "Farmer's Crisis League". The Nasjonal Samling obtained no seat in Parliament.

Being in a hurry to run for election, Quisling and his followers did not elaborate very carefully the programme of the party before the general elections of 1933. Quisling, in his capacity as the Party's "Foerer", published a more detailed programme in February 1934. In this programme, except for a few drafting modifications, and the subsequent elaboration of two or three specific projects, no change has since been made.

According to the programme of Nasjonal Samling, The Norwegian nation shall have a Government by the people, but on the basis of competence. In other words, the programme redrafted the formula of Lincoln: "Government of the people, for the people, by the people" to read: "Government of the people, for the people, by competent people." The Government shall be independent of party politics. Guilds federated in national congresses shall take care of the industries and the cultural life of the nation under Government control. The national economy shall be a planned economy. Lockouts and strikes shall be prohibited. The monetary unit shall have a fixed value, independent of gold. The Norwegian race shall be protected against physical decay. The basic values of Christianity shall be safeguarded. The Norwegian foreign policy shall have for its main objective to cooperate with other nations of similar race, culture and interests towards the final goal of a union of all peoples of the world. The interests of the individual shall be subordinated to those of the nation and be furthered by the progress of the nation. At this point, the programme resolutely translates the twenty-fourth slogan of the German National Socialist programme: "Gemeinnutz bevor Eigennutz".

It brooks no discussion that this programme was in the main a compilation of elements borrowed from Fascist and Nazi doctrines, the chief difference being that the major dogmas had been toned down to fit in with home conditions in Norway, much as the German National Socialists had to move cautiously in their programme of 1920, never changed in the

letter. What especially strikes one in the programme of the Nasjonal Samling is that religion, even defined as Christian religion, had a place similar to that which it occupied in the programme of the Norwegian bourgeois parties, for instance that of the Agrarians and that anti-semitism was no part of the racial principle so vaguely expressed in the document., What about the application of force to bring about the creation of the new State?

Not very long after the constitution of the new Party, this issue, which had been avoided in the programme, had to be faced along with the possibility that these ideas of Quisling's none of them very new, could fall once more on the deaf ears in Norway. At a public meeting in Bergen in November 1934, Quisling, goaded by interruptions, and several times overpowered by emotion, declared that if necessary, Nasjonal Samling would use armed force in order to carry through its programme.

This admission was not easily elicited and, once made, was not sufficiently heeded. For in its propaganda, the new party paraded as a national party both in the sense of being a patriotic movement and in the sense of being a original effort adapted to the needs of Norway. In 1936, Quisling insisted that his political creed was not an imitation of Fascism or Nazism, nor imported from abroad in any sense of the word, suggesting that it had been evolved by himself in the long years of his Russian wanderings. In the period from 1933 to 1936 the Party took care to underline where it differed from Fascism and Nazism, made no display of anti-semitism, was ruggedly patriotic. To the rank and file of its members, the Party was simply the patriotic Party. At the same time, the Party leadership conscientiously copied Nazi public meeting tactics and political methods and slowly but surely involved themselves in such dealings with the official German Nazi Party as to preclude, in the end, any serious attempt on the part of Quisling to disengage himself from his entanglement.

From its very beginning in 1933, Nasjonal Samling copied such paraphernalia of the Nazi machine as uniforms, processions, storm troops, strange emblems, not to speak of the cult of the person Quisling inherent in his elevation to the dignity of "Führer".

It was perhaps quite natural that the leaders of the Nasjonal Samling should wish to have the success of their enterprise assured by the employment

of means similar to those so successfully used by the Nazis in Germany. Very soon after May 1933, they sent representatives of the Party to Germany to study Nazi technique and not least the introduction of violence or the menace of violence in the Party's public manifestations – street fighting, breaking up of meetings of opponents, etc. One of the early results of these German studies was the creation of the Specialavdelningen (Special Troops, designated by the ominous initials S.A), later on re-baptized the Hird (old Norse word for the Chieftain's body-guard). In the autumn of 1933, a group of Norwegian S.A. boys were sent to a S.S. training camp in Germany to get final instructions.

To the passive and pondering, introverted Quisling, it no doubt appealed most strongly that the Party appeal according to the interpretation of mass psychology, was the stronger the more the life and existence of the "Führer", was studiously set apart from the other offices, the only access to it being from a separate staircase. Quisling's voyages abroad were kept very secret. He was to be the only one having connections of behalf of the Party with the powerful leaders of Nazism and Fascism in other countries.

In the first year or so of its existence, Nasjonal Samling retained, theoretically at least, the possibility of becoming in fact what its leaders pretended it to be in propaganda, a strongly patriotic party of true Norwegian origin, its members being particularly moved by the danger of a Bolshevisation of their country. The expenses, incurred by the Party through its participation in the general elections of 1933, were covered by Norwegian adherents of Quisling. At that time the foreign policy of the Nazi Government of the Reich did not imply a German domination of Europe, but at the most a possible expansion towards the East. In the hands of a more capable leader than Quisling, the Nasjonal Samling might have maintained considerably longer independence of a sort towards their German model and instructor. Quisling, moreover, had no rival in his own party at the time, for the only possible one, Hjort, preferred to remain in the background. But Quisling lacked to a lamentable degree the qualities of a leader of a group engaged in difficult and, indeed, very much up-hill political work. As he was by nature passive anybody who pushed him hard and persevered, might make Quisling act the way he wished. Quisling, having no psychological

acumen, very often, once he took action, employed the wrong person in the wrong place. The finances and administration of the Party got into a muddle. During this period the inner councils of junior party leaders often ventilated the question whether it would not sooner or later prove necessary to find another Führer for the Party. Taxed with multiple and mounting difficulties, Quisling reacted as one could have expected. He emphasized the necessity of even closer relations between Nasjonal Samling and the other Nazi and Fascist parties in Europe, and especially the parent one in Germany, as a pattern for the future political relations between the respective countries. Being himself the chief personal instrument of relations with the other Nazi and Fascist parties, his own importance in Nasjonal Samling would thus not only increase but it would grow, one might say, in proportion to the difficulties in which the Party became involved. In the autumn of 1934, when the Party had run into a deficit of 50000 kroner, and Norwegian contributors were not available, Quisling acting through Walter Fürst, then head of his propaganda service, agreed to accept his sum from the German Nazi party. Günther Kern, a German domiciled in Norway and Hitler's Gauleiter for the country, paid out the money and formulated the conditions. Quisling kept proclaiming that Nasjonal Samling was a strictly patriotic party. In his strange mentality the conviction of being the standard-bearer of a lofty ideal seems always to be able to obliterate any qualms as regards the means by which the ideal is carried out. But speaking objectively, it may be said that from the Autumn of 1934, Quisling was definitely engaged in the course that would lead him on to ruin.

Quisling's method as a public speaker was that employed by all politicians of the Messianic type, in so far as he kept on repeating a few profound political truths, and repeated them often in exactly the same words.

As far as rhetorical technique is concerned, realizing his natural shortcomings, Quisling now took lessons in declamation from a woman teacher. The result, probably satisfactory to some extent in terms of improved fluency, certainly won him no extra followers. For one of the secrets of Quisling's success as a speaker, such as it was, lay in his very helplessness, which, to an anti-rhetorical nation such as the Norwegians are, may enhance persuasiveness.

When speaking in public, Quisling is slow and often falters and stops, and he sometimes even breaks up a single word, pausing between the two fractions of it. But in the presence of an unsophisticated public, he may carry the day because he goes on delivering truisms to which the listeners heartily agree; that we ought to love our country, that we have to stand guard over our heritage, etc. And in giving vent to such feelings, his very faltering helps to call forth the impression of a strong personality and deep conviction., exudes intensity, wraps up and hides from direct inspection the logical extravagance of his conclusions. A stream of unctuous phrases leads up to the invocation of the will of the Deity and to statements condemning the conspiracies of the Jews, the abjectness of democracies, the wiles of leaders of finance. In the beginning, his exposés, for which he usually did not rely on written notes, were involved and obscure; after a while, he learned to comply more with the rules of public speaking.

Using a technique of adulation and hero-worship without precedent in Norwegian political history, the sub-leaders of Quisling tried to make the leader of Nasjonal Samling appear to the Norwegian public as a man of extraordinary dimensions, endowed with an historical mission. During the period from 1933 to 1936, Quisling's lieutenants never tired of proclaiming that he was a great gentleman, although maltreated by ignorant politicians (pastor Knut Geelmuyden), a great statesman, "the greatest constructive statesman since Harald Haarfagre, the King that unified Norway" (Dr Gulbrand Lunde), "the man who has given the Norwegian youth new ideals to live upon" (Jens Rolfsen).

To a political movement like Nasjonal Samling, trying to supplant older and firmly established parties, the only short cut, indeed the only road, to success lay in its ability to obtain the following of the youth of the nation. There exists an eloquent and touching testimony to the state of mind of the young Norwegians who were the followers of Quisling in the years 1932-1936.

In the spring of 1936, "Samtiden", the Norwegian literary review, published an article by a young author, Odd-Stein Anderssen, entitled "Youth's allegiance to democracy." The author describes the feelings of many young

Norwegians when Quisling first founded his party, that the ability of Youth should be utilized in politics. Not a few felt with the author that the new party was a hazardous expression of something with which the times were fraught. It interpreted a very real need of young people to be doing something with their lives and their persons, whatever might be the practical goal put up to them.

In judging the party, doctrines such as the leader principle and the hierarchy of races, counted for very little when weighed against the fact that to this party, youth meant something. Here were possibilities of action, here young people were put to tasks, which only they could accomplish, here was given direct and immediate contact with life itself. Thus, the movement led by Quisling justified and vindicated in their own eyes a youth who having been put to no political use until then, watched for the day when they would mean something in society, and when the nation's rulers no longer would cheat them of such responsibility and initiative as youth is entitled to exercise alongside the older generations. The old political parties, with all the key positions already occupied, did not really feel they needed youthful collaborators until, by activating the latent resources of youth, Quisling's new party had forced their hands. So, Quisling's new party had the merit, at the outset, of awakening youth and speeding up the beat of their hearts, holding out to them chances of early participation in public life. Also, in an era of economic depression, Quisling's new party promised the young people work and a right to participate in decisions. In many cases, the young person adhering to the movement only afterwards became acquainted with its doctrines and aims. Thus, very paradoxically, a movement, the real aim of which was to turn the Norwegian youth into mental robots, moved by the springs of a few primitive doctrines and bent mechanically to the dictates of a leader, was instrumental in making many young people realise for the first time their own possibilities of free and humane action. For some time, in the heat of the contest, there was no time to stop and doubt; these doubts arrived later on. They proved invincible. And in the end, this Norwegian youth of 1932 – 1936 became a tragic generation.

Inside the party the youthful member would adjust the official ideology

to his real feelings, calling himself a pacifist and a humanist at the same time as he remained a Quislingite of those who left the party, some turned sceptical and cynical in regard to politics generally, others were waiting for a better opportunity to make their influence felt or take revenge, a few found their bearings and turned their youthful ardour to the pursuit of more mature political ideas. In 1937, to most of the young people who once belonged to the movement, this deception was total, this humiliation profound, this past incursion into politics a loathsome memory, making no sense other than that of an attempted escape from an uneventful young age. By 1937, most of the young adherents of Quisling had realised that they were wrong, that faced with the party's fundamental negation of the freedom of the personality they had no choice but to withdraw, but that, at the same time, the basic problem of how to create for the rising generation appropriate opportunities for a humane and dauntless initiative remained unsolved. And the author concludes, speaking for the young generation : "It is our appeal to democracy, that instead of provoking desertion from its own ranks by the young people, it should train them for a collaboration destined to safeguard those civic freedoms without which there could be no cultural progress".

Being too openly a paraphrase of foreign models, the official programme of the Nasjonal Samling had no power to attract the interest of Norwegian voters except as regards certain restricted groups. Thus, in the forest districts of Eastern Norway the owners of big estates, hard pressed by taxes and harassed by lumberjacks' strikes and other labour troubles, and having in the midst of the slump a vivid recollection of glorious booms in the past, provided some eager adherents. A few officers were as much in sympathy with Quisling's latest ideas as they had been horrified by his earlier communistic leanings. Here at last was a chance for the officers' profession of obtaining a more honoured place in society than had been accorded it by a generation of bourgeois pacifists; here was perhaps salvation from the confusion of unilateral disarmament; here a nucleus for the re-building of an already (to their minds) dilapidated social order. These groups, together with these frustrated innovators who flocked to the new red and golden banner, could not, however, constitute that rank and file of voters necessary for a political party running at parliamentary elections. In preparation for

the General Election of 1936 Nasjonal Samling staged a terrific propaganda campaign and made so much noise that even this opponents were surprised when the results became known and Nasjonal Samling, instead of the promised 10% of the voters, procured only a bare 2% and not a single representative in the Storting; nor, in a single constituency, was the Party's candidate even on the verge of getting elected. After the failures of this campaign the more analytical minds inside the Party were painfully aware that whatever other causes had been at work, Quisling had contributed to the Party's overwhelming defeat by sheer inability to co-operate, and thus to lead.

In 1936, after the general election, the Nasjonal Samling suffered an almost complete collapse. Quisling had to face violent opposition from inside the party. Many of its most influential members, such as F.S. Hjort, left the party. (After the German invasion, Hjort has taken a courageous stand against violations of Norwegian law by the occupying authorities). By 1937, the party had practically fallen to pieces as a regular political organisation. What now happened was that the crowd of frustrated politicians and fanatics, naïve or otherwise, who, together with members of the old 1930 and 1931 group, had formed the nucleus of the Nasjonal Samling at its start in 1933, and who had up till now played no prominent part in the leadership, took over what remained of the party under a more or less nominal leadership of Quisling. From 1936 to 1939, Quisling himself was very little heard of. He occasionally would deliver a lecture or make a political speech or write an article in the party's newspaper. Very few were those who took the slightest interest in him or knew what he was doing or by what means he lived. His party had been so utterly rejected by the Norwegian people that it would not have taken part in another general election. The paper "Fritt Folk" still made its appearance, but now irregularly, and often at long intervals and it was soon reduced to two small sheets. In so far as the Nasjonal Samling after 1936 still cut a figure in Norwegian politics, it was in the realm of accusations that grew more and more tempestuous as time went on, against the Government and all existing political parties. If one were to believe Quisling, the bourgeois politicians were all joining hands with the Marxists (and the Labour Party were Marxists no

less than the small Communist Party) to further the interests of the Jews and the Jewish dominated international high finance. In private conversations, Quisling would insist that the “Marxists” were traitors, that throughout the upper classes in Norway, many supposedly of Aryan descent were really Jews etc. He would start exposing these theories to foreign diplomats or to anybody else on no provocation at all.

From the autumn of 1936 onwards, Nasjonal Samling was just another name for the Quislingites, and the Quislingites were a small and discredited band.

8. Traitor's progress

Quisling's attitude towards his country, as a member of the family of nations, changed from 1933 to 1937 under the impact of those blows to which his fortune as a party leader in Norway was subjected. In 1934, he wrote a letter to the King complaining that a temporary law of July 1933 prohibiting the use of uniforms by private organisations had been enforced against Nasjonal Samling. In this letter, a long one, which Quisling published as a pamphlet, he emphasizes that what counts in the matter of patriotism and willingness to sacrifice life and wealth for the country is the spirit and not the colour of the shirt. To the extent to which an egocentric can be in good faith at all in matters of patriotism, he then certainly was. But Quisling kept up a show of patriotism long after he had ceased to be sincere on this point. In the winter of 1934-1935, he explained to restive party members that Norway in the future had to be linked up politically with other Nazi or Fascist governed countries. In the autumn of 1936, when returning from a international Nazi assembly in Switzerland, he told a young lady of his acquaintance that for a country like Norway, its only possible future was to be incorporated as a subsidiary State in a vast German-controlled Empire. But all that time, in his political campaigns, he posed as an ardent patriot anxious to safeguard his country's independence and sovereignty.

To Quisling himself, there never came a time when he, in a dramatic way, had to choose between his country and a foreign enemy. To Quisling, Germany changed her position and meaning so that she could never, at any single turning of the road, present herself as the enemy. To the observer, judging objectively, Quisling's development from a prospective to an actual traitor is signified to his continued fight for power in Norway after he had been decisively rejected by the people, and especially by the youth of the nation. And this attitude of his naturally takes a significant form the moment he decides to continue with financial support obtained, directly or indirectly, from Germany. After the party had received 50000 kroner from Germany in 1934, some time elapsed before it again needed such assistance. But in

1936, on the eve of the general election, thus before the crisis inside the party, Quisling relied upon German money when he offered to buy shares for 150000 kroner in a newspaper, on the condition that he was appointed chief political collaborator. If it had been carried through, that arrangement would have made him the paid agent of Germany in Norway. Even apart from this major proposal, which never materialised, there is strong reason to believe that he, through undisguised German agents like Hilditch the friend of Admiral Raeder, received financial support already in 1936. That he had to rely on German financial support for such political activities in Norway as he was able to carry on after 1936, is fairly obvious.

Nasjonal Samling had its own newspapers, and it published propaganda pamphlets. The newspapers were especially active before the electoral campaign of 1936 and during the five or six months preceding the invasion. The publishing of pamphlets which had been brisk from 1934 to 1936, dropped after the electoral defeat Nasjonal Samling sustained in that latter year. The leading newspaper of the party Fritt Folk (A Free People) has periodically been run as a daily paper. Since the paper had always had only a very scant income from advertising and has never had any substantial paying circulation, the financial burden on the party was very heavy. The party made a great effort to organise branches in many parts of the country and it formed storm troopers of its young members; the Hird existed openly until a permanent law of 1937 forbade members of private organizations to wear uniforms. In these various activities considerable expenses had been incurred. Wealthy Norwegian sympathizers had no doubt for a number of years contributed to the party fund. Prytz, Conrad Langaard, Eckbo were amongst them. When discreetly asked by old acquaintances where he got his funds, Quisling, with his usual air of mystery, would reply that he had "influential friends". But knowing roughly what expenses Nasjonal Samling had incurred during the 1936 electioneering campaign and knowing also more or less the limitation of his Norwegian resources, Quisling's old friends of the Patriots' League, now opposing him, suspected that he then got the greater part of his funds from Germany or German-controlled sources. After the electoral defeat of 1936, Prytz, although obstinate enough, ceded to his sense of the realities and for some time lost interest. About the same

time, Langaard who as a great industrialist, feared the resentment of his workers found it prudent to stop the contributions of his wife. The activities of Nasjonal Samling were at a low ebb from 1936 to the last months of 1939. Then, again there was evidence of new resources having suddenly opened up. Propagandists and secretaries were engaged and handsomely paid. As to the origin of the funds there can be little doubt.

We arrive at the period immediately preceding the invasion. In the middle of March 1940, Nasjonal Samling hires a suite of 14 office rooms and converts the Party organ *Fritt Folk*, into a daily paper, and again, it is obvious from where the funds came. Quisling had changed from a prospective into an actual traitor.

Looked at from another angle, Quisling's progress from a prospective to an actual traitor can be measured by his progressive estrangement from the bulk of the nation. Although with a lesser degree of refinement than his models, the Fascist and Nazi leaders, Quisling exercised the art of accusing the opposite party of just the crimes that he might be suspected of himself. The following may serve as examples of his technique.

Do you believe that Nasjonal Samling is basing itself on the use of terrorist methods? The bourgeois parties and the Marxists are daily guilty of lies, illegal acts and terrorism against Nasjonal Samling. In contradistinction to Fascism and Nazism, Nasjonal Samling does not subscribe to the principles of power politics.

Does anybody suggest that Nasjonal Samling is preparing to set up a dictatorship? Through their fratricidal strife, the old political parties are leading the country towards a dictatorship. The only way to avoid dictatorship is to join the Nasjonal Samling. (Before the election of 1936, Quisling said "Give us 100000 votes and we shall save the country from the coup d'etat that is threatening from outside.")

Does anybody think that Nasjonal Samling is recommending a policy that will lead Norway into war? The opposite is true. Quisling said in 1936:" As evidenced by their adherence to the policy of sanctions against Italy, and their League of Nations policy in general, the Government are participating with France and England in an attempt at encircling, undermining, destroying Germany, and this policy leads us straight into war. Nasjonal

Samling demands that Norway follows a policy of strict neutrality and withdraws from the League of Nations now that Germany is no longer there.” In 1938, in a lecture before the Officers’ Club (Militære Samfund) in Oslo, he predicted that a world war would come and that Germany would conquer the European continent, after which to him, the war in his opinion would be over. Drawing the political conclusions in respect to Norway he wrote in September 1938: “The crime of the Government is the more appalling as the German Bloc has every chance of being victorious in a future world war”. Quisling pinned his faith on a German victory, the coming of which was the more probable to him as without it he could have no political future.

Does anybody pretend that by the very act of following such a policy, Norway would have taken Hitler for her political leader? An author writing in an Oslo newspaper had, in 1936, taken this stand. Nothing, the spokesman of the Nasjonal Samling replied, could be farther from the truth. But, he continues, while addressing an open air meeting, Quisling the other day pointed out that if Norway continues in the League of Nations to follow the policy of France and England, and does it without rearming, the thing that will happen is that the Oslo valley will be bombarded from the air.

And after the German invasion. Is Quisling a traitor? “No”, the Quislingist chorus replies, “but the old Government was guilty of treason, for by deliberately neglecting to mobilize, they laid the country open to a British invasion, and thus forced the Germans to intervene”.

With regard to the problems of the day, Quisling faithfully followed the lead from Berlin, raging against communism when Berlin did, and emphasizing the need for European collaboration and solidarity when that was what Berlin wanted. “Fritt Folk” the party organ, was, during the Spanish civil war ardently pro-Franco and anti-Red. It was in favour of the Anschluss of Austria to Germany and for the annexation of Czechoslovakia. Characteristically enough, during the Finno-Russian it was very uninterested in the Finnish cause. The more consistently Nasjonal Samling took its stand on these lines, the more it lost adherents in Norway, and the more the existence of the party and its newspapers and other paraphernalia depended on financial contributions from Germany and German-controlled sources.

Quisling for a long time clung to the idea that the union of the Nordic nations should even primarily include England. Did he, when keeping steadfastly to this line, follow the instructions of Hitler? In April 1938, he declared that the only independent task of Norway in world politics was to contribute to the maintenance of peace between Germany and England. On October 11, 1939, Quisling in a telegram to Mr. Neville Chamberlain, pleaded with this statesman to end the war with Germany. "Having", he states, "from 1927 to 1929, represented British interests in Russia (as we know, a somewhat exaggerated statement), I am conscious of expressing the opinion of nearly everybody in the Northern countries when I say that the fratricidal war between England and Germany, Bolshevism being the only beneficiary, is felt as something eminently tragic in our countries which are so closely related to both England and Germany." Quisling goes on to propose that the British Government take the initiative to call a European Congress having for its mandate the constitution of a Commonwealth of the European nations, including England, France and Germany. The calling of such conference would put an end to the war.

But when Quisling's appeal remained unanswered, and it became clear that his role as a possible saviour of the Greater Nordic unity was at an end, he started pouring out invectives against England and English policy.

The Fascist or home Nazi parties in the various European countries formed a sort of Internationale, and during recent years their representatives met several times in Germany. Quisling and his closest collaborators such as Hagelin, formerly a business man in Germany, and Meidell, a University professor of mathematics, not infrequently attended meetings in Germany and neighbouring countries organised by Nazi leaders – and these meetings became more frequent just before the German invasion of Norway.

To what extent were the ordinary members of Nasjonal Samling aware of what their leaders were doing in the field of international politics? They certainly knew very little about it. That their leaders had committed a few indiscretions did not change this main impression. Perhaps to some members, their chief interest in belonging to the party was the prospect of getting, if only a few hints of inside information. As for one person, it is certain that he enjoyed the full confidence of Quisling during the weeks or

days immediately preceding the German invasion. That person was Prytz who had made that much clear in a speech he delivered in 1941. That the majority of the Nasjonal Samling did not know what was in the offing, is proved by facts. If, to put it liberally, the Nasjonal Samling had 15000 members including women and children on the day of the Germans invaded Norway, the day after, not ten per cent of this number followed Quisling. On the morning of April 9, 1940 a member of the Party, hurrying out of Oslo to join the military forces of resistance, paid a short visit to an old benefactor and said, white in the face and out of breath: "I was a fool; beware of Quisling; he is a traitor."

For some reasons of his own, Hitler seems to have acquired an unshakable confidence in Quisling as the best available home Nazi leader in Norway. Rosenberg certainly has upheld his friend and, as some will have it, occasionally against the scepticism of a Goering or a Goebbels. Perhaps Hitler did once believe in the possibility of using Quisling as an intermediary in dealing with the English, and now, that bubble being pricked, and himself being infallible, cannot withdraw from his position. In some respects, the two men obviously are akin. If not otherwise, they are akin in the mystical bent of their minds. Quisling's paper of 1929 on the celestial bodies other than our own earth which are inhabited by rational beings, reminds one of the planetarian unity passages of "Mein Kampf". Together they join Czar Alexander I, another mystic, and Madame Krudener, in dreaming of a world union of Nations. Just as Hitler has his astrologers, Quisling leans on a spiritualist medium, Mrs. Koeber, who predicted for him a great future as a political leader.

Did Quisling know beforehand that Hitler was preparing to invade Norway?

The evidence is by no means complete, but it seems that Hitler had disclosed to Quisling at least some days ahead of the event his intention to invade Norway. He may not have given away the details of the military measures contemplated, but plans of invasion were in existence, which at any rate gave three quarters of what was going to happen. Some hours before the invasion, Nasjonal Samling issued in Oslo a manifesto to the Norwegian people. One passage runs: "Nasjonal Samling has been the only

organisation rightly to judge the main political issues. It is the only movement capable of saving Norway's freedom and independence through the coming great crisis. We therefore have the duty and the right to claim the power of Government". Preparations had then been made to form a Government, which was to be declared a "rebel" government in case of resistance.

When the invasion came, and indeed for a long time before that event, Quisling had no sentiment of community with the masses, which, in flesh and blood, constitute the Norwegian people. He could not avoid realising that he was, throughout the country, an object of anger and distrust. He would never be able to range behind him the majority of voters in a parliamentary Norway. He did not even want to build his power on any democratic basis. To him, the future of the Norwegian nation lay in collaborating, willingly or not, with the Germans under German hegemony. That was also the only means by which a political mission was left to him. On the day of the invasion he was surrounded by a few henchmen, and the more boisterous they were in their praise of him, the more they felt themselves a tiny handful in the midst of a hostile nation. He no doubt then felt more lonely than he did in his boyhood days in the solitude of wooded Telemark.

As for the reactions of Norwegian public opinion, the fact must be kept in mind that the great majority of the people knew nothing or practically nothing about his activities as the "Foerer" of Nasjonal Samling and, for that matter, very little about Nasjonal Samling. On April 8, 1940 most Norwegians had never read a Quisling newspaper or pamphlet, and in the course of the past seven years Nasjonal Samling had altogether had very few minutes at its disposal on the Norwegian radio. The vast majority of Norwegians only knew of Quisling as an anticommunist agitator and suppressor of strikes and as a man given to mystifications and secret dealings. The industrial workers distrusted and despised or hated him. To the youth of the great cities it was a source of unrestrained amusement when posters announced a Quisling mass-meeting; "10 or 20 will be there, and they will be paid for attending; otherwise they would prefer the Salvation Army." To the serious-minded citizens, Quisling was something between a crank and a lunatic.

Before the German invasion, in the opinion of the general public Quisling, with all his talk about national solidarity, represented a small minority which, although already over-privileged, seemed to be bent upon using force against the masses of the nation in order to maintain and extend its privileges. Now, collaborating intimately with the German government and perhaps in their pay, he was a speculator in the possibilities of reaching the one coveted goal, power, and a conspirator more than a condottiere. When the German Minister to Norway proposed to the King, on April 10, 1940, that Quisling be included in the Government, the spread of his news marshalled all forces behind the Government in their determination to resist the Government. The absurdity of the German contention that they came to protect Norway against the English, could not be made patent more effectively than by the announcement that they wanted the reins of Government placed in the hands of this sombre plotter.

9. The Consummation

Early in the day of the invasion of Norway, April 9th, 1940, Quisling and Hagelin, Medell and some others of his other followers gathered in Oslo. A few dozens of the Hird were brought together and assumed a martial bearing. Quisling and the other leaders gathered at the Hotel Continental. Some isolated young members of the Quisling movement may voluntarily have been active in spying and guiding the German troops. But there is no evidence that the leading Quislingists participated in the actual conduct of the invasion. This was entirely in German hands. The Quislingists were not capable of taking over any real responsibility for actions of importance, and most certainly the Germans did not trust them. What was left to the Quisling organization was to take over and run such institutions as required the intervention of born Norwegians; for instance, the Norwegian State Broadcasting.

The internal causes facilitating surprise lay not with Quisling and his crowd of schoolboys; they lay with the weakness of the intelligence service of the Norwegian Government; Quisling had not the means to deceive the Government, neither did he attempt to do so.

German agents had for some weeks been arriving in Norway by the hundreds. Many of them had spent some time in Norway before and knew the country well. Throughout the country, nearly everything had been open to inspection by foreigners. The invasion of Norway did not depend for its success on the participation of traitors.

In Norway, the Germans found no Norwegians to fight on their side; no brass band reception; no friendly saluting crowds. What occurs was that orders did not arrive at their destination in time, that officers and civilian function-aries sometimes showed themselves incompetent, or hesitant, or threw responsibility on somebody else, or were discouraged. In a few cases, officers declined to fight in the fact of overwhelming odds. Maybe some Quislingist volunteered his services in some obscure episode of the campaign; but no such act had any noticeable influence on the outcome. "Incompétence ou trahison, le résultat est le même", Milioukov, the Russian statesman, once exclaimed. Very true, the result on the battlefield may

be the same. But however incompetent the rulers of a country, their incompetence cannot by itself destroy the nation's moral unity; only the number of traitors and collaborationists can do that. That number probably was, and is, less in Norway than in any other country, which the Germans have invaded and did not set out to destroy.

Quisling's Norwegian followers were never able, as Leland Stowe would have us believe, to become effective fifth columnists. The following is the version given by Eugene Lennhoff in "Agents of Hell" and repeated by Walter Tachuppik in "The Quislings"; "When garrisons were suddenly found without ammunition, when the cables of aircraft detectors were cut at the critical moment and the mines in Oslo Fjord mysteriously rendered harmless just as the German fleet entered the narrow straits, such actions were not quickly improvised; they had been planned to the smallest detail long in advance, fitting into one another with clockwork precision". And Colonel Knox after Pearl Harbor stated that fifth columnists had worked more successfully at Hawaii than anywhere else "except perhaps in Norway".

Quisling's record is black enough even when the truth, less dramatic than fabrication is admitted, namely that no such thing ever happened, for some very simple reasons. The garrisons did have ammunition, and they used it to good purpose. The aircraft-detectors installed were all in use. No minefields had been laid out along the whole Norwegian coast before the invasion. The only mines the Germans had to deal with were some mines laid by the Norwegian minelayer "TYR" in one of the approaches to Bergen, after the German warships had been signalled; they were picked up by German minesweepers.

What a pity that the reporter's mind could not, in this case, be made to work with "clockwork precision".

At the time of the invasion, the only Quisling follower in a position of command was the colonel commanding a battalion in Narvik. No one knows exactly if treachery or his excessive addiction to red tape prevented him from getting his men together before it was too late. It would not have mattered anyhow, for his forces were hopelessly inferior to the German ones. The most that can be made out of the evidence so far available is that he refused to fight the Germans when they entered Narvik. Nothing further

– it is bad enough – has been proved. As Eugene Lennhoff has pointed out, the leaders of the German spy and fifth column service have never relied upon the assistance of the native population of menaced countries, any more than they have relied upon foreign propaganda carried out by sympathizers. They have their own emissaries. In Norway, German visitors and a handful of naturalized Germans did the spy part of the work, and it was not as important as in other instances, owing to the nature of the campaign.

During the invasion, Quisling and his followers behaved as the flies on the cart in the old fable, they were carried, they were not driving. After the occupation they have been used by the Germans. This is foolish for Hitler is right when he says people will more easily swallow a big lie than a small one, then he must be wrong in placing at the helm of an old nation a small and undignified traitor, rather than a big one. On the other hand, he must be excused, for he could not find any Norwegian of authority to take the part of a traitor. Norway is not a nursery of false ambitions. The Norwegian nation does not belong, as Mr. Donald Nelson seems to think, to those nations Hitler has been able to divide and lead into pitfalls. It there is one country which the Nazis, up to now could not hope to destroy, which on the contrary they have tried to cajole, and where the Quislings are few and far between, then it is Norway.

Unlike Cariolanus, Quisling has not had the chance, nor probably the desire, to become a second time a traitor. After the invasion of Norway, he has been a constant collaborator of the Germans. According to the choice of Berlin, he was to be the head of the Civil Government in Norway. On April 9, 1940, Quisling formed his puppet government of interim Ministers in German-occupied Oslo. He had some trouble in forming his Ministry. Invited, Prytz hesitated and Hvoslef refused. (Later on, Prytz was made Sheriff of the county of Sör Trøndelag and he is now Minister of Finance in Quisling's February First Government.) Not a single one of the Ministers had any authority in the country. In the judgment of the German Government, a prolongation of the experiment might thwart the German effort of a rapid pacification of Norway. After a few days, the Quisling of seven men chosen because of their authority as civil servants or because of their outstanding

position as businessmen. Quisling's role was now to be the head of the only legal political party in Norway, that party being, of course, his own "Nasjonal Samling".

One of the subtleties of the Nazi system is that three executive organs alternately can appear as the decisive one – the General Staff, the Government, or the Party. In an occupied country, whenever it is necessary or expedient, the power of decision may be taken from the Government and given to the Party, or the Party simply usurps that power of decision. From the moment Quisling relinquished his post as head of the Government, Nasjonal Samling steadily extended the range of its functions and activities, and progressively accentuated the brutality of its methods. In September 1940, the Administrative Council was replaced by a new interim Ministry which was composed mostly of Quislingites with a couple of nonpartisan Ministers interspersed, and was to be responsible to the German High Commissioner in Norway, Terboven. In September 1941, this interim Ministry was converted into a (so-styled) permanent one. On February 1, 1942, Quisling was again appointed President of the Council of Ministers, this time composed exclusively of members of Nasjonal Samling. Thus, the gulf between the puppet Government in Oslo and the nation has progressively widened.

Just as the German Army leaves to the German Nazi party any repugnant work of repression in Germany or in occupied countries, so in its turn the Nazi party willingly transfers the odium of cruelty in occupied countries to the home Nazi party. Nasjonal Samling, by fulfilling a task of malignant repression in Norway, has in vain tried to discharge its mission of averting a measure of odium from the German Military and Civil Authorities in Norway.

The ranks of Nasjonal Samling have, according to German-inspired reports, been constantly swelled. That may be so. The Party is not composed as it used to be. If it now counts a little over 30.000 as one report will have it, only a small percentage of that number are old members of the Party, and many of those now loathe Quisling and remain on the membership list simply because they are not trusted by compatriots, have once mixed with Quisling. As for the newcomers, they constitute, most of

them, failures in life who now try to recoup themselves or youngsters who under other circumstances would have been taken care of by criminal courts or placed in the charge of guardians or put on board ships to go through the hard lower-deck discipline of the merchant marine.

Whether Quisling has met with any success as leader of the home Nazi party in Norway is doubtful. Provisionally at least, the signs point in the opposite direction. In the conduct of his own life Quisling is in the grip of incoherences and contradictions. Simultaneously with using violence to make the people submit to his will, he sobs when an old acquaintance reproaches him for having betrayed his country: "Do you also consider me a traitor!" At the same time as he declares it to be his set purpose to force a new political order upon the people, he declares to an intellectual in quest of some alleviation of the maltreatment of his class: "Do you really think I possess any power in this country?" But such sincerity as this reply suggests is not the natural attitude of Quisling. His complete egocentricity does not allow him to see facts as they are, and thus the escape which enables him to carry on. Thus, when the nonpartisan Minister of Finance, Sandberg, pointed out to Quisling the indignity of the practice which deprived officials who had been dismissed for political reasons of any salary or income – many of those who were left to starve had families – Quisling just replied: "Have not I been maltreated by the General Staff? Is there any reason why these persons should be better treated than I was? Seeing how the old regime has wronged me, there is no reason why the present order should treat its opponents mildly. They only get what they deserve and their fate cannot even be compared to what I had to endure." When a passerby of his acquaintance avoided saluting him, he pounced upon him, pointed him out to the two henchmen who accompanied him and threatened the terrified citizen with the loss of his professional status if he again failed to salute him.

As the oppression with which the name of Quisling is associated proceeds and deepens, so the resistance to that oppression progressively takes shape and extends. A signal of resistance was the resignation of the Supreme Court, new order of the Trade Unions, the Sports Organizations, the National Organization of Teachers, the clergy, the municipalities and

many others. In the midst of this seething national temper which is so slowly roused, Quisling deports himself as if repeating to himself the words the Emperor Caligula used to quote: "Let them hate me if only they fear me".

Fate, overtaking Quisling, involves him in a net of incoherences and contradictions. "Norway was an empire, it shall become a nation". Does this motto of Nasjonal Samling come true today? Yes, and in part by the efforts of Quisling, but not in a sense he can accept. His escapism blossoms forth in the phrase he has coined. "We have been right in our predictions and, therefore, we represent the will of the people, whether the majority be with us or not".

As a supreme incoherence and contradiction, Quisling, the religious devotee and the once staunch upholder of the basic values of Christianity, has, by his reliance on a policy of "punishment and prison", been led into a conflict with the Norwegian State Church – backed by all the other Norwegian Churches. In vain he has introduced into his party's program those repudiations of power politics intended to reconcile clergymen and churchgoers and free church adherents with his politics; in vain, up to the present, he has included in his Ministry persons known for their devoutness. But he continues to speak at meetings and to show himself in public, as though not unmindful of the obligations the fulfilment of a historic mission imposes upon one that destiny has chosen.

"There is a soul of goodness in things evil". In Norway today, the scandal of this life helps to keep aflame in Norwegian minds the determination to shake off the yoke at the earliest possible opportunity. In this tragic sense the name of Quisling is a rallying force in the Norway of today.