INITIATION AND INITIATIVE
AN EXPLORATION OF THE LIFE AND IDEAS OF DIMITRIJE MITRINOVIĆ

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CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

On May 24, 1933 a new weekly paper appeared on bookstalls throughout Britain. It was called *New Britain,* the organ of a political movement of the same name launched the previous December. By August 1933 sales of the weekly had reached 32,000 and over 60 local New Britain groups had been formed throughout the country. The time was obviously favourable for a new political initiative. The country had just passed through the financial crisis of 1931, unemployment and poverty were devastating problems. In Germany Hitler had risen to power and the threat of a new European war began to appear on the horizon. Whilst the threat of civil strife between the forces of fascism and communism grew, the main political parties seemed bankrupt of ideas.

The New Britain movement appeared to many to offer a radical and imaginative approach to such problems. Its programme consisted of four main proposals:

1. The complete overhaul of the monetary system by restoring the right to issue credit to the nation rather than the banks;
2. The reorganisation of industry as National Guilds based on workers' control;
3. The devolution of parliament into three Chambers—a House of Industry based on the National Guilds taking control over economic affairs, a House of Culture composed of representatives of the arts, sciences, religion and education which would exercise a guiding influence over cultural affairs, and a Political Chamber which would be concerned with questions of law and order and international relations;
4. The utmost devolution of decision-making power on as wide a range of issues as possible within Britain itself as a step on the way towards European and ultimately world federation.

The movement made a direct appeal to those who yearned for a new social order to take responsibility upon themselves for its creation in their everyday lives. One of the early manifestos concluded:

> *To wait for leaders is to evade responsibilities* . . . Those who wish to save themselves from drifting into a state of war—a war of all against all, must make themselves responsible to each for all, and find others who will join them in overcoming all that stands in the way of a NEW ORDER.[1]

From the first issue of *New Britain* there was evidence that this was not a conventional political movement, in the form of 10 articles entitled "World Affairs" written by M. M. Cosmoi. These were written in an apocalyptic style, ranging over the whole world panorama and touching on different aspects of human life. This was the same M. M. Cosmoi who had contributed a long series of articles under the same title of "World Affairs" to A. R. Orage's weekly *The New Age* between 1920 and 1921. The main theme of these articles had been the notion of the world and humanity as a developing organism; within this framework he had attempted to sketch what he called "the psychological layout of the world," assessing the contribution and relative function of each race and nation in an organic world order.

Few of those who read the articles in *The New Age* and later in *New Britain* knew the identity of M. M. Cosmoi. His name was Dimitrije Mitrinović. He was born in Hercegovina in 1887. As a young student he had taken a prominent part in his country's struggle against the Austrian regime and became one of the leading young lights in the literary world there through his involvement with the radical literary review *Bosanska Vila*. In 1914 while studying at Munich he became associated with Wassily Kandinsky. The artist introduced him to a group of distinguished thinkers from different countries who were trying to create a strong cultural influence on behalf of international harmony. They called themselves the Blut-bund. Amongst the figures associated with the initiative were Erich Gutkind and Frederik van Eeden who were the moving spirits, Gustav Landauer, Martin Buber, Florence Christian Rang and Theodore Däubler—whilst Romain Rolland and Walter Rathenau were also peripherally involved. The outbreak of World War I frustrated their plans and Mitrinović fled to England where he sought work with the Serbian Legation.

In London he was intoduced to A. R. Orage and became part of the circle of writers and thinkers associated with *The New Age,* one of the most important journals at the time for radical political thought in its support

of Guild Socialism and Social Credit. In 1922 Orage resigned from the editorship of *The New Age* and left for France to work with Gurdjieff. Mitrinović, by this time, had begun to gather around him his own circle of friends and acquaintances, and had begun to lead informal discussion groups on a wide range of subjects: philosophy, sociology, the arts, religion and psychology. In 1926 he met Alfred Adler in London and the following year he founded the English branch of the International Society for Individual Psychology, known as the Adler Society. He was also at this time closely associated with Philip Mairet, Maurice Reckitt and the other members of what became known as the Chandos Group. With some of them he provided the impulse for the formation of the New Europe Group, a British initiative for European federation, of which Patrick Geddes was the first president. The New Britain movement grew out of the Adler Society and the New Europe Group, as a movement for national renaissance based on the recognition that if the age of plenty made possible by technological development was to be realised it required a total re-ordering of society, a transformation not only of the social structure but also of individual consciousness—"Self change for world change," as Mitrinović phrased it.

The New Britain Movement came to an end as an active public movement in 1935 after publication of the movement's papers ceased due to lack of funds. However, a group of people remained with Mitrinović and continued to work with him. He believed that the age of hierarchical leadership had passed and that a new organic social order required a new organ of integration. He gave the term Senate to this new function. It was not to be an alien body grafted onto society to rule from above, but rather a large and loosely connected group of people who would attempt to intermediate between all the different functional groupings that would together make up the new cooperative order. In such a society the values of mutual aid and community would need to be held in dynamic tension with the values of individual freedom. Some source of guidance was necessary if such a balance was to be maintained. This was to be provided by senators. They would possess no authority other than their personal influence as members of the different groupings in society. Their function would be one of helping contending parties to view their conflict within the context of the world as a whole, to help them discover how their respective points of view might be reconcilable within a wider organic context. Mitrinović called this method 'Third Force,' implying the rejection of 'either-or' types of thinking in favour of an approach which he characterised as "above, between and beyond the extremes and opposites." During the years prior to World War II Mitrinović worked with those around him in a kind of prolonged training exercise in those

personal and interpersonal skills and attributes which would be required of potential senators.

In 1976 I received a letter from one of the people who had been involved with Mitrinović during this period. He explained,

> We believed that those who were to help in founding the social state must start with an absolute personal commitment to one another; must be prepared to pool their wealth in the widest sense of the term, including sharing responsibility for one another's lives and problems; and finally must be prepared to speak openly and frankly with one another, in declaring their own mind and will and appreciating and criticising others. So they would form a group in which both the widest diversity of individuality and a real sense of equality and community would exist together; in which there could be both the continuity of a collective and the continual change which arises from the free working of individual initiative. Such a group would have no fixed formal organisation but would always be flexible.
>
> Success and failure in such an endeavour cannot be measured, but we entered into it with great dedication and we had our share of both. Much of the time we lived in different houses, though there were houses where some of us lived together a life in common.

Mitrinović died in 1953. The following year a charitable trust, the New Atlantis Foundation, was formed for the purpose of maintaining the archives of the different initiatives with which Mitrinović was involved, holding meetings and issuing occasional publications on various aspects of Mitrinović's thought. The small group of people who run the Foundation were all involved with Mitrinović in the 1930s and remained together until his death, and have continued to share their lives together since that time. The letter I received in 1976, the first time I had ever come across the name of Mitrinović, was from one of their number. He had read my books on communes and alternative communities in Britain and felt that there was much in Mitrinović's thought and work that was relevant to the contemporary quest for a new social order based on the insight that true socialism can be achieved only by people who are themselves true 'inner socialists.' Hence the origins of this book. It represents an attempt to convey something of the life, thought and work of a man who, although possessed of great abilities and formidable intellectual energy and imagination, is virtually unknown. In his home country of Yugoslavia he is mainly renowned as one of the intellectual and political leaders of the pre-World War I revolutionary youth; a mysterious figure who, for some unfathomable reason, deserted the liberation struggle and became embroiled in mystical esoteric circles in England.

In truth there is much in Mitrinović's work, especially his published writing, which is obscure and seemingly totally divorced from the realities of the world. Anyone who attempts to read, for example, his series of articles from *The New Age* or some of his contributions to *New Britain* will find his idiosyncratic and eccentric language and style almost incomprehensible; whilst the ideas that he sought to convey by such means often appear so utterly fantastic, so far beyond the normally taken for granted ways of approaching the problems of the world, as to invite dismissal as the bizarre ramblings of a somewhat deranged dreamer. This indeed was the response of many, including the present writer, on first encountering Mitrinović's published writings. Others however came to realise that it was this very ability to move beyond the conventionally taken-for-granted modes of thought and practice which was an integral part of the man's significance. Rowland Kenney, the first editor of the *Daily Herald* observed that:

> Mr. Mitrinović transcended ordinary language as he transcended ordinary thought. He was speaking and writing from levels which we were not using. We were too much under the influence of logical sequence and what Ouspensky called the formatory mind. We were not used to writing, thinking and speaking from our feeling centre, which Mitrinović did. Mitrinović was therefore preparing many of us for an understanding of things in a new light and I think that is one of the contributions he has made to our modern world. He has taught those of us who were so wrapped up in common-sense, in reason, in the scientific outlook, in logical, sequential thought, that there is something much deeper and of much more value.[2]

There is indeed much in Mitrinović's work and in his ideas which is of contemporary interest. The demand for workers' control in industry is still on the political agenda. The frustrations felt by those excluded from exerting an effective influence over decisions that affect their lives grows apace with the centralisation of political and economic power. The owners of capital and the controllers of finance continue to exercise a determining influence over our lives in their search for profit. The spectre of international conflict on an hitherto unimaginable scale hangs over us. Despite continued technological progress, the problems of poverty and unemployment remain with us. I would never claim that Mitrinović had all the answers to such issues of world concern, but throughout most of his life he was trying to confront these problems in an original and creative manner. A colleague recalled after Mitrinović's death that "he had the wonderful gift of being able to say to individuals and to our generation what future experience would make clear to them."[3] Perhaps the world needs its practical planners,

people with the ability to judge between lesser evils; but we also need our visionaries, people possessed of a utopian imagination, able to conceive of an alternative ordering of society and life, and willing to risk censure and ridicule in pursuance of a grander image of the future. What follows is an attempt to retrieve from history the life and ideas of such a person.

Chapter 1

THE YOUNG BOSNIAN

Dimitrije Mitrinović was born on October 21st 1887 at Donje Poplat, a small village near Stolac in Hercegovina, the eldest of ten children.

Bosnia and Hercegovina had been occupied by Austro-Hungarian military forces in 1878 after three centuries of Turkish rule. Throughout the nineteenth century Bosnia and Hercegovina had been in a state of continual unrest. Under the weight of crippling taxes to the central state, religious persecution and exploitation by feudal landlords, the peasantry resorted to armed rebellion. There were frequent local uprisings which had flared up on a larger scale in 1875. Politically weakened and economically bankrupt, the Ottoman Empire had been unable to suppress the revolt. The peasant guerrillas, on the other hand, were unable to gain the support of the townspeople, with the result that by the winter of 1877 there was a stalemate between the opposing forces and no end to the conflict in sight.

The greed and territorial ambitions of the major European powers, particularly Russia and Austria-Hungary, were whetted by the power vacuum created in the Balkans by the disintegration of the Turkish Empire. Under the 'honest brokership' of Bismarck a congress was convened at Berlin in June 1878. Making no concessions to the aspirations of the Balkan peoples, the European powers at the Congress authorised Austria-Hungary to occupy and administer Bosnia and Hercegovina.

Under the Hapsburg occupation an extensive modernization programme was implemented in the provinces. By means of forced labour the authorities built over 6000 kilometres of new roads between 1878 and 1914. Over 1000 kilometres of railways were built during the same period. Mineral resources were exploited and heavy industries were established. It was mostly state capital that was involved in these enterprises, private capital was primarily engaged in the exploitation of the forests of Bosnia and Hercegovina.

In order to safeguard this expansion of their colonial interests the Hapsburgs sought to maintain the social and religious divisions within the population. They did this by preserving the feudal pattern of serfdom that had existed under the Turks. By playing off the largely Christian peasant population against the predominantly Muslim landlords, the Austro-Hungarians sought to forestall the development of nationalist feelings amongst the Slavs of the provinces. The result was that under the Hapsburgs the conditions of the peasantry in Bosnia and Hercegovina remained as bad as ever. A third of all their products was demanded by their feudal landlords. The Hapsburgs imposed a further tribute of one tenth which had to be paid in cash. A system of forced labour for the central state and the local authorities was also maintained until 1893, when it was replaced by a new tax. In addition to these obligations the peasantry suffered from a worsening of the terms of trade between town and country under the Austro-Hungarian occupation. The price of industrial goods rose whilst the revenue from agricultural products fell. Agrarian relations were further aggravated by a rapid rise in the population of the provinces, which almost doubled during the Hapsburg annexation.

Divided amongst themselves and lacking any national leadership or organisation, the response of the peasantry to these conditions was the traditional reaction of subjugated groups throughout the world: periods of apathetic resignation broken by violent, but localised, uprisings and armed rebellion. As part of their attempt to sustain tribal and feudal relations in the villages, and thereby forestall any national uprising, the Austro-Hungarian authorities systematically deprived the population of any educational resources. Even by 1914 88% of the population of Bosnia and Hercegovina were illiterate.

It is therefore all the more surprising that there emerged in these South Slav provinces at the turn of the century a small group of educated young people who were to form the nucleus of a revolutionary movement against the Hapsburgs. Collectively they came to be known as the Young Bosnians, and Mitrinović was to become one of their leaders.

Many of the Young Bosnians were peasant boys who had worked as servants in the richer homes in order to attend high school. Mitrinović was rather more fortunate.[1] Both his parents were educated and well read. His father, Mihajlo, worked as a school teacher in Donjie Poplat as did his mother, Vidosava. Outside school hours Mihajlo was active as an agricultural adviser whilst Vidosava involved herself in teaching the village girls domestic skills, home management and the rudiments of health care. The house itself served as a regular meeting place for the students of the area and contained a well-stocked library of several hundred books—reflecting the enquiring mind

of Mihajlo who had taught himself Greek and Latin and was also fairly fluent in German. It was from his father that Mitrinović obtained an early appreciation of the classical literature of Europe and his first introduction to the world of science. His relationship with his mother was particularly deep and close, and it was she who opened up the world of music and the arts to her eldest son. It was from her that he learnt the Serbian epic poems and traditional folk music that he was to remember all his life.[2]

Brought up as an Eastern Orthodox Christian, Mitrinović attended primary school at Donje Poplat and later at Blagaj to where his father had been transferred. Both parents seem to have recognised the fact that their eldest child was specially gifted, and to have been prepared to make sacrifices in order to encourage his educational and cultural development. His brother, Čedomil, remembered an occasion when their father had to go into town for necessary shopping. The young Dimitrije asked him to buy a violin. There was insufficient money for the family's shopping and the violin, but the child got his violin and the family went without the needed household articles. Another tale told by his brother was of the occasion when Mitrinović, as a small child, went for a walk with his parents. Separated from his parents, they discovered him with a venomous snake, both quietly regarding each other. To the relief of the parents the snake showed its discretion and slid away.

One can safely assume that such events were not the norm during his childhood, which seems to have passed fairly uneventfully—it was, however, of extremely short duration, according to some of his elders. He later recalled how, as a small boy, he was taken by his mother to visit the local ladies of the Muslim faith in the strict seclusion of their quarters. This practice was terminated when he reached the age of seven, by that age he was regarded as a man.

In 1899, at the age of twelve, he enrolled at the High School at Mostar, the capital of Hercegovina, where he remained until his matriculation in 1907. As part of the Hapsburgs' general policy of denying any kind of political freedom to the people of Bosnia and Hercegovina, students were forbidden to organise any school societies or to participate in any public society. This did not prevent the school children from expressing their feelings towards the Austro-Hungarian regime, however. Mitrinović used to tell his associates in Britain in later years of how, as school children, they would kneel on one knee only in church when prayers were said for the Austrian royal family, hoping that this would render their prayers ineffective.[3]

Given the restrictions on organising openly, the school boys began to form secret societies. One of the earliest was started at Mostar in 1904

when Mitrinović was instrumental in creating a secret library for the use of the students. Out of this library a secret student literary society, Matica (Mainstream) emerged in 1905. The main activity of the society consisted of a weekly gathering at which the students would read their own poems and writing and discuss current literary questions. It was at these sessions that Mitrinović began to develop his ability as a literary critic. It was also about this time that he began to publish his own poems. In 1905 the poems "Twilight Song" and "Lento Doloroso" were published in the journals *Nova Iskra* and *Bosanska Vila.* By the time he graduated from Mostar more than twenty of his poems had been printed, usually under the pseudonym of M. Dimitrijević. In 1906 he published his first critical article on the occasion of the death of the poet Jose Maria de Heredia. This appeared in the *Prijegled Male Biblioteke* (Review of the Little Library).

Along with his work with Matica Mitrinović was also engaged in a secret political society at the school called Slobada (Freedom). Amongst the members of this group were Bogdan Žerajić, Vladimir Gaćinović, Pero Slijepcević and others who were to play an important role in the history of the Young Bosnians. A number in the group defined themselves as Serbian nationalists and pan-Slavists. Others, including Mitrinović, described themselves as Yugoslav federalists. The members were united, however, in recognising the need to overthrow the foreign rule of the Hapsburg Empire and the need to overcome the backwardness of their own society. None of them were very clear during those early days at Mostar how this transformation of their own society might be achieved. Students like Žerajić and Gaćinović advocated political assassination and a violent revolutionary upheaval. Mitrinović was particularly concerned with the role that a cultural and literary convergence of Serbs and Croats might play in the emergence of a Yugoslav consciousness. The students shared a general interest in Russian literature and history. R. Parezanin recorded how:

> Chernishevsky's 'What Is to Be Done?' was passed from hand to hand. Whole pages from it were copied and learned by heart. Besides Chernishevsky, the most esteemed writers were Bakunin, Herzen, Dostoyevsky (particularly 'Crime and Punishment') and Maxim Gorky . . .[4]

They also studied the German and Italian liberation movements. Especially influential in the early formation of the ideas of the Young Bosnians was Mazzini's conception of the role of the young in the liberation of a nation, particularly with regard to his belief that, "There is no more sacred thing in the world than the duty of a conspirator, who becomes an avenger of humanity and the apostle of permanent natural laws."

In January 1907 Mitrinović travelled to Sarajevo to assist the high school students there to establish their own political society. In the autumn of that year he graduated from Mostar. After a short holiday at the home of his parents he set off with Bogdan Žerajić to study at Zagreb. He travelled via Belgrade and during his stay there established contact with literary and nationalist groups in the city, including *Slovenski jub* (The Slav South) which had its own journal. It seems clear that it was during his stay in Belgrade that Mitrinović arranged to obtain funding from the Serbian government to support him in his studies and his political activities. An anonymous report to the police in Zagreb alleged that he received more than 100 crowns a month from Belgrade whilst an associate, Veljki Petrović, remembered him as a man gifted with an amazing ability to acquire money seemingly without effort. Certainly he dressed and lived with some style. On one occasion he provided the improverished Vladimir Gaćinović with a complete outfit of clothes, whilst on one of his many visits to Sarajevo he treated ten students to an expensive meal at one of the best restaurants in town. He did a tremendous amount of travelling around the Austro-Hungarian Empire to Sarajevo, Belgrade, Vienna and further afield. Writing to a friend in January 1910 Bogdan Žerajić wrote that Mitrinović was in Zagreb:

> He lives very well. He sometimes goes looting to Sarajevo, then comes back loaded, lives for some time, then again. . . . .[5]

Nominally enrolled in the Faculty of Philosophy at Zagreb studying philosophy, psychology and logic, his academic studies were secondary to his political and cultural activities. It appears that he began to attend courses at other universities apart from Zagreb, including Belgrade and Vienna. It is recorded that in 1908 he was instrumental in the formation of a cultural society called Rad (Work) amongst the students at the University of Vienna. This group was particularly influenced by Thomas Masaryk and his advocacy of 'realistic tactics' as a method of political struggle. For Masaryk liberation would be achieved through the cultural reawakening of the South Slavs, and this would be brought about by the day-to-day work of individuals in cultural societies, temperance and literary groups. His gradualist tactics lost favour with certain of the Young Bosnians, however, when the Austro-Hungarians formally annexed Bosnia and Hercegovina in the October of 1908. On receiving this news in Vienna Mitrinović and five other students immediately formed a secret society to fight the Hapsburg authorities. They declared total opposition to the Austro-Hungarians and vowed never to recognise the annexation of their homelands which, they asserted, "represented

a sheer plunder, and if Austria-Hungary wants to swallow us, we shall gnaw its stomach."[6]

In their organisation of the society the founder members followed the practice advocated by Chernishevsky and other Russian revolutionaries. Each of them headed a secret group or "kruzhok" consisting of three members, none of whom knew the membership of any other kruzhok. To preserve secrecy the rules and aims of the society were not committed to paper, and correspondence was carried out by means of coded messages. The members of the society argued that the people of Bosnia and Hercegovina needed to be ideologically prepared for the final overthrow of their imperialist masters. To this end they set about organising secret societies and groups in the provinces and establishing links between the different villages. They also decided to make contact with "revolutionary, anarchist and nihilist organisations which exist in the world."[7] One of their number left for Russia in January 1909 in order to establish links with the Russian revolutionary movement and to learn their methods of work.

Mitrinović's activities were interrupted during the summer months of 1909 which he spent in Hertzgnovi recuperating from suspected tuberculosis. By the autumn, however, he was actively involved in the launching of a new journal, *Zora,* "the voice of the Serbian progressive academic youth."[8] According to Palavestra, Mitrinović, during the course of 1910, "held with his own hands many threads of the publishing and editorial policy of *Zora.*"[9] His work was interrupted once again in the summer of 1910 when he was arrested by the authorities. His friend Bogdan Žerajić had evolved a plan to assassinate the Emperor Franz Josef on the occasion of his visit to Mostar and Sarajevo. Nothing came of this and so, a short time later on June 13th, 1910, Žerajić had attempted to assassinate General Marijan Varesanin, committing suicide with the final shot from his revolver. It was alleged that Mitrinović was an accomplice and an instigator of the act. An anonymous note to the Sarajevo authorities alleged that:

> This man received to our knowledge 600 crowns a month from Belgrade . . . To Croatian writers he pays in advance a fee for working for Serb journals etc. . . . For the better elucidation of this attempt it is necessary at once to carry out a search of the rooms of Dimitrije Mitrinović in Zagreb. We add that we have written this letter to you, because this letter has the purpose of bringing to an end the conspiracies of the dangerous Mitrinović . . .[10]

Mitrinović was arrested and his rooms duly searched. Nothing incriminating was found and he was released after a few days, although his passport was confiscated for a while in an attempt to restrict his travelling.

It seems fairly clear that even if Mitrinović had some idea of his friend's plans, he disapproved of such individual violent acts. Along with perhaps the majority of the Young Bosnian movement he believed that the overthrow of the Hapsburg empire must be accompanied by a moral and cultural revival of society and the development of a new Yugoslav culture. As part of this anticipated renaissance, special attention was paid to the role of the arts in general and literature in particular. The literary journal *Bosanska Vila* played a crucial part in this development.

Founded in 1885 *Bosanska Vila* had been primarily devoted, in its early years, to the collection of folklore, customs and poems.[11] According to Dedijer, when Mitrinović was in Sarajevo in 1907 he became the review's "real editor" transforming *Bosanska Vila* "into a mouthpiece of modernism."[12] His involvement with the magazine had begun in 1905, when he was still a student at Mostar, with the publication of one of his poems. This was followed by other poems, and in 1907 by an article on "Our Literary Work," and a series of articles in 1908 including "Democratization of Science and Philosophy," "The National Ground and Modernity," and "The Philosopher Marcus Aurelius." During this period, according to Petrović:

> Mitrinović gave *Bosanska Vila* an enormous impulse by shaking it out of a romantic verbiose nationalism of fiery words and gave it a new direction, an understanding of nationalism that was modern and progressive. It thus became the advance guard of the younger generation. . . . The powerful influence of *Bosanska Vila* which grew with the development of the Serbian intelligentsia in Bosnia was such that more than any other Serbian publication on that territory, it represented the expression of the spiritual life of the time. Although Mitrinović brought a new impulse to it, he too, like all the others who worked for it, was educated under its influence, and came from the spiritual ambience which it had created.[13]

The Young Bosnians considered the spiritual and moral plight of the people as important as their material deprivation under the Hapsburgs' rule. They believed that the Austro-Hungarians were consciously promoting the moral corruption of their nation. The introduction of special military brothels to Bosnia and Hercegovina by the Hapsburg authorities was seen as an integral part of this policy. They were filled with disgust by what they viewed as the decadence of the older generation, their materialism, conservatism and apparent lack of nationalist feeling. This gulf between the generations was expressed by Mitrinović when, in 1911, he criticised the editorial board of the *Serbian Literary Herald* for not included amongst their members:

> . . . someone who is not an old man, spiritually old, old fashioned, old-Slav. I emphasize that what has been done in literature must be done in art: let the young speak; let them tell us what they have; let them work, let them show their artistic value, their national value.[14]

This concern of the Young Bosnians with the spiritual and moral regeneration of their people followed naturally from their belief in the importance of working towards the cultural revival of a suppressed people as a necessary preliminary to any move towards a political revolution. This feeling was expressed by Mitrinović in an article he wrote for *Bosanska Vila* (issues 9 and 10) in which he proclaimed:

> Our national tasks are very difficult, but urgent. Our enemies are very powerful: however our social, spiritual and physical milieu is too weak for hopes of victory to be close or sure. Our job today is to awaken dormant national energies, to make use of anything that may serve our ends, to raise the irresolute, to goad the lazy, to educate the unconscious, to show the path, and follow it as the best example, to encourage, spur on without pausing, to assemble and organise national energies and differentiate these energies for various great and arduous tasks.[15]

In emphasising the importance of the exemplary action of the individual he was echoing not only the Russian populist and revolutionary martyr Chernishevsky, but also the founder of Serbian socialism and one of the first to encourage the Yugoslav ideal, Svetozar Marković. One of Mitrinović's contemporaries, the literary critic Jovan Skerlić, summarised an important aspect of Marković's socialist idealism with the words: "Particularly in small countries, ideas are worth only as much as the men who advocate them."[16]

Such an emphasis on the significance of an ethical morality in the private and public life of the individual naturally led the Young Bosnians to adopt a critical stance towards political parties in general, and the social democratic parties in particular. They were attacked for their lack of principle and internal democracy, and their revealed tendency towards an authoritarian bureaucratization. In his article, "The Democratization of Science and Philosophy" published in *Bosanska Vila* in 1908 when he was aged twenty, Mitrinović expressed this feeling forcefully:

> The greater part of our activities, particularly in domestic party politics, have not arisen from reasonable and principled convictions, but from spite, envy, egoism, hatred and similar unworthy motives. Caprice often takes the place of principle. We shall never make any fundamental progress as long as the majority of our actions are not undertaken with serious and noble intentions . . . often a naive

and sentimental enthusiasm for 'harmony' is ridiculous, but party politics should not descend from the heights of principle to the depths of petty and unworthy disputes . . . In our politics there still rules a spirit of authoritarianism, so that our politics are usually not the politics of reason and wisdom, but the politics of authoritarianism and rhetoric . . . The sacred ambition to possess a conscience and intellectual integrity have almost disappeared . . .

Less caprice, more principle! This should be the motto of those who are able to do something to transform our swampy and senseless society into a different society, healthy and vital.[17]

The Young Bosnians saw it as their mission to inspire the equivalent of a spiritual or religious movement amongst the youth of the South Slav provinces; a movement that would lead to a federation of all the national groups following the overthrow of the Hapsburg empire. Indeed Dedijer has written that:

> The most positive contribution of the Young Bosnians to the South Slav struggle for national liberation was that they tried to rise above the religious and national strife which raged among the inhabitants of Bosnia and Hercegovina, ethnically the purest South Slav province but divided into various religious and national groups by its historical development.[18]

One of the most significant steps towards this goal of a Yugoslav federalism was taken in Sarajevo in 1911 when radical Croat and Serb students formed a joint secret society, *Srpsko-Hrvatsku Naprednu Organizaciju.* Its first president was Ivo Andrić who, a half century later, was to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature. One of the first to join was Gavrilo Princip, the Bosnian who was to fire the shots that killed the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo on June 28th 1914. In a letter to his tutor written in 1912 Princip observed that the new secret society accepted "the revolutionary program of Mitrinović."[19]

Much of Mitrinović's "First Draft of a General Programme for the Youth Club People's Unification" was written while he was in hospital in Zagreb suffering once again from some respiratory difficulty. It embodied many of the key ideas of the Young Bosnians. In particular it emphasised the need not only to wage a struggle against the injustices of the Austro-Hungarian regime, but the necessity of fighting for the moral, spiritual and cultural rebirth of the people of the occupied lands. Its main points included:

1. To oppose everything national and antinational in the material and spiritual life of our peoples by means of:
   (a) Radical anticlericalism.
   (b) Radical elimination of destructive alien influence and promotion of

Slavization of our culture against Germanization, Magyarization and Italianization.

(c) Fighting against attitudes of servility, sneaking and contemptibility and raising of national honour and pride.

(d) Expropriation of estates, liquidation of all prerogatives of aristocracy and all social privileges and the democratization of political consciousness and the political awakening of people.

2. A national defence against alien spiritual and material forces; national offensive to reawaken the subjugated and half-lost parts of our people by spiritual and material means.[20]

Through this society the ideas of the Young Bosnians and their commitment to a Yugoslavian federation spread to revolutionary youth groups throughout the different Slav provinces. Mitrinović played a significant role in this process, travelling the country presenting his programme to various groups. In the spring of 1912 he was in Belgrade where he addressed the members of a group organised around the paper *Preporod* (Renaissance). One of their number later recalled how "All of us were profoundly taken by Mitrinović's intellectual brilliance, and we wholeheartedly accepted his ideas."[21]

Mitrinović had described himself as a Yugoslav federalist even when he was a student at Mostar. In an article he wrote for the journal *Vihor* in 1914 he left the reader in no doubt where he stood on the nationalist question, "For Yugoslavia":

> We wish for the strength, honour and integrity of the national struggle of the Serbo-Croats and Slovenes, a nationalism of sacrificial and creative action instead of a patriotism of lukewarm and—within legal limits—warm feelings . . . Life is finer than death, we believe: yes, but death is more honourable than shame! And for the nationalists of Serbo-Croatia and Slovenia, for the sons of the uncreated Yugoslavia, there is nothing more exalted than the struggle, and nothing sweeter than the great victory. . . . Hopes and beliefs, you nationalist youth! From the saving idea of Yugoslavia and from her unbreakable basis and the national union of the Serbs and Croats, let us set to work on the nationalist creation of ourselves, on strengthening, preparation, and perfection. Forward to our goal, to the Idea of the Nation of the Southern Slavs, and to Freedom! Through the National Union of Serbo-Croats and Slovenes let us step to their National Unification.[22]

The belief in the importance of working towards a moral and cultural revival of the South Slav peoples through the exemplary influence of morally strong persons led many Young Bosnians to a kind of revolutionary ascetism, even puritanism, in their private lives. Mitrinović's friend and contemporary from Mostar, Vladimir Gaćinović, gave some indication of this in a letter to Trotsky: "In our organisation there is a rule of obligatory abstinence

from love-making and drinking, and you must believe me when I tell you that all of us remain true to this rule."[23] Gaćinović and Mitrinović were both concerned to establish an ethical system based on this revolutionary morality of the Young Bosnians. For Mitrinović, this manifested itself in a particular interest in the relationship between ethics and aesthetics.

Between 1907 and 1913 he wrote regularly for *Bosanska Vila* as a literary critic. During this period he developed further his belief in the moral and social mission of works of art. In 1911 he wrote in the review:

> Every work of art has two values: an aesthetic value contained in the artistic form, and the ethical, national cultural value of the content within the form. The aim of art is always the expression of its theme, but not merely expression for itself. The meaning of a work of art is always contained in its subject matter, in its moral significance, moral symbols and moral value. A work is created for the sake of its purpose.[24]

In the same year that this appeared, Mitrinović was sent by the Serbian government to report on the First International Art Exhibition in Rome. In Italy he shared rooms with Ivan Mestrović, the Dalmatian sculptor,[25] and enthusiastically reviewed the artist's work: praising not only the aesthetic qualities of the works exhibited, but emphasizing the importance of their national value in propagating the idea of Yugoslav unity.

> I must admit that I have never had a deeper or more fine feeling of being a Serb than before the splendid 'Malevolence' by Mestrović. Never has my heart had such a Serbian beat and never have I felt more crushingly the sacredness of revenge which will cry out at shameless men when from our blood speak out spirits like this statue of Mestrović's, alive with flesh and earth. Mestrović's 'Malevolence' is silent, but terrifyingly silent, although it has no soul, made of plaster of dead earth. Mestrović is a prophet, and he who does not understand this, does not understand him, and has no moral right to enjoy his art. And this is what he prophesies: the resurrection of our entire people, both Serbian and Croatian.[26]

Whenever he returned to Sarajevo he would attend meetings of the Young Bosnians, taking the opportunity to expound his ideas on the role of the arts and his ideal of Yugoslav unity. One of his associates from that period, Borivoje Jevtić, who was later to become Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, remembered him thus:

> Somewhat above average height, broad-shouldered, with an energetic gait and holding a strong stick in his hand, Mitrinović resembled some world-traveller,

> who by chance had fallen into this sad, gloomy small-town society, upon which he hastily and at random poured his abundant knowledge and his vast experience of life . . . While Vladimir Gaćinović, distrustful and always cautious, would always direct us in a whisper to select secret groups of essentially revolutionary conspiracy, and to Russian revolutionary literature, Mitrinović opened up to us the horizons of world literatures and taught us mutual tolerance, the need for mutual national tolerance, the great idea of the Unity and brotherhood of the Yugoslav peoples.[27]

It was at such gatherings that he would introduce to his friends and associates the new ideas and books that he had come across on his travels. He brought to their attention, amongst others, the works of Walt Whitman, which were later translated by Ivo Andrić. With his gift for foreign languages he was able to introduce the classical literature of Europe to the writers of Young Bosnia. According to Palavestra:

> Most of the young writers gathered around him considered Mitrinović as their intellectual leader and as a kind of teacher . . . Mitrinović influenced powerfully the writers of Young Bosnia, being an almost uncontested arbiter on many issues in art and literature . . .[28]

Mitrinović gave fullest expression to his views on art, the role of the individual and the artist, and the need for a new philosophy of culture and life in a series of articles published in *Bosanska Vila* in 1913 under the collective title of "Aesthetic Contemplations." It is difficult to gauge the impact these articles had on his contemporaries. Certainly they make no concessions to the reader. They are the outpourings of an anguished soul and a troubled heart. They are filled with a sense of disgust and contempt for civilisation coupled with a sense of sorrow at the human condition. At the same time these feelings are linked with a sense of wonder at the potentiality of humanity, and an insistence upon the moral responsibility of the individual and the creative artist in particular to work to aid humanity fulfil this potentiality. They reveal the feelings and longings of one who, familiar with the major schools of philosophical thought, condemns them for their inadequacy and impotence to change the world, but retains a faith in the crucial role of ideas in changing the world. This faith in the role of ideas is tempered by the painful recognition of the problems of discovering the right way to act and the impossible task of revealing a single truth for people to follow; and yet there is revealed a Nietzschean faith in the ability of heroic minorities to change the world. The whole is informed

by an idealist faith in the power of intuition and imagination and the need for the individual to strive to achieve a spiritual purity in the face of the smug materialism of the elder generation.

Written in a polemical style, "Aesthetic Contemplations," despite the many digressions and repetitions that can confuse the reader, impresses by its force and the strength of feeling revealed. Of civilization Mitrinović wrote:[29]

> Mankind in civilization is fallen. We are insulted, battered, soiled and deformed by the soullessly soulless and bestially inhuman living that shakes the earth, by the tumult and shrieking, the roar and clamour which deafens us, and we are beaten black and blue with their 'dread-noughts' and their stock exchanges. We desire Humanity, we who cry to God that we are sick with the lawlessness of the powerful and battered by the misfortune that we live in this shameless today.

The vehemence of his opposition to bourgeois decadence and philistinism rivals that of Sorel and Nietzsche.

> Monsters have seized power on earth and one must live with disgust. And we hate and despise the truths and beauties that are powerless and without will to overthrow the dread rule of inhumanity that destroys man's honour and profanes his ideal. People suffer from the lawlessness of state power, of ecclesiastical power, and the evil multitude of forces that have arisen against man and who tirelessly plunge the earth into disaster.

His revulsion against bourgeois society was an essentially moral one. Whilst recognising the existence of material deprivation and poverty and the abuses of power and privilege, it was the moral and cultural degradation of humanity that hurt most deeply. "We are accursed and cast into the dread depths of senselessness and ineffectuality."

The sense of impotence to which so many give way was made worse by the realisation that there was no simple answer to the plight of humanity, no single truth which one could follow:

> Nothing on earth, is clear to its utmost profundity. To the more refined intelligence things are ever more obscure . . . There is no single truth. There are as many truths as there are consciousnesses certain that they possess the truth within them.

Even so, it was imperative to commit oneself to change and the transcendence of the bankrupt order of the present. There was a need to search for a new way of living and relating, to "dedicate ourselves to a new star with

a new and redeemed salutary ideal, to take wing and again fly off into the unattainable." But one could not look to anyone else to break the fetters of the existing order, to take one to the new realm:

> No one can lead anyone there to that place, none guide. One reaches it only on one's own. Only he can attain this all-healing spring who finds the path within himself, for whom the gentle star has desired that he be saved.

And yet there were people, minute in number and perhaps insignificant in the eyes of the world, who were aware that "all truths are tangled in the most contradictory mutual suppositions," who could appreciate and embrace all the different views of the world, of right and wrong, and who possessed a sense of an alternative order based on a new way of seeing and being—the realisation that "truths are not right or wrong, but good or evil."

> The truth of these of the smallest minority lies not in whether anything is or is not, but in whether it should be or should not be. The truth of truth consists in its perfection of our moral beauty, in its good action, in its value for good will. Truth is goodness, the beauty of the soul. What is truthful is what makes the soul better and more beautiful, the truth is what we wish . . . The truth or untruth of a thing depends on our will . . . The will is the endlessly powerful creator of ideas. The ideal is the highest truth . . .

It was the responsibility of this small minority of individuals to create a new philosophy for living, as a necessary preparation for the construction of a new age, an age of 'all-human humanity'.

> We need to create a revision of values according to the criterion demanded by the soul and to build a synthesis of the whole of knowledge, creating a new philosophy, better than yesterday's and superior to any former philosophy, which will give justice to the soul.

But it was not sufficient merely to create a new philosophy, a new scheme of values. If "the truth or untruth of a thing depends on our will" it was necessary to live out one's ideals in public and private life. The transcendence of the old and the creation of the new must be "brought to life in one's feelings and actions." People did not need new theories of knowledge, "but the power to bring to life the Ideal and cast down oppression . . . We desire a philosophy of practice, a wisdom of living."

In calling upon all those of tomorrow who live in today to join in this task, Mitrinović allotted a special role to the creative artist. He demanded the democratization of art: the breaking down of divisions between disciplines

and areas of expertise, the dismantling of the barriers between creators and consumers.

> For art has been too little art, too little the speech of the soul's morality through intuitive expression . . . It is time to mix a chaos, to unlock exclusiveness and to link the hitherto unlinkable so that for man life be based upon man's values, upon his true being. We need the arts to be arts and not just painting, the plastics, architecture, music, literature, dancing and acting. They need to speak of the soul, the whole soul, the soul of mankind. In each of the arts and in every part of each of them there should be the whole of mankind. Beauty should sing philosophy and religion to us, speak morality to us . . . For if someone has anything to say to us moderns, he should not speak to the spirit, but with song, with symbol, with paradox and intuition. To think in concept is altogether too academic.

For Mitrinović the aim was to introduce into life a spiritual art, to fill it with moral meaning. To that extent an "art that is empty is of no value to us, the morality that is pompous is worthless. The new philosophy must speak in the language of art, the new art with the profounder thought of philosophy." In attributing such an important role to art and artists, he was highlighting his belief that "cultural philosophy is the only philosophy that can lead us out of the hellish torment which is our modern spiritual and moral, physical crisis of the soul." But such a philosophy and such an art must be integrally linked to life and practice. For:

> The realisation of the ideal is what the people need and what thought desires and is the only way to overthrow oppression and found humanity, to enlighten the people and strengthen thought . . . Our task, our ever-present need is a vital and powerful philosophy, a wisdom in which the world is not merely mirrored but by which it is governed. It is not thought that is the work of the new philosophy but it is work which is its thought. Its skill is the making of life better and not the reflection of life as it is.[30]

Mitrinović had begun to prepare "Aesthetic Contemplations" towards the end of 1912 whilst he was in Rome. It seemed to mark a definite shift in his concerns: from the nationalist struggle and the life of the political organiser and ideologue to a scenario of individual and social change on a much deeper and wider scale, a concern not only with the transformation of his own people and of the Balkans but of Europe and the world. The change in focus undoubtedly reflected, in part, his growing familiarity with different cultures and world-views derived from his travels and the people he met, which enabled him to develop a far wider frame of reference than

that possessed by his friends and compatriots at home. At the same time, during the periods he spent in Rome, he intensified his own personal study of modern and ancient, western and eastern philosophies and religions which further broadened and deepened his perspective on the world. Moreover, there was a new generation of political activists emerging in the Balkans who, influenced by the example of Bogdan Žerajić, had been converted to the idea and practice of political assassination as a means of struggle against Hapsburg rule. Whilst Mitrinović sympathised with the ultimate ends of people like Gavrilo Princip, he was opposed to the means they advocated. He was totally opposed to violence as a means of revolutionary change. The real task lay in preparing people, morally and culturally, for the new society.

In many ways, then, "Aesthetic Contemplations" marked a new stage of development in Mitrinović's approach to the problems of the world and its transformation, and presaged many of the themes which were to dominate the rest of his life and which he was to explore both in his writing and in his living. In "Aesthetic Contemplations" he had described the task that lay ahead:

> We must gather the riches inherited from other generations, order them, test them, distribute them, give life to them, utilise them according to justice and for the universal progress. We must digest all history and create from it an unshakeable, unchangeable, universal, single foundation beneath us . . .

Some twenty years later Basil Boothroyd was to say of Mitrinović that he had a neurosis the size of Nelson's Column and it was called "synthesis."[31] Despite the irreverance, there was a deal of truth in the remark. The search for synthesis in all fields was a guiding passion of his life. He was concerned not just with synthesis of the arts, the breaking down of the barriers that divided different disciplines, but ultimately with the synthesis of the world as a whole, the establishment of what he came to refer to as "Universal Humanity," the transformation of the world into a true home for the family of mankind, the transcendence of all the differences that divided people from each other and the creation of a new order within which people might acknowledge their differences but respect each other as equal members of a common human fellowship and family.

In a series of articles that appeared in Orage's *The New Age* in the early 1920s Mitrinović was to develop the idea of humanity as a single organism with all the different groupings of people throughout the world having their own specific contribution to make in their different ways to the maintenance and well-being of the whole. The sketch of a functional ordering of the world developed in the columns of *The New Age* allowed for and

acknowledged the many differences that existed between the races, classes and nationalities of the world. It recognised the idea that he had explored in "Aesthetic Contemplations" that there was no single truth, that there were as many truths as there were consciousnesses certain that they possessed the truth. It was his answer to what he described in "Aesthetic Contemplations" as "the yearning of the spirit for that very real awareness, for that all-comprehending thought, for that all-embracing theory."

In "Aesthetic Contemplations" he argued strongly for the uniting of theory and action, and a major concern of his life was with the translation of his vision into the realm of practice, at least on a small experimental scale. Thus, in the 1930s especially, he worked intensively with groups of individuals of different ideas and persuasions, seeking to create a functional order in microcosm in which the differences between people were not suppressed at the cost of individual freedom but were recognised and acknowledged, and also transcended within the context of the functional ordering of the group life as a whole.

A major component of the group life with which Mitrinović was involved in the 1930s was the training of the members for a new integrating social function which he called "senate." In essence senators were to act as the intervening link between the individual and humanity as a whole, between the single cell and the whole organism. Senators were those who possessed the ability to view human problems and concerns in the context of the needs of the whole of humanity. Their function was to represent the interests of humanity to those with whom they came into contact. The germ of this idea was expressed in "Aesthetic Contemplations" in his description of that minority "whose gaze embraces the circles of all points of view and unites them all," those for whom "all-embracingness is their passion, the harmonisation and distillation of chaos, the formation of the formless, the putting together of the sundered, the organisation of the disorganised, the concentration of the dispersed," those who "cast furthest and encompass most, come closest to truth and aim closest to the centre."

In later years Mitrinović depicted the stance that he adopted towards the world by the maxim "mentally scepticism, spiritually affirmation." This is an apt description of the impression conveyed by "Aesthetic Contemplations." On the one hand it is pervaded by a sense of idealistic optimism, especially in passages such as:

> The ideal is the highest truth . . . The ultimate truth is our dream, our ecstasy, our desiring. The conception of the good in us is truth . . .

At the same time this apparent naiveté is tempered by a quite sober sense of realism on occasions, as in the "recognition of the insolubility of all problems on earth" and the claim that "to the more refined intelligence things are ever more obscure . . . ."

It was perhaps in such a spirit of mental scepticism balanced by emotional optimism that Mitrinović, early in 1913, decided to begin a new life in Munich where he could continue his personal and university studies. He arrived there in the early spring of 1913 and took lodgings on Adalbert Strasse. To his friend and patron in Belgrade, Velimir Rajić, he wrote on March 4th that in Rome he had become a new person, that henceforth he would devote himself to his studies and play a less active role in the nationalist struggle, "because it is superfluous to rouse the world to something that is accomplished only in spirit and will and for which you still have to wait, and for which it is necessary to work." He continued:

> Here in Munich I shall remain for only one semester for intenser studies of art history and modern art, and in the autumn I shall go to some smaller city further into Germany and shall stay there till the end. I came here without any certain view of how I shall manage for support: but anyway I shall remain. I don't want to return without a degree unless it is demanded by those older and bigger than me; but that won't happen. I shall take my nationalism even more strongly and deeper and more seriously later on when I've finished and then I shall be more useful everywhere, to myself and to my friends . . . In Rome I existed well and badly, I lived splendidly and insignificantly, I worked and lost myself and wandered about seeking my soul. Now that's finished; and nothing is left in this world but making myself ready for my real business with work which is not quite the real work and is not altogether pleasant.[32]

Mitrinović's decision to leave his homeland was a difficult one for his friends and associates to understand. It seemed as if he was turning his back on the struggle to which they had devoted their lives. His younger brother, Čedomil, was later to recall that he "simply disappeared and vanished from the public life of his country. He went away from Serbia and stayed in Rome, Munich, Tübingen. To his fellow country-men at home it seemed that he had become dead and feelingless towards his own country."[33] His departure also provided welcome ammunition to his political opponents who opposed his dream of the unification of Serbs and Croats within a

federal Yugoslavia. Mitrinović was philosophical about such attacks. On December 21st 1913 he wrote to Rajić:

> There reached me today a letter from Belgrade which in a friendly way speaks scowlingly and gives advice; it states that I'm terribly hated and people would like to crack me. It's interesting that the snarlings are much more thunderous when I'm not there; and that few friends and innumerable enemies is a rule. I know this, and I don't get excited about it. Only if there is anything at all that materially affects life and wants to destroy me, please tell me ruthlessly; and if some rogue wants to make me an Austrian hireling or in general deform me morally publicly and privately, again don't spare me: for scoundrels can by moral rebukes make it hard and reduce success, and we don't want to lose force. As for intellectual evaluations of me, let anyone do what they must. . . .[34]

Whilst people at home felt that Mitrinović had deserted them and their cause at a crucial time he had, in fact, given some indication as far back as 1908 that his constituency spread far beyond the territorial boundaries of the South Slav lands. In an article entitled "The National Milieu and Modernism" published in *Bosanska Vila* he had written:

> If one wishes to be a real poet he must be first of all a human being in the fullest sense of the word . . . the utmost and eternal subject of art is the human being everywhere and eternal . . . an individual is not only a member of a national group but also a member of the human race.[35]

In 1926 Čedomil Mitrinović travelled to Britain where he met his brother. He asked him why he had left his homeland. The reply was typically cryptic:

> The torch flares, the fire has been lit. I am the sower who does not reap the harvest.[36]

Chapter 2

MUNICH

Mitrinović enrolled at the University of Munich to study the history of Art under the distinguished Swiss scholar Heinrich Wölfflin. In those prewar days the city enjoyed the reputation of being the foremost artistic centre in Europe after Paris, and attracted artists and students from many countries. Perhaps the most significant development taking place in Munich at the time of his arrival was the emergence of that school of abstract or non-representational painting that was centered around Wassily Kandinsky and his associates—the *Blaue Reiter* Group. It was towards this circle of creative artists that Mitrinović gravitated.

Kandinsky had arrived in Munich in 1896 from Russia and since 1908 had been living in a small village, Murnau, in Upper Bavaria with Gabrielle Münter. In 1912 he had been instrumental in organising an exhibition of paintings by new artists who came to be known as the Blaue Reiter Group. 1912 was also the year that the *Blaue Reiter Almanac* was published, described by Franz Marc as "an organ for all the really new ideas of our day. Painting, music, drama, etc . . ." Kandinsky's idea had been to produce "a 'synthesised' book which was to eliminate old narrow ideas and tear down the walls between the arts . . . and which was to demonstrate eventually that the question of art is not a question of form but one of artistic content."[1]

The views to which Mitrinović had given expression in "Aesthetic Contemplations" placed him in full accord with such sentiments. His critique of materialism and positivism, his rejection of the idea of "art for art's sake," his belief in the spiritual and reformatory powers of art, and his insistence on the need to break down the barriers between the arts, all echoed the views of Kandinsky and his associates. A fact which Kandinsky acknowledged in a letter of February 17th, 1914, to Franz Marc in which he suggested that Mitrinović "can be *very* useful to the Blaue Reiter . . . I've talked a lot about it with him and he goes to the heart of things like lightning."[2]

Mitrinović's presence in Munich was also noted by Paul Klee (1879–1940), the Swiss-born painter and associate of Kandinsky's:

> Mitrinović, a Serbian, came to Munich and gave a lecture about the new art, Kandinsky etc. He also approached me. Had me lend him some of my works so that he could immerse himself in them. A nice man with a peasant face.
>
> Often comes to our music sessions. Made this classic utterance: "Yes, Bach knew how to write it, you know how to play it, and I know how to listen to it."[3]

The lecture referred to by Klee was delivered in the Great Hall of the Museum in Munich on February 27th 1914, entitled "Kandinsky and the New Art: or 'Taking Tomorrow by Storm'". In the programme the theme of the lecture was described as "the new art" and "the spiritual development of our time in its organic relationships with the past." Mitrinović was later to claim that in the lecture he had forecast the violence that was to erupt in war before the end of the year, on the basis of his study of contemporary artists. This sense of impending violence was one that Kandinsky also experienced very strongly. In a letter to Michael Sadler concerning a painting he had sent to the Englishman in 1914 to which Sadler had given the title "War in the Air," Kandinsky wrote: "I knew that a terrible struggle was going on in the spiritual sphere, and that made me paint the picture I sent you."[4]

It was undoubtedly Kandinsky's vision of the intrinsic links that existed between the spiritual realm, the creative work of the artist, and the ultimate transformation of the human order which attracted Mitrinović. Kandinsky had given fullest expression to these views in *Concerning the Spiritual in Art,* published in 1912, in which he presented his justification for abstract art.

He looked to the creation of a new age of spirituality after the years of materialism—"the nightmare of materialism, which turned life into an evil, senseless game."[5] He wrote that "to each spiritual epoch corresponds a new spiritual content, which that epoch expresses by forms that are new, unexpected, surprising, and in this way aggressive."[6] He thus saw the role of the artist as crucial in relation to the development of the new spirituality. True works of art were not only expressions of some profound emotion or spiritual experience, "produced by internal necessity, which springs from the soul"; they also had the power to "nourish the spirit."[7] A true work of art "has a definite and purposeful strength, alike in its material and spiritual life. It exists and has power to create spiritual atmosphere; and from this

internal standpoint alone can one judge whether it is a good work of art or bad."[8]

Kandinsky adopted the imagery of an acute angled triangle to graphically represent his vision of the evolutionary process leading towards the new epoch. The triangle was divided into horizontal sections, with the narrowest segment uppermost. The whole pyramid, he believed, could be portrayed as moving almost imperceptibly forward and upward—where the apex is one day, the second segment will be tomorrow, and so on: "what today can be understood only by the apex, is tomorrow the thought and feeling of the second segment."[9]

Kandinsky also included the Theosophists as "movers" of humanity, as well as those "professional men of learning who test matter again and again, who tremble before no problem, and who finally cast doubt on that very *matter* which was yesterday the foundation of everything, so that the whole universe rocks."[10] In this Kandinsky was reflecting the reaction of theosophists in general to the emergence of nuclear physics at the turn of the century. If matter was not matter after all, then could not everything be regarded as condensed and shaped spirit? Rudolf Steiner observed that matter was "dissolved into vapour and mist" in the face of such research.[11] It also provided Kandinsky with an important justification for non-representational art: since matter was disappearing, the time was right for pure abstraction and concentration upon the internal life within objects.

Naturally, Kandinsky believed that artists constituted a significant section of the motor force behind this spiritual movement. In each 'segment' there exist artists who can see beyond the limited world of their fellows, and who therefore, as prophets, help the advance of the whole; despite the fact that they may be scorned and misunderstood in the short term. Their role as "torchbearers of truth" would eventually be recognised:

> Every segment hungers, consciously or unconsciously, for adequate spiritual satisfactions. These are offered by artists, and for such satisfactions the segment below will tomorrow stretch out eager hands.[12]

Art, for Kandinsky, was "a power which must be directed to the development and refinement of the human soul, to raising the triangle of the spirit."[13]

Many of these themes had been echoed by Mitrinović in "Aesthetic Contemplations." Like Kandinsky he had drawn a distinction between the vast majority of people and that small minority whose direction was forward and whose aim was "to embrace, to review, to be aware of and comprehend the entire horizon of truths, no matter how many." Like Kandinsky he emphasised the role of the artist amongst this advance guard; those who,

in their imagination, anticipated the future, "the dream of the far-away and the great." Like the Russian artist he had a firm faith that the example and efforts of just a few, those "true ones . . . who are of today yet who were born tomorrow," could act as a leavening agent amongst the mass of alienated humanity dominated by the world-as-it-is and ill-equipped to envisage the world-as-it-might-be.

As part of this 'leavening process' Kandinsky had been planning to produce a second yearbook to follow the publication of the original *Blaue Reiter Almanac* in 1912. Although Mitrinović had originally planned to leave Munich in the spring of 1914 and move to Tübingen to complete his doctoral studies, his growing involvement with Kandinsky meant that once again he deserted his university studies and channelled his energies into the preparation of the proposed book, taking on the role of chief editor. Planned as the first of a series, the Yearbook was seen as part of a wider movement "Towards the Mankind of the Future through Aryan Europe." This was to be an initiative to transform and unify Europe, working towards the transcendence of the different national cultures and the creation of a "pan-European culture" which, as a model, would lay the foundations for the overcoming of all divisions between people in the world—the attainment of world fellowship.

In their approach Mitrinović and Kandinsky were noticeably influenced by the visionary ideals of the Russian theologian, poet, and philosopher Vladimir Solovyov (1853–1900). Solovyov viewed the cosmos as an organism, animated by a single spirit and evolving towards a definite goal—the final reconciliation of the world of God with that of humanity. Such an achievement could only be attained through humanity consciously joining with God, as co-partners, to transform personal and social life. "The supreme aim of individual and social morality," he wrote, "is that all men and all things should be conformed to the image of Christ . . . it depends on each one of us contributing towards its realization by trying to reproduce Christ in our personal and social life."[14]

Mitrinović anticipated that the Yearbook would be published in the Spring of 1915, and by June 1914 he was heavily involved in negotiations with the publishers, the Delphin company of Munich, and in establishing contact with potential contributors. The list was impressive: they included Peter Kropotkin and Thomas Masaryk, the sculptor Ivan Mestrović, Maxim Gorky, Knut Hamsen, Maurice Maeterlinck, Emile Verhaeren, Anatole France, Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Rudolph Eucken, Henri Bergson, Franz Oppenheimer, Otto Braun and Jean Jaurès. Mitrinović was also busy preparing articles for various European journals on the idea

of the movement, on the significance of the potential contributors to the Yearbook, and on such prophets as Solovyov and Dostoyevsky. He was also planning a series of lectures which he hoped to present in Berlin, prior to a trip to Russia with Kandinsky where he planned to lecture on the theme of a "pan-Europe." Trips to London and Paris, Serbia and America were to follow the Russian tour.

In a letter to Kandinsky of June 25th 1914 he begged the artist to come up to Munich for a couple of days in order to discuss these plans. Informing Kandinsky of the progress made in relation to the Yearbook, he continued:

> . . . I shall write myself to Mr. Volker directly and with confidence because it seems to me that "die Siderische Geburt" is worthy to be the true religion of a pan-Europe. But I ask you also to write to him about the movement; not to lose too much time over it, but all the same to do it; for I think that Mr. Volker, with you, with Chamberlain, Papini and Braun will be the principal thought-bearers of the movement . . . it is necessary that you support me to these gentlemen; Volker, after all, does not know me at all . . . I am so completely nameless that I cannot command the respect of anybody, at least in Europe.

"Volker" was the pen-name adopted by a young German, Erich Gutkind, who had published in 1910 *Siderische Geburt (Sidereal Birth).* Kandinsky had been heavily influenced by this book, had corresponded with the author, and had in turn introduced Mitrinović to the work. It had an immediate and profound impact on the young Serbian. In a letter to its author of June 27th 1914 he wrote:

> . . . Mr. Kandinsky has given me a picture of you which truly inspires reverence . . . He has drawn my attention to *Siderische Geburt* and has strongly recommended it. This book, dear sir, has to my joy become a book which supports and uplifts me . . . I am indebted to *Sidereal Birth* as to hardly any other of my pan-human experiences, and was deeply moved on reading it and transfigured much as I was with the first Kandinsky exhibition which I experienced . . .

Sidereal Birth has been variously described as "a curious work . . . (which) consists of a large helping of mystical word salad, for the most part unintelligible but with occasional passages conveying at least a semblance of a meaning to the reader,"[15] and as "a hymnodic rhapsody to a new age, written with little attention to organisation or system, but with an exuberance of poetic imagery."[16] In fact, the book revealed certain similarities with the theology of Solovyov: the same kind of intuitive mysticism, the vision of the history of the world as a single cosmic process, the recognition

of humans as the connecting link between the divine and the natural world, and the same emphasis upon the crucial significance of the free individual combining with others in a movement towards a new utopian age. Despite its difficult and esoteric style, making free use of terms such as 'Pleroma,' 'Seraphic,' and 'Sepulchral,' running throughout the work was a clear apocalyptic theme. The existing world order, world views, religions, were outworn and exhausted. Humanity stood on the brink of an exciting and wonderful new age: an age that would finally see the fusion of the world of God and the world of man—humans would become as gods. Perfect freedom would be attained—Heaven on Earth. To move into this new epoch we must sever our links with the old. Discard all our old props and supports, whether they be material possessions, fixed ideas or gods. Unfettered and free we shall then be in a position to recognise the organic links that exist between all things, "experience the whole of the divine cycle"[17] and acknowledge our own divinity. In so doing we shall begin to take upon ourselves the responsibility not merely for the narrow individual self but for the whole of humanity. "The most joyful tidings are that we can burst the framework of the world, and that it falls to us to shape it into the highest holiness."[18]

In his letter to Gutkind of June 27th 1914, Mitrinović asked for his assistance in arranging his proposed lectures in Berlin and invited him to join with Kandinsky in helping to organise the Yearbook. Specifically he asked if Gutkind would write a short and relatively simple summary of the main points of *Sidereal Birth* for inclusion in the book. In his rather untutored German he concluded the letter with the observation that if Gutkind acceded to these requests:

> I shall have a great joy of my life in that case, for I have the courage to believe that the total revolution of aryan pan-humanity movements will be given a foundation by *Sidereal Birth.* I hope and trust that you, honoured sir, will undertake to carry a considerable part of the organisation of the movement and a most significant part, that of final truth and total faith.

In later life Mitrinović was to remark that if Gutkind had not written *Sidereal Birth* then he himself would have had to write it, such was the lasting impact that the work had upon him. Indeed, he must have felt that in Gutkind he had discovered a kindred soul whose vision mirrored much that he himself had explored in "Aesthetic Contemplations." The affirmation of the ultimate unity of all humanity, the bankruptcy and sterility of the contemporary world, the higher order of consciousness that was necessary in order to create the new order that was imminent within the womb of

the old—all this struck an answering chord within Mitrinović. Much of his later life was devoted to the development of these insights. In particular, in the group life that he orchestrated in London in the 1930s he sought ways of developing amongst those gathered around him that new consciousness required by the new age wherein, according to Gutkind, "the 'I' must perish, but 'We' must put forth life."

In the meantime, however, his letter to Gutkind was rewarded with an invitation to visit the Gutkind family home in Jena. He set off from Munich on July 19th 1914. In a letter to Kandinsky written on the day of his departure he expressed the hope that whilst at Jena he might meet that "dear and noble old man" Professor Rudolf Eucken. He then planned to go on to Berlin armed with an introduction to Gustav Landauer provided by Gutkind, thereby obtaining access to European socialist and anarchist circles. "Through Landauer," he observed to Kandinsky, "one could get to Kropotkin." In Berlin he also hoped to call on Franz Oppenheimer, then on to Bayreuth to visit H. S. Chamberlain. He expected to be back in Munich by July 24th. At a later date he planned to visit Umfrid and then on to "my much respected" Mauthner at Lindau.

But first there was the meeting with Gutkind. Mitrinović set off "full of confidence" and "happy with hope." He was not disappointed, the visit proved a great success. In a note to Kandinsky of July 21st he wrote:

> Gutkind is a wonderful personality; a depth of soul and a purity of inner-ness which elevates one. We have fundamentally understood each other . . . it was good beyond expectation.[19]

It was a meeting of two "men of genius" according to LeRoy Finch:

> Mitrinović's genius lay in direct dealing with people, while Gutkind's was expressed in ideas and writing. What they shared was that in both of them the ordinary concerns of the self had been replaced by a new intensity of vision (as much, it seemed to many, physiological as psychological). The self-security and self-enhancement (which consciously and unconsciously determine the lives of most men) had been transformed in them into a clairvoyant kind of "seeing."[20]

Gutkind was at that time deeply involved in an initiative for world peace based on similar premises to the movement "Towards the Mankind of the Future." Kandinsky had, in fact, already talked with Mitrinović about Gutkind's venture, describing it as an "organisation for a pan-human little brotherhood of the most world-worthy bearers of present day culture."[21]

With the Dutchman Frederik van Eeden, Gutkind was engaged in seeking to create an association of the leading spirits of the time who, they anticipated, through coming together and sharing their lives and ideas, might act as an essentially moral force to influence the path of the world's development in the direction of peace and harmony. This proposed association or community of the leaders of world thought and culture came to be known by the name of the Blut-bund or "blood-brotherhood." The prime mover behind it was undoubtedly van Eeden, a man of far more active nature than the scholarly Gutkind.

Born in Haarlem in 1860, van Eeden had led a rich and varied life. After studying medicine he had established an Institute for Psychical Therapy in Holland, based on the belief that "the body could be cured by the mind."[22] As he pursued his medical career, he also attained national and international fame as a writer of novels, poems, and plays. Moved by an awareness of the ills of humanity and the search for remedies, he read the works of Robert Owen, Henry George, Shelley and Ruskin, and was profoundly influenced by the example of Thoreau. He eventually arrived at the conclusion that the answer to the evils of society was not to be found in the works of Marx, who stood "with both feet in the swamp of materialism,"[23] but through cooperative living based on fraternal love and friendship.

Accordingly, in the best tradition of the utopian socialists for whom he held such admiration, he established in 1898 a cooperative colony at Bussum, Holland, named "Walden" in honour of Henry Thoreau's "high minded example." Always fond of nautical analogies, van Eeden likened Walden to "a small pilot ship in the great economic fleet, seeking a proper route over the shallows to the harbour."[24] Financial difficulties forced the closure of the colony in 1907. Between 1908 and 1910 van Eeden made several trips to the U.S.A. where he sought the assistance of, amongst others, Upton Sinclair, in the promotion of cooperative ventures that would further his vision of a benevolent world-wide brotherhood of capitalist and worker.[25]

Throughout his life van Eeden held the view that the working classes, brutalised and incapacitated by the harsh struggle for existence, needed the enlightened leadership of people of intelligence and vision if they were ever to attain true socialism. The publication of *Sidereal Birth* in 1910 caused him great excitement, for here was another advanced thinker who stressed the necessity of social change through individual personal transformation and cooperative effort rather than through class conflict and the struggle for political power, and who emphasized the key role to be played by intellectuals and the spiritually advanced in sowing the seeds of the new age.

The two men began a correspondence, and in a letter to Upton Sinclair of December 16th 1910 the Dutchman confided that he was preparing a manifesto which would call for the "Noblest of all Nations" to unite. The rallying call of "Proletarians Unite" was fruitless, he explained, because a "united mass of proletarians is a body without a head. But the Free and Pure, the Kingly and Powerful minds ought to make a stand."[26] The outcome of the joint endeavour with Gutkind was the publication of a short book entitled *Welt-Eroberung durch Helden-Liebe (World Conquest through Heroic Love),* consisting of two essays: "Heroic Love" by van Eeden and "World Conquest" by Gutkind.[27] This was to be the manifesto for the proposed group of "kingly spirits" who, by their moral and spiritual example, would lead the rest of humanity out from the morass of materialism and selfish greed into a realm of freedom and cooperation—the Blut-bund.

Mitrinović's visit to Jena during July 1914 provided Gutkind with the opportunity to assess the Serbian's potential contribution to the group. He was impressed. He wrote to Kandinsky concerning the visit: "We had three marvellous days and all is going well." A copy of "the little blue book," as Gutkind referred to *World Conquest Through Heroic Love* was also given to Mitrinović.

The book explored many of the ideas first raised in *Sidereal Birth.* At the core of both essays was the belief that the most significant division in society lay between the minority who were attuned to the new age and its values, and the mass of folk entrapped within the old. Gutkind wrote:

> Economic oppression is no more the root of misery than prosperity is the ground from which genius springs. The unelectric life of the masses and the lack of transcendence and reality are the one root cause of our meagre life. The secret but real rulers of the world must with their heroic love conquer the peoples and make the world as electric as it has always been in decisive moments in order that God may be.[28]

Van Eeden described the "kingly of spirit" as one:

> Who feels mankind's need in himself . . . he feels the fault which the multitude, because it is unconscious, cannot feel . . . He knows that he bears what the multitude does not possess, but what it needs. His kingly pride lies in this, that he will not lower himself but will stand fast in order that the human mass may follow him and raise itself up.[29]

By thought, word and deed and personal example such exceptional persons would guide the world towards unity. According to van Eeden,

> The new way will only begin when these exceptional people unite and form a community. In a new atmosphere of loving confidence, freedom of spirit, wisdom, devotion and self-discipline a new unity will flourish . . . Only unity among the Kingly can bring freedom and self-sustainment to the people, so that they also may be able to come together in love. They will lose their fetters without losing their balance. The few will then have laid the foundations on which many more can build and around which order can be founded.[30]

Mitrinović was, of course, in the summer of 1914, by no means the first person whose involvement as a member of the Blut-bund was sought. According to Upton Sinclair, van Eeden and Gutkind "were on fire with a plan to form a band of chosen spirits to lead mankind out of the wilderness of materialism" as early as 1912.[31] Writing in the third person, Sinclair went on to observe that he "brought tears into the young rhapsodists' eyes by the brutality of his insistence that the sacred band would have to decide the problem of social revolution first."[32] Sinclair also accompanied the "two rhapsodists" on one of their early recruiting drives. The target was Walter Rathenau, the son of the founder of the giant German electrical company AEG. A hint of some of the tensions that were to mar the history of the Blut-bund was detected by the American novelist at that early meeting.

> Thyrsis (Sinclair) was invited to meet Walter Rathenau. He had never heard the name, but his friends explained that this was the young heir to the great German electrical trust who went in for social reform and wrote bold books . . .
>
> They united in finding him genial but a trifle overconfident—an attitude that accompanies the possession of vast sums of money and the necessity of making final decisions upon great issues. Van Eeden was a much older man who had made himself a reputation in many different fields—yet he did not feel so certain about anything as he found this young master of electricity and finance. However, there is this to be added: it is the men who know what they think who are capable of action.[33]

Larger gatherings of Blut-bund members took place at the summer residence of the Gutkind family at Potsdam. At one such meeting in June 1914 those recorded as being present included the Swedish psychiatrist Paul Bjerre, the German anarchist Gustav Landauer, Martin Buber, Gutkind, Theodor Däubler, Florens Christian Rang, and the Dutchmen Henri Borel and van Eeden. The purpose of the gathering, according to Landauer, was "to represent the uniting of the peoples of humanity, and bring this to authoritative expression at a critical hour."[34] Other people to whom van Eeden and Gutkind

sent copies of their 'prospectus' for the proposed association included the poet Rainer Maria Rilke, the Russian symbolist Dimitri Mereskovsky, the German poet Richard Dehmel, Ezra Pound, Rudolf Eucken, the Nobel Prize winner Professor Charles Richet, the British physicist Sir Oliver Lodge, novelists H. G. Wells and Romain Rolland, Rabindranath Tagore, and the Dutch mathematician L.E.J. Brouwer.

Van Eeden proposed that they should rent a large house somewhere to which these "representative personalities of different nations" should be invited, "just as guests in a hotel or an English country house." The opportunity would thus be created for them to meet and discuss freely with each other. There would be no formal programme. Rather:

> The mode of life in the house during the months of the meeting must be entirely simple, but sufficient for all demands and without any hint of sectarian tendencies. The guests shall be invited only one season, but the invitation can be repeated every year. When these invitations, with strict observation of the principles of freedom and universality and without consideration of lower values, take place it will soon arrive that such an invitation shall be considered as a great distinction. And when once such an effect has been produced, then all that in those two months in the House was schemed, thought, said, and done, will obtain a world meaning and be capable of moving the rudder which the whole great ship of human culture obeys.[35]

In retrospect, the attempts of Landauer, Gutkind, van Eeden and their associates to create an initiative that would lead to world peace on the eve of the war might seem pitiful and insignificant, if laudable. Likewise Mitrinović's hectic round of visits, letters and appeals to people throughout Europe during the early summer of 1914—whilst in his homeland the chain of events that were to lead to the "war to end all wars" had already started. On June 28th 1914 the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated at Sarajevo. A month later, on July 28th Austria-Hungary, supported by Germany, declared war on Serbia. Mitrinović was placed in an awkward and potentially dangerous situation. Nominally he was an Austrian citizen, with an Austrian passport, and of an age that could render him liable to conscription. He was, however, also in possession of a Serbian passport. He was known to the secret police and the prospect of either conscription or of being found in possession of a passport issued by a hostile nation must have caused him considerable concern.

He wrote to Gutkind expressing his disquiet and worry about his personal position. Gutkind replied on July 30th, the day before Germany declared war on Russia. He advised Mitrinović to adopt an attitude of "Buddhist

calm" in the face of the turmoil around him, implicitly criticised him for being so "active" in his attempts to prevent the war, and recommended that he place his faith in a "metaphysical electric flash of lightning" that would somehow resolve the situation. The letter is worth quoting at length if only because it highlights the way in which those who believe in a 'higher truth' and a supra-mundane level of existence can, on occasion, insulate themselves from much that is going on around them with what can appear to be a callous disregard for the plight of other people. This was a danger that was, one could argue, inherent in Gutkind's conception of the Blut-bund as an aristocracy of persons, qualitatively superior in mind and spirit to the mass of folk who because of their pre-eminence should, and could, exert a determining influence over the direction of world development. Few would dispute that different people possess or have developed different gifts to qualitatively different degrees. However, such a recognition must be tempered by a corresponding acknowledgement of the common humanity that unites all people, whatever their skills or abilities, if it is not to descend into an arrogant élitism that views the less gifted as 'lesser mortals,' as 'cannon-fodder' for history. As far as Gutkind was concerned: "generals need not get involved in the hurly-burly."

> My very dear friend, you really do not have the least cause to desert the greater and wider cause, and you are not committing treason at all . . . I am doing everything I can. I wrote at once to van Eeden and Landauer and when the danger gets very great I shall try to call in our circle. But please do not overestimate the danger. It may all quieten down again. I even consider that this is quite possible. If only you will come away from the idea that—however urgent it may be—we can do anything in a week and that protests and that sort of thing are of the least use. The only thing that is of any purpose here is to tackle the issue from the metaphysical end. There is no point in proclamations calling people to 'reason' and 'justice,' but only an unheard of metaphysical electrical flash of lightning, and that we must now prepare. To that end I have contacted the others, and this immediately and with my whole heart. It is exactly the very great tension in the situation which provides a favourable soil for the ignition of the mystic spark. Please don't do anything silly from nervous impatience. I'm sure it will not be too late, even if it takes a few weeks. Just stay at your post with the idea—the generals need not get involved in the hurly-burly. Only don't let us issue any impotent paper protests, but also in order to do justice to the Slav issue let us go down into the primal depths and there call up the demons. Only a magic of primal power will help, and no rustling of newspapers—the plebs which have been unleashed won't listen to that for even a second. Nor do we need to take the route via the plebs. I was unable to get hold of Kropotkin's address more quickly. He is always in Brighton in the summer and

> is known there. Are you in contact with Mereschkowski, Przynizewski? Did you get our Blue-book? Write at once about anything that happens, and please for God's sake do remember that the most severe Buddhist calm is what is required of us, and concentration at the highest post. I am wholly with you, and sincerely so and send my greetings and also those of my wife who shares my feelings.[36]

Mitrinović was obviously unconvinced by this argument. He decided he must leave Germany as quickly as possible, but he was penniless. He travelled to Berlin where Gutkind's mother advised him to flee to Russia. Germany and Russia were by then however nominally in a state of war. He decided to try and reach Britain, and Frau Gutkind provided him with the money necessary for the journey. Travelling by train to the coast, he took one of the last ferries to cross to England before Britain declared war on August 4th. He was later to recall how it was only as the boat neared the British coast that he realised that he was penniless and unlikely to obtain entry if it was discovered that he had no visible means of maintaining himself on his arrival. A fellow-passenger lent him £5 to prove his solvency to the customs officials. His benefactor was a black man, a fact that Mitrinović might well have considered to be symbolic of the future harmonious relationships that would eventually prevail between all races and peoples of the world—a goal to which he remained as committed as ever.

Chapter 3

THE EXILE

Mitrinović arrived in London in early August 1914 armed only with an address in Golders Green given to him by his English teacher in Munich, a Miss Sanderson. He presented himself at the Serbian Legation from where, on August 15th, a telegram was sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Niš enquiring whether they might appoint Dimitrije Mitrinović, who was in London without work and without means, to a position within the Legation. A further despatch of August 29th, stressed the importance of Mitrinović's knowledge of the Yugoslav question, and on September 14th, arrangements were made for his appointment as a clerk at the salary of 150 dinars a month. This was an unlikely position for one who had spent much of the previous decade as a political organiser and propagandist and he did not remain deskbound for long. Mitrinović shared the view that the war would not last long and that by the summer of 1915 he would be able to resume his roving commission on behalf of the Blut-bund. Within a few months he was writing to the Serbian Prime Minister, Nikola Pašić, offering his services as a propagandist for the Yugoslav ideal. In the letter of early November 1914 he explained:

> Be so kind as to forgive me for troubling you with this letter, since I have realised that I am not suited to office work I have had to resign the charge with which you and Monsieur the Minister have favoured me. I take the liberty of informing you personally why I have ceased working at the Legation so that my action may be rightly understood. In the meantime I hold that my national duty and my great obligation to the government of Serbia, which for years has assisted my education, will be best served if I devote myself to the propaganda of Yugoslav cultural and political thought among the peoples who may best be of assistance to Serbia and to Yugoslavia.[1]

At the end of November Pašić sent a reply to the London Legation: "Let Mitrinović work as he proposes." Mitrinović, for his part, took a short course in Spoken English at the Berlitz School of Languages in order to prepare himself for the public speaking engagements that he anticipated would accompany his new commission.

For Mitrinović the cause of Serbia and Yugoslavia could no longer be confined to a narrow nationalism. The development of his ideas with the Young Bosnians, expressed most fully in "Aesthetic Contemplations," had prepared the ground for his involvement with Kandinsky, Gutkind and van Eeden in the movement for a new European order. Now, with the outbreak of hostilities there came the impetus to join the two strands together: the fate of his homeland with the future development of humanity as a whole. This concern to relate the specific to the general, the micro to the macro-level, was one of the key features of his approach to the world and to life. The true significance of a single part could be appreciated only within a context that embraced an organic view of the whole, within which the single part had a functional role to perform. In an article published in September 1914 he addressed the question of "Who should possess Trieste?" Writing as the Secretary of the "Serbo-Croat Organisation for Political Union" he combined a detailed analysis of the conflicting claims and interests of Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia and the embryonic Balkan Federation with a perspective which stressed that "the question of Trieste should be settled not in the interest of one nationality or the other, but in the interest of the peace of the world." He argued that "in the independence and neutralisation of these two important towns (Trieste and Constantinople) lies the only way of achieving a permanent and peaceful settlement." Such a settlement, he suggested, would enable "the great Southern Slav state of tomorrow" to fulfill its historic function as "the connecting link between the New Europe and the New East."[2]

During the first few months immediately following his arrival in Britain Mitrinović was very much taken with the idea of going to America to further the aims of the Blut-bund and continue his work on the preparation of the proposed yearbook, *Aryan Europe*. He had heard that the wife of the Serbian foreign minister was travelling to America from Niš on Red Cross business, and he wrote to Slavko Grujić, the minister, offering his services as a secretary on November 19th 1914. In his letter he informed the minister of his project with regard to the yearbook and stressed the importance of propaganda work for the Yugoslav cause in America:

> Having fled from Munich here, firstly to be of use to the Serbian Legation here, and secondly to maintain myself materially while the war lasts, I have assisted

in the office at the Legation; however I realised that I am not suited for that work. Secondly my faith in the yearbook has revived, and I hope it will be possible to gather friends together; and I am unshakably convinced that, besides the fact that it is categorically necessary to enlighten public political thinking in Europe and America about Serbia and the brotherhood with the Croats and the Slovenes, it is necessary to gain the respect of Europe, and of humanity in general, for the cultural works which Yugoslavia has already achieved: for the national art, literary, musical and textile; for works of artistic literature and for scientific work worthy of general recognition: for Mestrović and brilliant works of art among the Slovenes and the Croats. It is necessary to advise the wide world of the high moral value of the Serbian peasant, not only when he is putting up a superhuman fight for his life; and of the human content and greatness of Yugoslav history. At this moment it is not opportune and it is not possible to begin such propaganda in England not even in Europe generally; in America humanity is not being crushed and is calm. The future peace will be not a congress of diplomats but the pan-human parliament of nations; America will, with its idea and plan for Peace, be one of the decisive factors in the Peace and therefore it is necessary to represent the just rights of Serbia there: in general Slavdom needs to enlighten people in America about itself.[3]

While he was waiting to hear the response of the Foreign Minister to his suggestion, Mitrinović busied himself working for the Yugoslav cause in Britain. In 1915 the Croatian poet Tucić edited a book in the *Daily Telegraph* "War Library" series entitled *The Slav Nations.* For this Mitrinović prepared an article, "Buried Treasure," in which he reviewed the historic mission of Serbia and the Serbo-Croat people as "a bulwark for Europe and Christianity against the invasion of Turkish barbarians and Islam."[4] He went on to proclaim the birth of a new age of Southern Slav history and culture, the central event of which process being the emergence of "the artist-prophet Ivan Mestrović."[5] For Mitrinović Mestrović's "Temple of Kossovo" was symbolic of the dawn of the new age of universal humanity in general, and of the development of Southern Slav political and cultural unity, under the influence of Serbia, in particular.

In 1915 an exhibition of Mestrović's sculptures and models was held in one of the large halls of the Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington. Mitrinović was closely involved with the organisation of the exhibition and in lecturing to visitors. A sense of the significance he attributed to Mestrović's work is given by the report of a lecture he gave on Mestrović's behalf at the University of Leeds on October 5th. Described by the Vice-Chancellor Michael Sadler as possessing "a wonderful command of the English language," Mitrinović proclaimed in the course of his presentation:

that if anything was to be the base of spiritual union between the Southern Slavs and the British people, the sublime work of Mestrović ought to be that base. He then went on to suggest that . . . the temple of Mestrović had both the human and the Divine beauty; it was the embodiment of human glory and an immense, although human, peace. It might be said to be a reconciliation of mankind with eternity. It represented an eternal dawn of beauty and of New Aryandom. It was the visible perfection of pan-harmony . . .[6]

"Pan-harmony," "New Aryandom": whether he was writing or talking about Mestrović and the "Temple of Kossovo," about Serbia's past tribulations, or about the future union of the Southern Slavs within a federal state of Yugoslavia, Mitrinović continually returned to the theme of a new order, the vision of a future age of peace, freedom and fellowship which he had portrayed in one of his early poems:

When the realm of human goodness is attained,
Soul of a brotherly, peaceful order,
When happiness will bestow lustre on all griefs,
The happiness of beauty.[7]

These lines were discovered by Paul Selver in an anthology of Yugoslav poetry. Selver, a translator of Czech poetry and a regular contributor to A. R. Orage's *The New Age,* had written an uncomplimentary review of *The Slav Nations* and of Mitrinović's contribution "Buried Treasure" in particular in *The New Age.*[8] Shortly after the review appeared, and much to his surprise, he received a letter from Mitrinović expressing a wish to make his acquaintance. Selver accepted and the two met at Mitrinović's lodgings in the Fulham Road, not far from the Redcliffe Arms. Selver's recollection of that first encounter provides a fascinating glimpse of this, to Selver, rather mysterious Slav.

On my way there I wondered what kind of person I was about to meet, but the Mitrinović of my imagination proved to be utterly different from the real Mitrinović. At first sight he reminded me of Dr. Nikola, as pictured in the *Windsor Magazine.* He did, in fact, possess many of the attributes with which novelists of the Guy Boothby breed (no disparagement is implied here) equip mystery men from the Near East who form the centre of a highly tangled plot. Yes, Mitrinović outwardly fulfilled all the requirements in this respect, with his shaven head, his swarthiness, his dark garments and his hypnotic eyes. This latter item must not be dismissed as a hackneyed flourish. Hardly had I shaken hands with Mitrinović than I found myself so affected by his mere presence that I nearly lost consciousness. This had never happened before to me, nor did it

ever happen again. But it left in my mind a strong impression that there was something, if not exactly sinister, at least uncanny about Mitrinović . . .

Amid the uncertainties which blur the image of Mitrinović the man, I can bear witness to the fact that he was both accomplished and erudite. He spoke a choicely worded English, to which he imparted a solemn and musical intonation. Evidence of his wide reading and critical discernment asserted itself casually in the course of conversation. I spent many hours with him, studying the Serbian ballads, and I was impressed to observe that he never had to turn to the printed page. He knew them, and also other poetical texts, by heart.[9]

Whilst Mitrinović continued to work in his own way for the Yugoslav cause, he was also actively seeking to re-establish contact with his continental associates of the Blut-bund and attempting to revive the impetus necessary for the publication of the proposed Yearbook. Within a few days of his arrival in England he had written to van Eeden asking "How is this whole movement of bearers of culture who are seeking tomorrow and thinking rightly to be realised?" He continued:

> And so now the truth time has come, willed by God, for a union of the leaders of mankind who will give birth to the idea of the cosmogony of races and who will be the entelechy of the total Europe—those who will lay the foundations of its pan-culture. I can put myself at your disposal because, insofar as I am able to put my truth and your truths side by side and discern their similarity and identity, I feel that in meaning and essence we intend absolutely the same. Especially for a union which would take the initiative for a world-embracing union, I will gladly give all my work and struggle so far as I have the strength. I myself shall try here in England, in pursuance of my request for contribution or collaboration in the editing of the Yearbook *The Aryan Europe,* to discuss the idea of such a concentration and cooperation of the culture-bearers of the present-day mankind of tomorrow in a general way. And furthermore I believe that I shall write to some men on the continent about *The Aryan Europe* and then I could give them the feel of the suggestion for an ad hoc action . . . I have become devoted to you since I read three weeks ago *World Conquest Through Heroic Love,* a book which has shaken me and brought deep healing. Gutkind sent it to me as a momento of our meeting in Jena. I also request most urgently, if you are at all able, that you lend me or give me a copy of *Sidereal Birth.* I came here in a terrible hurry because I had to escape from Austrian mobilisation and have not brought my copy of Gutkind with me.[10]

His offer of assistance was acknowledged by van Eeden in a letter to Henri Borel of August 31st 1914. He noted that:

> The Serbian Mitrinović is in London and has put himself at our disposal for all organisational work. He is a deserter[11] and therefore cannot go back to Serbia.

> I have given him a number of addresses, Kropotkin, Wells, Shaw, Archer, Upward.[12]

Unfortunately, the outbreak of war imposed strains on the Blut-bund which it failed to withstand. The immediate claims of nationalistic feeling upon certain of the members outweighed the pious pronouncements of faith in internationalism. The first sign of such pressures was revealed in a letter from van Eeden to his friend Henri Borel of August 29th 1914 when he referred to the fact that one member of the circle, Florens Christian Rang, "has unfortunately become patriotically inebriated."[13] A few weeks later van Eeden was bemoaning the spell cast by German nationalist feeling upon other members of the group. Gutkind, who in July had been advising Mitrinović to adopt an attitude of "Buddhist calm," had evidently fallen under the spell of German xenophobia. After receiving a letter from Gutkind, van Eeden commented:

> There is a real brutalising through 'nationalitis.' It is my plan to have this letter (of Gutkind's) reproduced together with my reply. It is of the utmost importance to establish how far the depravity can go which is caused to noble minds by patriotic fever. He talks about the 'English knout' and the 'hired murderers' from England!! and so on! I will answer him very forcefully . . .[14]

Despite such signs of "depravity" van Eeden remained committed to his ideal. On September 17th 1914 he confided to Borel:

> I do not believe that the circle will break. But things will get very hot. I said to Sinclair that he must come over because great things have to be done. And the Swedes are still there. Buber does not seem quite free from the infection. But I am very curious to know how Däubler feels about this . . .[15]

By late September however Gutkind's stance, according to van Eeden, was worsening. "He speaks of a 'holy war' against the English Empire: he makes me think of the Mahdi!"[16] Moreover, Rudolf Eucken, that "dear and noble old man" in the eyes of Mitrinović, was evidently failing to withstand the patriotic call. "Have you read the silly twaddle from Eucken?" van Eeden asked Borel, "they call that a philosopher . . ."[17]

By 1915 a clear split had emerged within the group between the German and non-German members. Van Eeden placed the bulk of the blame on the shoulders of Martin Buber. In a letter to Borel written in the Spring of 1915 he enclosed a letter from Buber which had caused him considerable pain. He went on:

> It is not a question of whether you agree with me. This is simply how I feel. I feel for all the members of the circle as you said you felt for me. They can do what they like, but those three days remain, and the circle remains and I remain—even if I am the only one. But it is sad—and Buber is really the worst one, because he is the strongest of the unfaithful ones, and he stands behind Landauer.[18]

Van Eeden's dismay was occasioned by a proposal from Landauer and Buber that a separate 'Bund' be formed of the continental members. The Dutchman called it the "Berliner-Tageblatt-plan." However, by September 1915 he was heartened to receive a letter from Gutkind promising his continued commitment to the original grouping. He wrote to Borel:

> How much more powerful love is than reason. I too hold fast to the circle with 'loving firmness' and am certainly inclined to embrace Rang as well as Gutkind. My sharp pain originated from Landauer's letter, which quite simply meant lack of faith. And it is my opinion that Buber is the real schismatic. He is so cold, so self-sufficient, so arrogant. Will they ever come back? Everything is possible . . . I will inform everyone in the circle and everyone who came into consideration (that means also Rathenau and Rolland) in quite a simple business-like way that Landauer and Buber do not want to have anything to do with the circle any longer, and that Landauer made a call for a new 'Bund' and invited Norlind, Bjerre, Borel, van Eeden and Rolland to it . . . That Gutkind, Rang, Borel, van Eeden will hold fast to the original circle and will not let go of it . . ."[19]

In fact the Blut-bund as an identifiable group was never to meet again. As the years of war continued the personal tensions between the members occasioned by the hostilities, coupled with the serious problems of communication in a continent torn by war, caused the association to break up. Individual members were to continue to correspond with each other, but each went on to pursue their own separate ways.

Van Eeden, a disillusioned and disappointed man, eventually joined the Roman Catholic Church in 1922. He died at Bussum on June 16th 1932. Gutkind emigrated to the U.S.A. in 1933 where he taught at the New School and at the College of the City of New York. He died in Chatauqua, New York on August 26th 1965, just two months after Martin Buber died at the age of 87 in Jerusalem.

Not all the members of the Blut-bund died peacefully in their beds however. Rathenau was assassinated in 1922. Gustav Landauer was murdered in 1919. In 1916 he had told an associate who asked him why he remained so passive during a time of great tension and stress:

> All my life I have worked for the downfall of this social system, this society founded on lies and betrayals, on this beggaring and suppression of human beings; and I know now that this downfall is imminent—perhaps tomorrow, perhaps in a year's time. And I have the right to reserve my strength until that moment. When the hour strikes I shall be ready.[20]

His moment came in November 1918 when the soldiers and workers of Munich proclaimed the independent Republic of Bavaria. Encouraged by Landauer they proclaimed themselves a Soviet Republic in April 1919, shortly before they were overwhelmed by a 100,000 strong force under the command of General von Oven. Landauer was brutally murdered, along with 700 others, as the central power of the German state was re-established.

Isolated to a large degree from the intrigues, personality clashes, and rival nationalistic feelings that marred the history of the Blut-bund Mitrinović, in the early years of the war, kept faith with his original commitment and continued his efforts to recruit "bearers of culture who are seeking tomorrow." He attempted to establish contact with H. G. Wells and with Kropotkin who was living in Brighton at that time. Towards the end of 1915 he travelled to Paris on a Serbian passport where he remained until late February 1916, staying at 6 Avenue Montaigne. His official business was to help with the arrangements for the staging of the Mestrović exhibition in the French capital. He took advantage of his visit, however, to try and arouse interest in the Blutbund project amongst such figures as Edouard Schuré, Anatole France, Charles Richet, Romain Rolland, and Henri Bergson. In a letter to Schuré he described the Blutbund as "a spiritual alliance of all the principal men and of all the institutions and movements worthy to think and act for the reconstruction and divine birth of Europe."[21]

He also tried to persuade Schuré to collaborate in the production of the proposed yearbook which he described as "an Almanac of Cosmopolitan Pacifism" and which would be published in French and English and contain "the contributions of prominent persons who believe in a spiritual Serbia and in a federated Europe of social harmony and synthetic culture." Despite the apparent fact that the war was to drag on longer than he, and many others, had anticipated, and the failure of his plan to go to America, Mitrinović's spiritual optimism sustained his commitment to the vision of the seed of a new order emerging out of the remains of the old, war-torn age. To Schuré he wrote:

> It is in the races that the gods are incarnated in history and even in our cataclysm: and if races, as people believe today, are all dead because they are absolutely all impure it remains only to invoke new gods, the God of Humanity without

> races, and to found by our absolute love and our intelligence a new Race, that of Christ.

There is no evidence that Mitrinović had any success whatsoever in his attempts to recruit Schuré and the others to his venture to create a new Christendom within Europe.[22] During his time in France he did, however, manage to re-establish contact with some of his friends and colleagues from the pre-war days of the Young Bosnians such as Vladimir Gaćinović and Tin Ujević who used to gather at the café "Rotonde," which was also frequented by Picasso, Modigliani and Cocteau.

According to Palavestra Mitrinović had a bitter argument with Ujević during the course of his stay in Paris, one consequence of which was a growing disillusionment on his part with Yugoslav emigré circles in Europe.[23] By March 1916 the London Yugoslav Committee was in disarray following a proposal from one of their number that the Croats break off relations with the Serbian government. It appeared to Mitrinović that his ideal of a federation of the Southern Slav peoples was being distorted and corrupted by professional politicians and career diplomats. He wrote to his friend Mestrović that the dream of a new Yugoslavia was being sabotaged by "the shamelessness and folly of politicians who are demolishing it before it is built."[24] It was possibly round about this time that he determined never to return to his native land. Henceforth his major concern was to be with the creation of a new Europe rather than with a new Yugoslavia.

One of his closest Serbian friends in London with whom he shared his dreams, his frustrations and his bitterness was Father Nicolai Velimirović, one of the leaders of the spiritual revival of the Serbian Orthodox Church and who was later to become Bishop of Žiča. Velimirović had rooms in Saville Row and was in the habit of eating at the Dickens Chop House in Warwick Street where he was frequently joined by Mitrinović. They were occasionally joined by Stephen Graham, the author and Slavophile, who had first met Mitrinović at the home of Canon Carnegie, the rector of St. Margaret's Westminster. According to Graham the usual topic of conversation over the meal was the union of Christianity. To this subject Mitrinović brought his own particular perspective.

> Dimitri was a born conspirator, which is curious considering that his life was so pacific. For him the young Christendom which he planned had to be a secret society. We must operate from the invisible towards the visible, from an initiated few to the many who were as yet unaware of the movement. His crusade must not be advertised from a broad platform to thousands as at a revival meeting. His message or doctrine must not be watered down.

> He addressed himself particularly to me; it seems Fr. Nikolai already knew what he would say: "It could start from us three," he said. "We are secretly committed to giving our lives to the realization of the Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth and all we do will be directed to that purpose. We will cautiously seek allies and persuade them to join us and form a Christianly conscious nucleus. All in secret, all below ground. The more secret we are, the greater spiritual strength we draw, till we are ready to break surface and grow to a mighty tree."
>
> All this was said in a hushed voice as if the walls had ears and in a jargon which I have translated into clearer English. I did not myself fully understand this idea, but I agreed to form with him what he called a 'personal alliance,' with the reservation that I would see what would come of it.[25]

It is difficult to know how much credence to grant to Graham's account of such meetings. In later life relationships between the two men became soured, whilst in his autobiography there are a number of factual errors about Mitrinović which lead one to treat his recollections with a certain degree of caution. What is clear, however, is that during his early years of exile in Britain Mitrinović was looking for likely people who would be willing to commit themselves, with him, to the creation of a new age. However fanciful and utopian such a vision might appear to others, for Mitrinović it could never be attained if people did not pursue it with seriousness and determination. Moreover, if the aim was to create a world of liberty and fellowship, where each would value the other as much as themselves, then the starting point lay with one's own life and one's relationships with friends and acquaintances. The seed there planted might one day evolve, organically, to a stage where a determining influence on the shape and pattern of the wider world might be exerted. This attempt to create a nucleus of individuals who, by their example and work, might act to transform social life, was a consistent theme of Mitrinović's life. It was to reach its fullest development during the late 1920s and the 1930s, but he had begun to explore the idea, if obliquely, in his "Aesthetic Contemplations" articles. His reading of Solovyov and his encounter with the ideas of Gutkind had further stimulated him, and his involvement with the Blutbund initiatives was to teach him some important lessons on the translation of such ideas into the realm of action. The difference between the later period and the years of his involvement with the Blutbund initiative was that during the earlier period Mitrinović believed it was possible to recruit to such a project the 'great names' of philosophy, art and science. This was the logic of the Blutbund. If the leading spirits of the age would commit themselves to each other and to an initiative for a new and better world of peace and fellowship,

then the results could be literally world-changing. This was the project which Graham was invited to join. He responded by trying to arrange introductions for Mitrinović to various people of consequence with whom he had contact. One of these was the Earl of Sandwich, but Mitrinović "half-closed his eyes as if beginning to pull down the shutters of a shop, and he did not ask him to join his secret society."[26] Graham also tried, unsuccessfully, to arouse the interest of G.R.S. Meade, the theosophist and gnostic scholar, and Father Fynes Clinton, the rector of St. Magnus the Martyr.

Mitrinović, for his part, sought to interest Patrick Geddes in his ideas and in the Blutbund initiative. Geddes was, in the late summer of 1915, engaged in organising a course at King's College, London, on the problems of the war and the post-war period. The meeting between the two men took place over the dinner table at the flat of a young woman who planned to go to Serbia to work as a nurse and who was learning Serbian from Mitrinović.[27] The evening had been arranged by a mutual acquaintance, Philip Mairet, who was at the time employed by Geddes to design wall-diagrams for his lectures. Geddes was renowned for having an opinion upon every subject under the sun and for his habit of taking any opportunity to pronounce his views at length. Geddes left early and remarked to Mairet as he went out, "Tell your friend that I shall be pleased to contradict him upon any subject he may choose." Mitrinović, for his part, enquired of the hostess as to the precise nature of Geddes' fame. When told that Geddes had made his name as a scientist he sighed: "Ah, I see—a *popular* scientist."[28] Geddes returned to India shortly after this encounter. Paradoxically, when he returned, knighted but broken in health and ignored by the academics and intellectuals of Britain in 1931, it was to be Mitrinović who provided him with a platform and a ready made following in London in the form of the New Europe Group of which Geddes became the President. Philip Mairet was later to recall his first encounter with Mitrinović, the man with whom he was to be intimately associated for over a decade: it had been at the Mestrović exhibition at the Victoria and Albert where Mitrinović had acted as a guide for Mairet and his party.

> He was a little late, for which he apologised with the courtesy and charm of an accomplished diplomat. He was a tall dark handsome man, attired in the black frock coat of an official or a business executive, who spoke with a strong foreign accent but with noticeable freedom, fluency, and even eloquence. Beginning with the architectural model [Model of "Temple of Kossovo"], he plunged at once into a moving description of the popular traditions and aspirations that had inspired this monument and the specimens of sculpture grouped around it. These, however, were presented or interpreted as illustrations and symbols of

> a supra-national, pan-human idealism by which we were all spell-bound, though sometimes mystified. This epic of heroic sacrifice and invincible hope of a national death and resurrection was magnified in the Serbian orator's discourse into a sort of paradigm of the faith and destiny of mankind. . . .
>
> What moved me to admiration even more perhaps than the majestic vision of art and civilization that he unfolded, which indeed carried us far out of our depth, was the eloquence of his exposition. I had never heard anything like it. Here was a man who spoke with authority. What he said seemed to be guaranteed by what he was, for I felt almost as if I was listening to some messenger from a higher realm of knowledge about the predicament of mankind.[29]

Mairet became, in his own words, "an aspirant in search of a teacher"[30] with Mitrinović as his mentor and guide. This was the role to which Mairet was to consign himself throughout his years of association with the older man; a relationship which was only broken in the early 1930s when they agreed to part for the sake of his own personal development. This, indeed, was one of the many paradoxes about Mitrinović and his relationships with those who came under his influence. On the one hand the bulk of his life was concerned with working towards a new age of freedom and fellowship, a world constituted by individuals who could freely cooperate together as self-managing parts of a functionally ordered whole. At the same time, such was the breadth and depth of his learning and wisdom, such was the power of his personality, that most of those with whom he came into contact remained in awe of him and looked to him for direction and guidance: not perhaps the most appropriate training for the creators of a new social order. It was a problem of which Mitrinović was well aware and with which he was to struggle, not always successfully, throughout his active life.

Although Mairet returned to France where he was working as a Red Cross auxiliary convinced that he had found a 'master' at whose feet he might sit, his 'teacher' continued, during the war years, with his own course of study and self-instruction. He had moved his lodgings to the Bloomsbury area, partly in order to be nearer the British Museum where he spent much of his time. His library tickets from that period show that he was studying, among other things, the Upanishads, Lao Tse, the Kabbala, and various works on occult and ancient philosophy; as well as continuing with his study of the work of Solovyov and western philosophers. He was also gaining a name for himself in certain circles as something of an expert and teacher of oriental and ancient philosophy, and began to take a few pupils for instruction. Some of these were introduced to him by Mr. G. Salby, the

owner of one of the bookshops which Mitrinović frequented in the vicinity of the British Museum.

As for Mairet, whilst in France he had been deeply impressed by his reading of Rudolf Steiner's study of the German mystics which Mitrinović had given to him. He returned for extended leave over Christmas 1917, eager to resume his studies under his personal teacher. Mitrinović, however, quickly tried to impress upon the enthusiastic Mairet that philosophy was nothing if it could not be translated into a way of living. The aim, as he had written in "Aesthetic Contemplations," was "to change theory into practice and into practice introduce theory." Mairet was later to recall the episode:

> We were in his little study with the window overlooking the street. Most of the walls were darkened by brimming bookcases. There were books all along the mantleshelf, piled on the table. "Look now," he said, pointing to a row of large volumes on the floor, ranged against the wainscot, "there is the whole of the philosophy of Solovyov. There he has said everything that needs to be said. It remains only for us to do it. Is not that the purpose of philosophy? How can it be anything else but to learn and to know the total truth about what we are and what we want to become . . . We want men and the world to be better . . . It is evident then that the work cannot begin until everyone has better ideas and thinks differently. But this we cannot do unless we feel differently, and that is not possible unless we *become* different beings . . . Change of being is not impossible; only very difficult. For you must go back and begin at the very beginning; you must find the being that always was, and is and always will be, not only in your self but in every self whatever. This is something everyone knows because he is it; but its name is the great impregnable secret; the name by which no-one else can call you, or me. To all others I am 'Mr. Mitrinović' or 'you'; only to myself am I 'I.' This 'I' is each one's private name for what philosophers call "subject of consciousness" . . .
>
> To be an 'I' is to be a living centre of the universe, each one of which is looking at the same 'everything,' but each from his own separate place in space and time . . . That is the one simple truth about this infinitely complicated existence.
>
> That is the truth we all know, but that everybody forgets . . . You remember only that you are Mairet who is at work, or is eating and drinking or reading and smoking: you forget that, at the same time, you are a centre of the universal consciousness—which is divine. However hard you try you cannot keep this in mind. Perhaps fortunately, because you might mistake the way to do it and go mad like Nietzsche. You cannot do it alone. You may possibly—just sometimes—attain something of this remembrance, this divine *anamnesis,* together with one other person. A 'you' and an 'I' may become a 'we'—spiritually. And these two persons could become three: then they could incorporate others,

> indefinitely. When this shall be rightly and really begun it will grow into a power of understanding that will change the mind of the human world . . . We must begin it now."[31]

Philip Mairet was partly mystified and somewhat frightened by this lecture, and by the last sentence in particular. It was obvious that Mitrinović was asking for something more than friendship. He was seeking commitment. But a commitment to what? Was it a religious movement that was being proposed? Were there any others who would be willing to participate in the earnest and dedicated collaboration that was being demanded? Mairet would have found some answers to these questions in the works on Mitrinović's shelves and in Gutkind's *Sidereal Birth* especially. The world lay on the brink of a new epoch in which, according to Gutkind, selfish egoism must be transcended and the " We' must "put forth life." For Mitrinović it was not sufficient merely to verbalise this, one must seek to attain this 'We-consciousness' in concert with others. The task was to try, initially with one or two others, to create a relationship founded on the recognition of the organic relatedness of all things, wherein the conflict between the interests of the individual and the needs of others might be transcended. One would then be working towards a prototype of a new form of human relationship, an example and a model which others might follow as the need for a re-ordering of personal and communal life became ever more apparent to wider circles of people, and as people in increasing numbers began to take upon themselves the 'God-like' task of creating their world anew.

Mairet was joined in the preparation for the initiatives that lay ahead by another who had come under the 'spell' of Mitrinović. This was Helen Soden, the wife of a doctor serving in France, who Mitrinović had encountered in the Palace Hotel, Bloomsbury, towards the end of 1916. A fairly conventional middle class lady in early middle age, Helen Soden presented something of a contrast to the younger Mairet with his idealism, his sensitivity, his self-doubt, his stammer and his search for truth and self-knowledge. This bringing together of people with disparate qualities and placing upon them the onus of working harmoniously and honestly together was, however, to become a fundamental element of Mitrinović's method. It was relatively easy to create a sense of community amongst those who thought and felt alike. The real world, however, was made up of many groupings with widely differing outlooks, beliefs and interests. If the task was to prepare for an initiative that would transform this wider world, then its heterogeneity should be reflected by the microcosm created within the group.

The three of them would meet regularly in Mitrinović's rooms. Occasionally Mairet and Soden received personal instruction but more frequently they met to discuss what they had been reading. In such sessions Mitrinović would try to convey something of his own understanding of the relevance of ancient mythology and oriental philosophy which expressed so strongly the inter-relatedness between all things. Together they explored the significance of Solovyov's vision of Christ as the God-Man, the archetype for humanity to emulate, and of humanity working in conjunction with God, realising their own divinity through working with others to create the Kingdom of God and Man, Sophia, on earth. There was also Gutkind's significance to be explained. Just how much of this the two students absorbed during the period of their early association with Mitrinović is doubtful. Perhaps it mattered less to them than the fact that they felt they were in the company of a great man whose mind, spirit and soul was beyond their common experience. Certainly, to Mairet, Mitrinović at times appeared in the guise of a prophet who presented him with a glimpse of a new life. Something of Mairet's mood and attitude is conveyed in the account he gave of one of their early encounters that took place in Mitrinović's rooms, with Mitrinović still in his pyjamas having just finished breakfast:

> The memory image of his face is more vivid to me than almost all he said. His appearance was somewhat changed since my earlier meetings with him. The black hair, now close cropped, and the shaven lips and chin made him look more like one's imagination of a prophet . . . To my heightened sensitivity, his face seemed more radiant with the supersensitive light which the ancient Christian artists used to symbolise by putting aureoles round the heads of Saints and Apostles. Indeed, I can clearly remember thinking, as I looked at him, that when the first Christian neophytes heard the great preachers St. Paul and St. Augustine for instance proclaiming the Gospel that was to make all things new, it must sometimes have been just like this. Then too, I thought, the scene may have been as peculiar as this rather dishevelled bedroom and the audience as small and undistinguished as we were now, besides this untidy bed; for this impassioned orator, speaking with his whole being, finally worked himself right out of bed onto the floor where he finished his allocution seated cross-legged on the carpet like an Indian Sadhu.[32]

If Mitrinović appeared to Mairet, on such occasions, as a prophet, then Mairet for his part became an active proselytiser on his behalf. He introduced his wife, Ethelmary, to Mitrinović. A skilled and talented weaver, her work was much admired by Douglas Pepler who was, in turn, a close friend of Edward Johnston the calligrapher and Eric Gill the sculptor. Gill had moved to the Sussex village of Ditchling in 1907 and was followed there by the Johnston family in 1912. Ethelmary Mairet was easily persuaded

by Pepler to visit the growing craft colony and on her first visit she was accompanied by her husband. He was, by early 1918, entertaining thoughts of working on the land. He had resigned from the Red Cross and had become eligible for conscription. Farm work might be one way of avoiding this. Helen Soden, on Mitrinović's advice, had moved to a south coast resort for the duration of the war and so it seemed that there was little Mairet could do to further Mitrinović's work in London while the war lasted.

Encouraged by Mitrinović, Mairet settled in Ditchling. Working as a labourer on Douglas Pepler's farm, he continued his studies, discussing his ideas, and those of Solovyov in particular, with Eric Gill. The sculptor, who was at that time working on the great stone Stations of the Cross in Westminster Cathedral, was a recent convert to Roman Catholicism and remained unreceptive. Edward Johnston, however, was greatly impressed by Mitrinović. Johnston had come across him standing by a cow-byre on the farm where Philip Mairet was working. Thinking the stranger was lost Johnston asked him if he needed directions. "No," he replied, "I am only looking how noble an animal is the cow." Johnston, recalling the incident with Mairet, observed "And you know, the way he looked and the way he said it, made me think, yes, yes and how noble a human being it is that is now talking to me."[33]

In London Mitrinović continued with his work as cultural propagandist for the Yugoslav cause. With Nikolaj Velimirović he had planned a series of books under the general title of *The World of the Slav.* Amongst the proposed titles were *The Humanism of the Slavs* and *Dostoyevsky as the Prophet of Slavdom* by Velimirović, and *The Teachings of the Prophets: the Christian Thought of Tolstoy* by Mitrinović, and an edition of Solovyov's *Foundations of Christology.* Nothing came of this scheme, but by 1917 he was working with Velimirović and Niko Županić on the preparation of the monograph *The South Slav Monuments* which was eventually published in 1918. Early in 1918 he resumed his friendship with Dušan Popović, secretary of the Serbian Social Democratic Party in exile who arrived in London from Stockholm. Together they planned a book on Marxism and its relevance to the Serbian people to commemorate the centenary of Marx's birth. Popović was to write something on Marx and Serbia, whilst Mitrinović was to contribute an article on "Marx as an Internationalist." It seemed that Mitrinović was beginning to take a more active part in political emigré circles with the arrival of his friend. In the spring of 1918 he was persuaded by Popović to deliver a lecture on Marx to the club of the Serbian Social Democrats in London. All this was brought to an end, however, by the untimely death of his friend on November 8th, 1918 after an operation.

Mitrinović took charge of the funeral arrangements, issuing the formal announcement of death, and accompanying the coffin to Highgate Cemetery where Popović was buried not far from the grave of Karl Marx.

The end of the war left Mitrinović facing something of a crisis in his life. He was still receiving a salary from the Serbs but his heart was not in the work. "You are even paid for more than you do," he remarked to Mairet.[34] He was bitterly disappointed by the realisation that Mestrović's Temple of Kossovo, the planned monument to the *Serbian* heroes of Kossovo, would never be acceptable as a symbol of the new Yugoslavia as it would antagonise the Croats and Slovenes. He was disillusioned with the professional politicians and careerists who had, to his mind, distorted the ideals and values that had informed the movement of Young Bosnia. The revealed impotence and eventual collapse of the Blutbund project had left him bitter about the failure of the leading representatives of the cultural and scientific worlds to respond to a call for an initiative for world reconstruction, the apparent inability of the 'great names' to cooperate together on a common venture that transcended narrow national interests.

During the months following the cessation of hostilities he spent more of his time down at Ditchling where Helen Soden had rented a small cottage and to where Mairet had returned in 1919 after completing a prison sentence as a conscientious objector. It was a time of anguish and self-doubt, and his physical health suffered also. Stephen Graham witnessed this period and was moved to observe that "he was so disastrously melancholy I feared he would end up by taking his life."[35] After a period confined to bed in a guest house at Ditchling his health and spirits started to recover. He had come to a decision. He would not return to his native land. He would forfeit the promised security of a diplomatic career.[36] He would devote his life to the greater vision of a recreated world order. It was not an easy decision to reach, and it was with some trepidation and doubt about what the future might hold that he took it. "I am jumping off into nowhere," he told Philip Mairet on one of their walks across the Sussex Downs, "No one will even know I am doing it. But this is bravery."[37] To Helen Soden he wrote, "I am determined more than ever and really to act and live according to my real conviction. Let that also give new orientation to yourself and real hope and faith."[38]

Chapter 4

"THE NEW AGE"

By the beginning of the 1920s Mitrinović had resolved to make London the base for the life work that lay ahead. What he lacked was a means of communicating his ideas and his vision of world reconstruction to a wider audience than those friends and acquaintances that had gathered around him.

During this period one of the most influential media of communication was *The New Age* under its editor A. R. Orage. It was, according to Hugh MacDiarmid, "the most brilliant journal that has ever been written in English, and small though its circulation was it reached all the liveliest minds in Great Britain."[1] According to another commentator *The New Age* was "an unparalleled arena of cultural and political debate" during the period of Orage's editorship between 1908 and 1922.[2] As such, the weekly and the circle of intellectuals associated with it represented a natural attraction for one such as Mitrinović who believed he had something to offer the world and who had always stressed the seminal impact that could be exerted on others by the highest minds.

It was Paul Selver who introduced him to Orage and his circle shortly after their first meeting in Fulham. Orage was convinced of the need to stimulate and co-ordinate the abilities of his contributors as part of his attempt to make the weekly a periodical which would mediate between specialised fields of knowledge: politics, art, literature, economics, philosophy. To this end he held literary and political gatherings where he would introduce the contributors to each other. Regular Monday afternoon meetings were held at the ABC Restaurant in Chancery Lane. There were also weekly discussions at the Kardomah Café in Fleet Street and lunches at the Sceptre Restaurant, with the Café Royal frequently acting as the rendezvous for evening sessions. Amongst those who attended such gatherings during the pre-war years were G. K. Chesterton, H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, S. G. Hobson, Beatrice

Hastings, A. E. Randall, J. M. Kennedy, Katherine Mansfield, Ezra Pound, Ramiro de Maeztu and T. E. Hulme. In later years they were replaced or supplemented by Edwin Muir, Herbert Read, Janko Lavrin and Philip Mairet. Upton Sinclair and Augustus John were also occasional visitors.

Undoubtedly, to many of his new associates, Mitrinović appeared as a strange and eccentric "Central European," just one more exile with strange ideas seeking refuge and a "following" in London. At the same time he succeeded in captivating many of the talented people gathered around the weekly, even if they had only the vaguest notion of what it was that motivated him. Philip Mairet has provided a detailed description of Mitrinović as he appeared to the intellectuals and artists meeting in the cafés and coffee houses during this period.

> He had the intensity of consciousness, the immediate intuition, of those few individuals whose instinctive, emotional and intellectual centres work in unison. . . . Physically, he was of the splendid type and proportions one so often sees in the Dalmatian and Bosnian peasantry of his forebears. The forehead was not remarkably high, but the cranium was highly domed and the back of the head rather flat. The fine, dark eyes set wide apart never struck me as truly 'hypnotic,' they had the watchful look one often sees in those born under Scorpio—Goethe, for instance. It was the mouth, of a singularly perfect form that was his organ of power; the mouth of a poet and orator. The winning beauty of his smile was in strange contrast with a fortunately rare but startingly discordant laugh; but the weight and seriousness of his inexhaustible exhortations was often relieved by a gentle, ingenuous humour. To people of all kinds and conditions he had an easy and engaging approach: cabmen and charwomen responded to his charm as readily as businessmen, artists or intellectuals. Provoked to self-defence he could be formidable . . . Yet it was in Mitrinović that more than a few broken or depressed individuals felt they had their one perfect experience of Christlike love and understanding. He had, in fact, that *abundance of being* that a number of recent writers have sought to convey in their recollections of Gurdjieff . . . Widely unlike in character and destiny as the two men were, both were distinguished from everybody one had met before by what I might call a higher magnitude of humanity.[3]

An insight into the life and style of Mitrinović during the immediate post-war years in London can be obtained from the memoirs and autobiographies of his contemporaries. Amongst these were the Muirs, Edwin and Willa, who had moved from Scotland to London in 1919 where Edwin was working three days a week in *The New Age* office as Orage's assistant. According to Willa, Mitrinović

> . . . . was a source of joy to us when he came visiting at 13 Guildford Street. After discovering that empty beer bottles were as good as currency, since we exchanged them for coppers at the corner pub, he never arrived without two quart bottles of beer crammed into the pockets of his frockcoat, which, from the look of it, served as dressingown as well as calling kit. He would appear about six o'clock, saying that he had an urgent appointment at seven, but at ten or eleven o'clock we would still be sitting beside our fireplace entrancing us with his speculations—the evolution of Sex, for instance, through various grades of animals. We finished up, I remember, with Pan-Man, Sex harmonious. As for Scorpio, why was *he* set in the zodiac as the sign of Sex? Because he made an effort of will and turned himself Inside Out with one great convulsion, and so the vertebrates were born.
>
> This brand of nonsense was novel to us and we enjoyed it hugely. Mitrinović made a plummy mouthful of every word he used. He did not say: Albion, he said: 'All-bion, Word of Mystery, Name of Strength.' Feeling gay, he would imitate Serbian bagpipes with zest. The only thing that irked him was the success of Ouspensky, his rival as a seer, and behind Ouspensky, farther away but more menacing, the magnetic force of Gurdjieff. Too many clever men in London, he complained, were throwing up their jobs and migrating to Fontainebleau because Gurdjieff had promised that he could raise into full bloom the merest bud of a soul. Yet after melancholy shakings of the head Mitrinović would then gurgle with laughter and cry: 'London is Looney-bin, no?'. He had an eye for a pretty woman, too; he told us that Ezra Pound's wife was like a cherry tree. We found him an entertaining companion because he was such an egregious nonsense-monger, which, we suspected, he was aware of himself.[4]

Edwin Muir was to recall similar scenes—the arrival with the beer bottles under each arm and then the endless talk "about the universe, the creation of the animals, the destiny of man, the nature of Adam Kadmon, the influence of the stars, the objective science of criticism . . . and a host of other things which I have since forgotten."[5]

There is, in both the accounts of the Muirs, especially Willa's, more than a hint that whilst they found him stimulating and hugely entertaining, they also felt there was something crankish about him, something of the poseur. Janko Lavrin, a friend of Mitrinović's during this period, was later to describe his fellow Slav as a man with a "home-made messiah complex," concerned to be a saviour rather than to save anyone.[6] However, in those post-war years in London the intellectual kinship and friendship between the two men, strengthened no doubt by their shared status as exiles, was extremely close. It was Lavrin, later to be appointed Professor of Slavonic Languages at Nottingham University, who was instrumental in introducing Mitrinović to intellectual and artistic circles in the capital beyond those of *The New*

Age, including members of the "Bloomsbury Set" who used to meet at a studio in 8 Fitzroy Street. The studio was shared between Frank Slade, a painter, and Valerie Cooper, a musician who taught dance and eurhythmics.

Valerie Cooper and Mitrinović were to become life-long friends, associates, and intimate companions. She died at the age of 81 in 1965. Some time in the 1950s, however, she jotted down some notes of her life at Fitzroy Street and of her early encounters with Mitrinović, who she referred to as D. M.

I first met D. M. about June 1919. Janko Lavrin, who had spoken frequently to me of him as a strong and gifted man—'but somewhat erratic'—(all this by implication rather than direct statement) brought him to lunch at the Studio one Sunday.

I cannot remember what we spoke of during lunch except that once he remarked "One can always know a woman by her cooking" and I thought "I am glad the lunch is good"—which I knew it was.

After lunch I gave coffee and cigarettes to the two men, and Janko said, "Now, Valerie, play Beethoven to us." D. M. interrupted quickly, "Coffee and a cigarette first." and I had a grateful feeling, "Here is someone who thinks for other people." After coffee he said, "Now play Beethoven for me." I said "I play badly." He asked me, nevertheless to play and I did—not well. I soon stopped and said "Is it too bad?" and he replied, "I find it nourishing." However—I didn't continue.

Exactly at 3 o'clock Janko went out. D. M. and I sat quietly for a moment, then he turned to me and said, in slow English, with a marked Serbian accent (I learnt to know it later)—"If, as is indeed the case, I am God and the ground of all Being, what ought to be my relationship with other humans, who are also God and the ground of all Being?" I could make no worthy response, so I just sat and looked at him, speechless. But he only waited a moment, and then plunged, with a sort of massive but fluid deliberation, into what seemed to me like a river of speech, which flowed on without ceasing and without hurrying. A man named Milnes came in for tea. D. M. included him immediately in the talk with unperturbed, kingly and modest graciousness and when he had left, continued as though there had been no interruption.

. . . I struggled with all my being to understand what he said, but could only dimly follow. As though he knew that I had discarded all religion long before, he spoke mostly about Christ. Once I said "But does it really matter whether he really lived on earth or not?" and he replied, "It matters more than anything else in the whole universe."

At 9 o'clock he stopped and said "I must go." I said to myself "I really should offer this nice man some dinner, but I can't bear one more word" so I let him go.

Janko called in a little later and I asked him why he had given me such a poor description of Mr. Mitrinović. He murmured something about 'an ordinary man.' "But," I said, "you never saw an ordinary man with a smile like that, it is an angel."

"Oh," he said, "that's just Slav childishness, we all have it." I was shocked and behaved cruelly. "Anyhow," I said, "*you* haven't."

The next day—Monday—I felt too exhausted even to stand upright, and only later realised it was probably due to the intense mental effort I had made to understand what Mr. Mitrinović had been saying the day before.

The following day—Tuesday—just as I was going to have lunch—he walked in, carrying a large punnet of raspberries—"I have come to lunch," he said, "and I have brought you some raspberries." As we ate, he continued Sunday's talk, as if there had been no interruption. Again I tried, floundering, to understand this strange language. We had the raspberries and when his plate was empty, I said "Have some more raspberries." He shook his head and I pressed a bit, "Just three. I will pick you out the nicest ones." He smiled, so I went to his side and found three fine ones. Suddenly, his face puckered like that of a disappointed child—"Oh," he said, or perhaps wailed, "that wasn't the one I wanted!"

After that, he came fairly frequently to see me. It surprised me, for I really couldn't respond properly to him. But, that a person such as he could exist was a perpetually increasing wonder for me. No matter what subject I spoke of, he, as it were, took me by the hand and led me along that path beyond the furthest horizon I could ever have dreamt of. . . .

He used, sometimes, to bring on Sunday afternoons, Petar Konjević, the Serbian composer. Together they would play and sing their Yugoslav songs and dances. For me it was like the opening of a door on to a new universe, full of nobility, colour, tenderness, strength. And when they stopped and went away I could almost hear the click of the latch as that door shut again.

Mitrinović became a frequent visitor to the Studio in Fitzroy Street, making friends with many of the artists who would gather there: including Bernard Leach, the potter; the conductor Edward Clark and the designer Sophie Fedorović who both worked with Diaghilev; Iris Tree, Matthew Smith and Augustus John.

A number of his acquaintances undoubtedly responded to him in much the same fashion as Willa Muir: viewing him as a remarkable and unusual man, a knowledgeable crank with an engaging line in "nonsense-mongery." To do so would be to concentrate upon merely one aspect of his public self—he did like to provoke people, he did have a sense of the absurd—and to ignore the many other facets. He took himself and his self-appointed

mission very seriously, and he had a target. This was A. R. Orage, and through him *The New Age* and its readership. It was said of Orage that he was "one of the most influential spirits in England although not one in ten thousand would know his name—because Orage only influenced influential people. He had no other public but writers."[7] This was something of which Mitrinović was well aware.

Born in Yorkshire, Orage had moved to London in 1905 after twelve years as a teacher in Leeds to pursue his chosen vocation as a journalist. In 1907 he and his friend Holbrook Jackson bought *The New Age* with financial support provided by Bernard Shaw and Lewis Wallace, a merchant banker. The two new editors aimed to turn the journal sub-titled "an independent socialist review of politics, literature and art," into an independent forum within which all progressive ideas and schemes might be examined and discussed—something akin to a weekly debating society. After policy disagreements with Jackson, Orage was left as sole editor by early 1908.

From that date until his resignation in 1922, the development of the weekly reflected to a considerable degree the path forged by Orage in his own search for some encompassing and coherent philosophy of man and society that could form a basis for the solution of not only social and political problems, but of spiritual ones also. Thus, during the immediate pre-war year he was particularly influenced by S. G. Hobson and it was during this period that *The New Age* embraced and promoted the cause of guild socialism. According to Margaret Cole it became "*the* left-wing paper, which everybody who was anybody read."[8] By 1917, however, Orage had begun to suspect that National Guilds, as he and Hobson had formulated the idea, were insufficient on their own. Whilst guild socialism, based on the premise that "men could not be really free as citizens unless they were also free and self-governing in their daily lives as producers,"[9] might be the ideal solution for the problem of industrial organisation, its economic theory was inadequate. There was, Orage suggested, something unsound in "the relation of the whole scheme to the existing, or any prospective, scheme of money."[10] He began to extend his study of socialist economics until, in 1917, he was introduced to Major C. H. Douglas by Holbrook Jackson. By 1919 Orage was converted and from that time until 1922 Douglas's system of social credit became one of the central concerns of the weekly. It was in the columns of *The New Age* and through the collaboration of Orage and Douglas that the seeds of the world-wide social credit movement were sown.

However, whilst Orage's interest in economics and monetary reform grew during the post war period, so did his own personal quest for spiritual certainty intensify. In 1919 he announced that the weekly would undertake "a more

profound analysis and synthesis of human psychology." It became a forum for the discussion and exposition of the new developments that were taking place in psycho-analysis, and sometime during 1920 Orage formed a study group of practising psychologists to investigate psycho-analysis. It was during this period when the religious or spiritual dimensions of Orage's mind and character were re-asserting themselves, perhaps as a counter-balance to the technicalities of Douglas's social credit scheme, that he came under the influence of Mitrinović.[11]

Rowland Kenney, who was a member of the coterie of writers and artists associated with *The New Age* at the time of Mitrinović's arrival in London, was later to recall, "We were all immediately deeply impressed by Mitrinović. Some of us were also deeply puzzled. We could never quite understand what he was, as they say, 'getting at' ".[12] Paul Selver was similarly bemused, claiming that

> Orage, to whom I introduced Mitrinović, saw in him, I fancy, even more than I did, largely because he had far more in common with his ideas than I could possibly have. Orage's interest in abstract thought and philosophical speculation was entirely beyond my range. The same remark applies to his familiarity with occult and transcendental matters, about which he was inclined to be reticent.[13]

This aspect of Orage's persona was something of which a number of his associates were well aware. Outwardly he was a man of the world: urbane, witty, even ruthless at times, an avid follower of political trends and events, and a brilliant editor. Inwardly, according to Hugh MacDiarmid, quoting Beatrice Hastings, Orage "suffered from paranoic mystagoguery."[14] Whilst to such people Orage's spiritual strife appeared as an aberration, a deviation from the 'essential Orage,' others recognised it as a manifestation of a constant tension that had accompanied the man throughout his life. According to Edwin Muir, Orage, ever since his youth,

> had taken up and followed creeds which seemed to provide a short-cut to intellectual and spiritual power. He had been a theosophist, a member of a magic circle which also included Yeats, a Nietzschean, and a student of Hindu religion and philosophy. He was convinced that there was a secret knowledge behind the knowledge given to the famous prophets and philosophers, and for the acquisition of that knowledge and the intellectual and spiritual power it would bring with it he was prepared to sacrifice everything and take upon him any labour, no matter how humble or wearisome or abstruse.[15]

It was this search by Orage for something other than wordly success, this quest for spiritual insight, that made him such a ready collaborator with Mitrinović. More than anything else Orage aspired to attain some higher state of consciousness, and in the Serb he recognised someone who could help him. He appeared amongst *The New Age* circle at a time when these aspirations of Orage were being frustrated by his commitment to Douglasism: Mitrinović emerged phoenix-like

> out of the centre of what one feared was now the flaming wreck of European civilization, proclaiming a gospel of world salvation inspired by the perennial philosophy and the Christian revelation. He spoke like a prophet with a mission to convict the nations of sin and call them to righteousness, preaching in a language of transcendental idealism to which Orage's mind was well attuned.[16]

According to Mairet, an intimate of both men, Mitrinović became "the predominant figure in Orage's world for two or three years, and possibly more."[17]

By 1920 the relationship between the two men had developed to a point where Orage felt prepared to place the columns of the weekly at Mitrinović's disposal. This was the opportunity that he had been waiting for, a means of communicating his vision of the world and the future development of humanity to a new and wider audience, one which might be receptive to his urgings. In fact, the readership of *The New Age* by this time had declined considerably from its peak in 1909 when its circulation reached 22,000. By 1913 sales were down to 4,500, and by 1920 the paper had been reduced to twelve pages and the circulation figure was probably less than 2,000. The appearance of Mitrinović's weekly column, "World Affairs," between August 1920 and October 1921 thus coincided with the least successful phase of the magazine's history. Indeed, it has been argued that the publication of these commentaries caused the decline in circulation during this period. Willa Muir claimed that Mitrinović "finally helped to sink *The New Age* by the dead weight of the columns he contributed."[18] A more balanced assessment is that of Wallace Martin who, whilst acknowledging that Mitrinović's columns did contribute to the fall in circulation, argued that the loss of the weekly's popularity could be traced to the decline of its commitment to guild socialism and the turn to social credit, accompanied as this was by the loss of much of the support previously provided by the social movement that had arisen largely as a consequence of the magazine's promotion of guild socialism.[19]

That Mitrinović should be accused of bringing about the demise of *The New Age,* is, in fact, quite understandable when one considers the style that he adopted to convey his ideas and images. Even so devoted a follower

as Mairet who, on Mitrinović's promptings, had begun to contribute to the paper himself in 1919 was forced to admit

> . . . . that the excellence . . . in Mitrinović's spoken English was not apparent in his literary style—or not when he wrote about world affairs. In this vein he expressed himself in towering abstractions, metaphysical allusions and extraordinary neologisms—a style which, at its best, might achieve a kind of monstrous beauty like an elephant with wings, and was always unlike anything one had ever read before. . . . . .[20]

The reason Mitrinović adopted a style and a language so difficult for the general reader to follow reflected his own perspective on the springs of human action. For Mitrinović, only mythological notions were able to affect the human emotions and hence the human will to action and commitment. Commonsense rational ideas necessarily mirrored the world as it was, reflecting the accepted paradigms of conventional thought, and could lead only to commonsense practical action oriented to readily attainable goals. 'Impractical,' imaginative or utopian actions which transcended the fetters of the dominant view of the world could be evoked only as a consequence of people's emotions being moved. Their origin lay in inspiration rather than mundane rational calculation. So, in his "World Affairs" articles for *The New Age,* he aimed not so much at the intellect but at those levels of consciousness above and below rational consciousness and thought. Moreover, the abstruseness of his language reflected his view of the complexity and contradictions inherent in human life and society. To express himself simply and clearly (as he was able to do when the occasion demanded), to render his ideas easily understandable at a first reading, would be to imply that life itself was straightforward and clear-cut, the fundamental guiding principles of which were readily available to be grasped by the individual without difficulty or struggle.

Despite the fact that Orage acknowledged that new ideas necessitated a new vocabulary, he was concerned that Mitrinović's contributions to the weekly would be beyond the comprehension of *The New Age* readership if he was given a completely free hand in matters of style and form of expression. Consequently, the first four months of the weekly column, "World Affairs," were written by Orage himself, largely from notes taken during conversations with Mitrinović. Eventually both men found this arrangement unsatisfactory and Mitrinović alone became responsible for the commentaries that appeared under the pseudonym M. M. Cosmoi.

Underpinning the articles were two broad assumptions. The first involved the recognition of the unity and continuity of the whole universe and, derived from this, of humanity in general. Although we might experience diversity

and discontinuity in the different races and nations of the world and in the different individual members of humanity, there is, in fact, a single continuous psychic thread permeating all the various forms of life. The second assumption which followed from this assertion of underlying unity was that the whole of humanity is an organism of which the different nations and races are organs, each having its own character relating to its proper function in the whole. Following on from this notion, each individual could in turn be viewed as a cell in the organism.

Before going on to follow Mitrinović's development of these core assumptions, it is necessary first of all to ask just how we are meant to treat these twin notions and the ensuing analysis to which they give rise. Was he claiming that the world is an organism as an empirical fact? Was he claiming that this is how the world might become, that humanity might develop to such a stage where it corresponds to an organism made up of interlinking parts? Or was he claiming that it is a useful heuristic device to view the world and humanity as a developing organism?

In sketching the details of his view of the planet and of humanity as an organic wholeness Mitrinović was putting it forward as a way of thinking about the world and its history. It was not a simple dogmatic assertion about the physical and material structure of the world. His approach was the essentially pragmatist one that he had outlined in "Aesthetic Contemplations." "The truth lies not in whether anything is or not, but in whether it should be or should not be. . . . The truth or untruth of a thing depends on our will. The will to believe is the criterion of knowledge." Thus, when confronting the great question of how to create a world order of peace and fellowship, it was necessary first of all to believe that such an end *ought* to be sought, believe that it *could* be achieved, and then to proceed to act upon these assumptions as if they were true and valid in order to bring it about.

When one does look at the world as it is one is struck not only by the similarities that exist between peoples and groups, but also by the tremendous differences. What model or scheme, then, allows one to embrace such diversity within a single paradigm or framework? The notion of organism, for Mitrinović, was the only one in which continuity and unity could be joined together with discreteness and diversity.

A contemporary of Mitrinović's, the English socialist Edward Carpenter, had adopted a similar model when, in an essay first published in 1897, he had detailed his vision of a non-governmental society in which people would be motivated by "community of life and interest in life" rather than

by fear or "greed of gain." Countering the criticism that such a society was impractical and impossible, Carpenter referred to

> . . . . the human body itself, that marvellous epitome and mirror of the universe. . . . It is composed of a myriad of cells, members, organs, compacted into a living unity. A healthy body is the most perfect society conceivable. What does the hand say when a piece of work is demanded of it? Does it bargain first for what reward it is to receive, and refuse to move until it has secured satisfactory terms, or the foot decline to take us on a journey till it knows what special gain is to accrue to *it* thereby? Not so; but each limb and cell does the work which is before it to do, and (such is the utopian law) the *fact of its doing the work* causes the circulation to flow to it, and it is nourished and fed in proportion to its service. And we have to ask whether the same may not be the law of a healthy human society?[21]

It seems clear that Carpenter was referring to the human organism as a model for the healthy socialist society, as did Mitrinović in certain passages of his writing. In others, however, he referred to the world as a developing organism in quite a dogmatic and assertive manner as if it were actually so. This apparently cavalier approach could be explained in terms not only of pragmatism but also the theory of "fictions" in Hans Vaihinger's *The Philosophy of As If*. In developing his theory of ideational shifts Vaihinger noted a discernible tendency for certain ideas, such as the religious notion of God, to be initially treated as dogma, as the expression of unquestionable truth; then, for the quality of conviction to be eroded so that the dogma was gradually relegated to the status of hypothesis; and finally the idea of God to be revealed as so full of contradictions that the idea was treated as a fiction. With respect to other ideas, particularly scientific ones, there was an opposite movement: an idea was proposed and treated as a fiction, eventually taking on the status of a working hypothesis, and finally becoming accepted as dogma, as the truth.

Following Solovyov and, indeed, Comte, Mitrinović put forward as a hypothesis the idea of the world and humanity as a developing organism. This could be regarded as a 'creative fiction,' a source of insight in the sense in which Vaihinger developed his theory of fictions. As such the idea was not without value as an aid to the affirmation of a common humanity sharing a single world and an inter-related fate. However, if such an immanent potential was to be realised, it required people to act as if it were true. If people, through faith, could act on the idea, then it could be created as fact. As William James observed, "There are cases. . . . . where a fact cannot come at all unless a preliminary faith exists in its coming."[22] So

with the notion of the world and humanity as an organic whole—this could lead to world peace and justice only if people had sufficient faith in its efficacy to act upon it to make it real. Hence, once having put forward the organic notion as a way of thinking about the world, as a hypothetical model, as a basis for action which would thereby reveal its efficacy, Mitrinović proceeded to treat the idea as dogmatically true, because only by doing so, and convincing others of its veracity, would the sought-for consequences in terms of human action towards world peace ensue. In this sense, it would have been counter-productive to constantly remind the reader that the functioning of the world as a single organism was merely an idea, a mythological construct.

The essence of the organic notion is not its physical nature but the relatedness of the parts to one another and to the whole; each part operating according to its own principles whilst performing a function that contributes to the maintenance of the whole. If the equilibrium of the organism is disturbed by an outside stimulus or by the malfunctioning of one of its parts, then all the other parts adjust correspondingly to restore the balance and proper functioning of the whole. The portrayal of the world as an organism thus enabled Mitrinović to see the differences and conflicts between different groups, nations and races as comparable to the tensions between separate parts of an organism which were, at the same time, constituent elements of a single whole and contributing to the development of the whole, rather than as signs of fundamental incompatibility that could be resolved only by force and violence. Thus, he wrote, early on in the series of articles:

> We have already indicated our conception of the world as one great mind in process of becoming self-conscious; and from this point of view the various races and nations may be regarded as rudimentary organs in course of development within the great world-embryo. If such a view is correct—and any other seems sooner or later to involve itself in tragic contradictions—not only would it follow that there must be a natural world process which it is the duty of all individuals to discover, and the duty of all individuals, nations and races alike, to assist, but it would also follow that there cannot be any *real* antagonism between the proper functions assigned by the world-process to its various developing organs. The heart does not quarrel with the lungs in a healthy organism; and in a healthy state of world-development it is impossible that the proper function of any race or nation should be incompatible with the proper functions of its interrelated companions. Where there is war there is, therefore, something wrong . . . War is, in fact, at once an evidence of misunderstanding and an attempt, more or less blundering, to clear it up.[23]

Moreover,

> Nothing less than such a psychological view of the world can possibly enable us to form correct judgments, since, in its absence, no other criterion of value can ever be adopted than that of self-preservation or self-extension by means of force. . . . . Unless there is and can consciously be conceived a non-arbitrary common world-responsibility, resting equally according to their respective genius, situation, and history, upon every race and nation, nothing remains but to abandon every issue to mere force. That then would be right that succeeded in establishing itself; and every effort to survive and to dominate would become justified.[24]

Mitrinović regarded the doctrine of the Trinity in the Athanasian Creed as the most precise expression of the dynamic principles and morphology of an organism. As such it formed an essential background to the complete series of articles in *The New Age*. In the statement of the Athanasian Creed the Father begets the Son, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father *and* from the Son. However, in the Athanasian Creed, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit do not just succeed each other, they also co-exist as equals with one another: "The Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God." All three are distinct and differentiated, and yet they are all equally God. The doctrine of the Trinity asserted, according to Mitrinović,

> . . . not as a theory or a wish, but as an immanent as well as transcendental fact of nature, the equal and independent yet interdependent functions of the three persons, *of whom Mankind is one*[25]

Following the doctrine of the Athanasian Creed in his articles, Mitrinović found:

> . . . the concepts of the world as one and yet three; of the human spirit as simultaneously and equally requiring the recognition of God, the Universe and Man; of Man as the Son and not the servant, still less the antithesis, of God; of Man as the *consciousness* of God, with God as the *unconscious* of Man.[26]

According to Mitrinović's reading, the Father was the unconscious, that mysterious power within the universe and within the individual human being. It was not God the Father who was endowed with attributes of personality and self-consciousness. Rather, the personality and self-consciousness of God resided in the Son. It was Jesus of Nazareth who declared himself to be the Son of God and "was to become, by his own Promethean act, the individual consciousness of God." Humanity, in the person of the Son, was to

> declare himself divinely omnipotent with the Father . . . announce himself as the 'saviour of God,' God's consciousness, and as indispensable to the Father

> as the Father is to the Son . . . Man was to declare himself the equal Son of God, and to enter upon the responsibilities as well as privileges of one of the Persons of the Trinity.[27]

It was Jesus Christ who was both Man and God. As the universal or archetypal man, he was the self-consciousness of the three-fold God, the second Person of the Trinity, of which the first Person, God the Father, was the world unconscious.

Drawing upon the work of Solovyov, Mitrinović interpreted the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, as Sophia, the establishment of the 'Kingdom of God' on earth, the creation of Universal Humanity. The Holy Spirit would be incarnated as the organic ordering of the world in which races, nations and groupings of all kinds would be functionally related to one another.

> The final revelation of the Eternal in the human kingdom, however, will not be the incarnation of the Universal Man in Christ Jesus but of Universal Humanity itself in the organised and harmonious life of the world . . . It is approaching swiftly, providentially and inevitably; for God Himself became Man in the Logos Incarnate in order that Man himself might transcend and break his individualist, egoist Ego and explode into cosmic Socialism, into the ecstatic life of divino-human consciousness . . . The absolute Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Tri-unity, proceeds, as Western Christendom has understood, from both the Logos and the Eternal Unconscious. The concrete, ultimate, individualised third Hypostasis of God, the personified God or Humanity is, also, and entirely, a collaborator, a cooperator with the Infinite Unconscious. For humanity itself is the Eternal Son of God, the Incarnated Son, the individualised Son. Thus the freedom of humanity becomes incommensurable. The scope of human action and guidance becomes broadened into the abysmal and the boundless. . . .[28]

According to Mitrinović, therefore,

> The problem confronting mankind today is the mystery of the third Testament, of the incarnation of the third Hypostasis itself on earth. And this Third Hypostasis or Holy Spirit is Universal Humanity itself. It is the incarnation of Sophia herself, of the Sophia of Man that is the mystery of the earth today. In the problem of the organic wholeness of the world all the problems of classes, races, sexes, even of individuals, are included . . . the problem of the world is one, and because it is one the solution of every sectional problem has its consequences for every other section and for the universal whole . . . every organ of the world has its specific function, irreplaceable and essential to the whole. . . . .[29]

The Trinity, then, for Mitrinović was not merely a theological abstraction, a religious myth—it also expressed synchronically the pattern of organic wholeness, whilst diachronically it represented an archetype for the development of humanity towards that wholeness. God the Father is the first Person of the Trinity and taken as representing the unconscious creative power immanent throughout the world and through which, at the level of the collective unconscious, all Humanity is one. The second Person of the Trinity, Jesus of Nazareth, was both God and Man who proclaimed "I and my Father are one." The begetting of the Son by the Father represented the emergence of the self-conscious individual from the unconscious unity of humanity. The Holy Spirit proceeds from both Father and Son—so, from the natural unity of humanity and the self-conscious decision of individuals would emerge the conscious unity of humanity, the Holy Spirit incarnated as Universal Humanity, "cosmic socialism."

The notion of humanity as a self-conscious organism can, of course, be realised only through the consciousness of its constituent cells. It can be brought about only by the will of individuals. Mitrinović wrote:

> It is freedom and the human race that rule the earth's fate as much as Providence and Destiny . . . Man is thus the very heart of the world and its plan. It is out of the mystery of human sovereign indefiniteness that the guidance of the species must come. Freedom, however, means voluntary and rational obeying of Providence. It means realising the creative needs of Providence. . . .[30]

The notions of Providence, Destiny and Freewill run right through the "World Affairs" series of articles. In developing the concepts Mitrinović drew upon the work of Fabre d'Olivet in his *Histoire Philosophique du Genre Humain* who had sought to explain the development of world evolution and history as a consequence of the interaction of these three factors or forces. Providence is that incomprehensible power operating to give any being its potential life and the form in which it can be perfected. As such it can be compared with Mitrinović's portrayal of God the Father as the unconscious power in the universe. Providence is what *ought* to be, its end is the perfection of all beings. Destiny, on the other hand, is what *must* be. Destiny can be compared to the laws of nature. As such, Destiny can be grasped by the intellect whilst Providence can be known only through intuition, by the soul rather than the brain. Providence is what *can* be if humans make the effort to realise their powers to the full. Destiny is what *will* be if humans fail to intervene to affect the course of history. In this sense, Freewill means the freedom to act towards the realisation of the

best that is possible. It consists in discerning and being guided by Providence, and as such requires faith in the existence and immanent power of Providence.

> There must be necessity and logic in the world. There must be Destiny. And it is this all-mighty power that in its working precedes the most precious of powers and dominants, the Freedom of Man; this eternal antithesis, this Satan, however, is ever grounded in the abyss of the creator's will in Providence . . . What ought to be drives and leads that which must be; not contrariwise. Freedom, the end of God and Man, ultimately realises its own most inscrutable function. . . . . Humanity can obey Providence and can use Destiny. . . .[31]

When those who are illumined by Providence ignore it and fail to make Destiny their instrument, chaos rules:

> Obedience to Providence and heroism against Destiny is the meaning of Freedom and of men . . . Obeying Providence is the calling of Man. In this consists his co-equality with the Eternal. The Unconscious is the Father. It is supra-consciousness, the indefiniteness itself, the divineness itself, that the Son makes possible. It is Pleroma and Holy Spirit that results from the co-equality of the Son . . . Man is consciousness and is conscious . . . To Humanity Universal, however, to Holy Spirit, individuality and personality is the gate. Freedom is the condition. Consciousness is the condition, while Creator the Father is the foundation and the ground.[32]

The key, then, to the creation of an organic, harmonious world order lay with the Freewill of humanity acting in "obedience to Providence and heroism against Destiny." This was the task that faced humanity in general, and the people of Europe and the west in particular.

In his general scheme of the evolution and history of the world and humanity Mitrinović adopted the pre-Christian framework expounded to the West by Madame Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* and developed more methodically by Rudolf Steiner. This scheme envisaged a pattern of world development by cycles or spirals of birth, growth, decay and death; with each cycle succeeded by another. In each cycle, or phase in the continuing spiral, some new faculty or quality emerged to characterise the people of that epoch. Such qualities, developments in self-awareness and knowledge about the nature of the world, were usually expressed by and through certain exceptional people who were 'ahead of their time'—key individuals with a more developed consciousness than their contemporaries, who expressed truths about the origin and nature of reality in mythological language, and who thereby helped guide humanity 'forwards and upwards' towards the next phase of development. Mitrinović conjectured that,

> . . . when mythology has been properly interpreted as symbolic or intuitive pre-history, an epitome of events preceding the observation of reason, it may, and we believe it will, appear that over each of the racial transformations some kind of intelligence presided either in the form of a Great Man or Manu, or as a creative impulse within the development race itself . . .[33]

According to his reading of world development there had been a continuous process of change in human consciousness—from people initially leading a relatively instinctive form of life, 'at one' with the rest of nature in a state of collective unconsciousness; followed by a stage during which each person felt their sense of being as inextricably linked to their membership of a collectivity or group, whether a tribe, a caste, a clan or family; leading to the phase when individuals begin to experience the freedom and significance of the separate self, when they feel they have the power to control their own lives as individuals. For Mitrinović, each successive stage of development was associated with, or carried by, a particular race. He likened the course of human development to

> a series of racial stages of transformation . . . Each of the races in embryological succession may have been, so to speak, eugenically developed and bred under the tutelage of what mythology describes as Culture-heroes, race builders, Manus or what not. Or, again, these figures may represent movements, revolutions inspired by the common mind of developing mankind which seized upon this or that people of each succeeding race as the most promising ground for the development of the next racial stage.[34]

The development in human consciousness, he claimed, had moved, geographically and racially, from East to West—from China and India, through the Middle East, Greece and Rome, to Europe and America.

> Westward the course of consciousness takes its way; and it is probable that nobody would be found to deny that, in general, the unconscious is related with the East, while the conscious is the characteristic of the "progressive" West. Westwards, or in the direction of increasing consciousness, the tide of impulse appears to flow; and it is of the utmost importance that the fact should be recognised.[35]

In the current phase of development, according to Mitrinović, humanity faced a critical turning point. Each cycle or stage in the developmental spiral was characterised by a period of growth followed by one of decline. With the growth of western civilisation humanity had emerged from the collective unconscious stage, and individuals had developed a consciousness

of themselves as separate, free agents. This had reached its peak, its limit, in the twentieth century in what Erich Gutkind termed "the zero point of pure isolated individuality"—the narrow competitive individualism characteristic of the west where people sought to increase their individual status by the acquisition of possessions of every sort. This was a major source of conflict and hostility. It was vital therefore that a new kind of consciousness develop to supersede mere individual self-consciousness: a consciousness of the world and humanity as one and indivisible on the basis of the individual's own self-conscious awareness of the part he or she had to play in the whole. This was the meaning of Mitrinović's claim that the world was "one great mind in process of becoming self-conscious."[36]

It was the religions of the East that expressed the intuitive awareness of humanity as one. Guided by these belief systems and mythologies, the people of the East led a life ruled less by their conscious analytical reason than by their virtually instinctive sense of being a natural part of a single, divinely-ordained order.[37] Christianity, by contrast, was the religion of individuality and reason. No other religion placed the individual person at the centre of its faith, as a vehicle into which God could incarnate, thereby enabling the individual to become an actual aspect of the Godhead. It was through the influence of Christianity that humanity, especially in Europe and the West, had taken on a degree of conscious control over their individual lives, assuming "what had before been only God's responsibility."[38] Socialism would rest on the foundation of these two orientations towards the world—the synthesis of the instinctive sense of one world and the will to independent existence. The foundation of Universal Humanity resided in the natural oneness of the world, instinctively recognised in the East, and the freewill and reason of self-conscious individuals in the West, upon whom a key task fell in creating the world organic order.

In stressing that different peoples and races were characterized by different orientations to the world, held different visions of the nature of reality, and thereby had different functions to perform within the world, Mitrinović was not attempting to rank one race or nation as superior to another. He maintained that in the functional organisation of the world "every race and nation has its indispensable part to play."[39] Moreover:

> It is not the virtue of the world-student to take sides in a partisan strife, even when the strife concerns whole races. It is altogether a question of values; and, above all, of values in relation to the *intention* of the world spirit. The world, we believe, has a divine dharma or purpose . . . it can be summed up in the phrase, the functional organisation of the world as one. Looking at the problem before us in the light of this affirmation, our judgment of values must depend,

> as we have said, on their value in relation to this end . . . There are no criminals in our court . . . only races and nations of relative service or disservice to the functional organisation of the world . . . there is no world-advantage in a mere comparison of races to the prejudice of one or the other . . . The problem is a practical one, though it involves the study of racial psychology; and the end in view is no other than the welfare of the world.[40]

Mitrinović always maintained that the soul was an organ of knowledge as well as the intellect; and in constructing a world-plan based on a psychology of races and nations he acknowledged that his scheme could only be a tentative one, based on intuition and creative imagination as much as logic and reason. For, "to discover the natural, the intended functions of races would demand the intuitive study of history, of science, of philosophy and religion; a work that is only in its infancy in Europe."[41]

As we have seen, Mitrinović, maintained the view that "westward the course of consciousness takes its way." The East was associated with the unconscious of the "one great mind," the West associated with the level of consciousness and rational thought. Just as the human unconscious can be understood as exerting a formative influence over the nature of an individual's conscious thought and feeling, so Mitrinović wrote about the development of the white race from out of the coloured and black races of Asia and Africa. He referred to Asia as the father-aspect and Africa as the mother-aspect of human consciousness who, between them, could be said to have given birth to Europe as their child who was to attain self-consciousness. As we have also seen, he held that Christianity was the prime bearer of that self-consciousness which characterised European culture.

In the westward flow of human development in the direction of increased individual self-consciousness and the related development of the human capacity for rational thought at the cost of instinct, Mitrinović paid particular attention to the role played by the Jews. He interpreted the mythology of the Jewish people as recorded in the Old Testament as symbolic of their spiritual unfolding. According to his reading,

> . . . from the coloured race of "Egypt" a particular people, the Jews or Israel, was "chosen" for the "mission" of becoming White; that this tremendous eugenic task necessitated "exodus" from "Egypt" (in other words, segregation from the inferior race), the crossing of the Red Sea, the Desert and the Jordan (all, no doubt, symbolic of actual physiological or psychological sublimations and transformations); and, finally, temporary isolation in the Promised Land under the Divine rule in preparation for their role as the inheritors or ruling race of the kingdom of the world . . . It is as a bridge between the East that was, and the West that was to be, that the Jewish race must be contemplated. Its exodus

> from Egypt was an exodus from the East, from the unconsciousness of Man . . . Psychologically they were to emerge from what psycho-analysts call the collective unconscious into individual consciousness; and doctrinally, they were to form a bridge, under the aegis of Jehovah, between the East and the West, between the Universal Impersonal Godhead of Brahma and the Individual Personal Godhead of Him whom they called the Messiah . . . That was, we believe, the task imposed upon the Jews, the mission they chose or were chosen to fulfil. What is more, they made a complete success of it! Their tragedy, and the world's tragedy, is that they failed to realise it.[42]

It was the Jewish people who gave birth to Jesus, "the greatest event in psychology as well as in history." Through the birth of Christ "God was born of Man, and the race that had performed the prodigy was the Chosen people."[43] But when He appeared amongst them they failed to acknowledge Him. This was perhaps not too surprising since He refused to declare himself a Jew and his claims and doctrines were in contradiction to those of the Jews. According to Mitrinović, from the perspective of the development of the world and humanity, the beliefs of the Jews had served their purpose once Christ was born.

> Like a husk that had protected the seed until it was ready to fall, Jehovah was obsolete from the moment that Jesus appeared; and with Jehovah went everything which the Jews had hitherto been taught to regard as religion.

In Mitrinović's eyes, Jehovah had been merely a "transitional 'phantasm,' unconsciously designed to form a bridge between Brahma and Christ." Consequently, once Christ, the "Individual and Personal Deity, flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone" had emerged, the mission of the Jews had been completed, they were "no longer anything in particular; they were only one of the races of Mankind . . ."[44]

The psychology of the Jewish people reflected their history. On the one hand they were a 'chosen' people with a divine call and mission—the origin of their sense of their distinctive uniqueness amongst the races of the world. On the other hand, they finally betrayed their mission when they rejected Christ and what he symbolised, the assumption by humanity of what had previously been considered to be solely God's responsibility for the development of the world—hence the sensitivity of the Jews to criticism.

For Mitrinović, writing in 1920, the practical choice facing the Jews was "Zion or assimilation." The pull of Palestine he likened to the hold that a father exerts over an individual, even in adulthood. The Father, in the case of the Jews, being the unconscious of the world represented by

the East. The Jews, he maintained, had a right "to regress to the East from which they emerged." The alternative to Zionism was assimilation; "not only the abandonment of Judaism and the acceptance of the Science of the Logos, but the assimilation of Jewish with Aryan blood by deliberate intermarriage of Jews with Aryans."[45] It is necessary to emphasise at this point, I think, that Mitrinović was writing in the early 1920s, before Hitler's attempt at a "final solution" to the "Jewish problem," and the terminology used by Mitrinović reflects this fact. Thus, by Aryan Mitrinović did not mean "the Teutonic brutality of Germany and Albion" but rather that section of humanity wherein the values of reason, personality and individual freewill were most strongly established. It was the white race, the Aryan world, which had the mission and responsibility of organising the world functionally. If the Jews chose Zionism rather than assimilation into that section of humanity, then, according to Mitrinović,

> they symbolically cut themselves off from the Aryan world; and it must follow, sooner or later, that they must forego the privileges of the function thus abandoned.[46]

Perhaps understandably, many of the subscribers to *The New Age* read such statements as indicative of anti-semitism on the part of their author. Mitrinović responded to his accusers:

> . . . we ask them to believe that we do not belong to the anti-Semitic school that has, as its chief characteristics, either a national chauvinism as "tribal" as that of the Jews themselves, or a cult, nominally catholic, that is Judaic in spirit . . . Nor are we pro-Aryan on tribal or even racial grounds.

He went on to warn such 'chauvinists' that,

> About the Aryan race we shall have something critical to say in due course; we trust that our Aryan readers are not purring with too complete a sense of complacency, since they will certainly be disturbed in it if they do us the justice of reading these notes to the bitter end.[47]

What, then was the proper role of Europe and the "Aryan world" of the West in the development towards a functional ordering of the world?

Universal Humanity could be achieved only through the conscious will of free individuals. It was in Europe, in the western world, that, under the influence of Christianity, individuality and reason were most developed and valued.

> The character of independence and of Promethean self-realisation are the gifts of the European to the humanity of all men; self-government of the individual; god-consciousness in the individual soul; identification of the ultimate personal awareness with the Sonhood itself.[48]

Thus, if the world was to be consciously organised as an organic whole, it was Europe, the brain of the world, that must take the lead.

> If there is a focusing force in the world and a need and a want of a synthetic humanness, these, surely, are revealed in the culture of Europe. If there be a specific and natural organic function of concentration; of thought; of consciousness, in the human whole, there is no doubt that this divine function is performed by Europe. Europe is chosen . . . both by Providence and Destiny, and must be finally chosen also by the Will of Humanity, to become the continent of the world's synthesis, the organ of the unification of the body of man.[49]

This, then, was Europe's mission in the development of the world. Only Europe, the white race, the western world, could "establish a functional world system in which each of the races and nations is called upon to play its natural and organic part."[50] This was not to say that Europe had a divine right to rule and determine the course of the world in pursuance of her own narrow interests. The solutions to the problems of world-ordering, Mitrinović wrote, "must be such that while they satisfy the European mind they satisfy the best minds of all the other races; for it is contrary to both reason and justice that the brain should dictate what the other organs do not find it easy and natural and proper to carry out, namely their own highest functions."[51] Moreover, he acknowledged that "there are individual minds in all races and nations that are 'universal,' and capable of taking a world-view of world-affairs."[52] He hoped to enlist these in the work towards re-ordering the world; particularly in the light of Europe's history—"an almost unbroken story of chicanery, greed and ill-will"[53]—and her patent failure to live up to her world-responsibilities. Thus, in her relations with China, for instance, "incredibly little of all that Europe has hitherto done to China lies outside the definition of crime."[54] The history of her dealing with Africa and Asia revealed a similar story. It was, Mitrinović claimed, "unimaginable to the complacent European mind what crimes have been perpetrated by Europe on the Black race."

> All-in-all, since the re-discovery of Africa alone, a hundred million Blacks have been enslaved or put to death in the supposed interest of Europe, not to mention

> the example of America. It would appear, indeed, as if the governing purpose of Europe were to divide up the Black race and administer it solely to Europe's good. Europe has not come to her senses in the full meaning of the word. There is no organised European mind; Europe as a cultural entity has not yet been developed. It follows that Europe's relations with the Black, as well as with the Yellow, race have been largely instinctive—in other words, not specifically European; for to be instinctive and not intelligent is to be essentially non-European.[55]

Europe, in general, had revealed herself as "too exclusive, too small-minded" to discharge her proper duties towards the rest of humanity.[56] Moreover, within the continent itself, relationships between nations and groups were conducted in a "satanical and terrible way."[57]

Despite the historical fact that Europe had revealed herself so far as only willing to take advantages of her privileges rather than fulfill her responsibilities to the rest of the world, as "the consciousness of the species"[58] she remained the only agency capable of initiating a world-synthesis. For,

> . . . no organ, other than the brain itself, can possibly discharge effectually the work of the brain . . . as the world is only the individual writ large, what is true of the individual is true, though on a larger plan and scale, of the world-mind itself. No other racial organ than the European can possibly discharge the intellectual and spiritual function of Europe.[59]

As a first initiative towards the organic ordering of the world, Europe needed to begin with herself and make herself whole. "The Federation of Europe, the synthesis of Europe, is the primary condition of the Alliance of Humanity, of the world-synthesis."[60] But by a federation of Europe (and in Europe he also included Russia, the Balkans, Britain, and the mediterranean countries) Mitrinović was not advocating merely a formal political unification. If Europe was to become "the instrument of the intelligent organisation of the world,"[61] then its future unity needed to be a spiritual or cultural one rather than founded on a political or military basis. The world needed a spiritual Europe,

> a Europe consciously and self-consciously one, a Europe whose parts freely consent in a harmony of Christendom, a Europe worthy of the world's reference of values. That is the constructive idea for a new Europe . . . Assuming that the intention of the world is to become born in the consciousness of mankind; and that on Europeans, as the most conscious of all the races, the duty and responsibility of exemplary leadership falls—the spiritual task before Europe is to realise its obligations, before it is too late, and to create an all-inclusive European culture, as a preliminary, not to imposing it upon the world, but to maintaining it as the world's standard of reference.[62]

Mitrinović was calling in the first instance for 'new Europeans' rather than a new Europe. The responsibility of exemplary leadership lay with individuals to make Europe, and eventually the world, "consciously and self-consciously one." Whilst so much of the "World Affairs" series was an attempt to sketch out imaginatively and mythologically the nature of an organic world order and the role of different races and nations in such a morphology; the movement towards such Universal Humanity was indivisible from the transformation of individuals and individual consciousness. Mitrinović defined socialism not as "any particular system of organisation, dictatorial or anarchist, but a self-ordering of man, based on the nature of the individual and collective soul of mankind."[63] As such, the attainment of socialism, Universal Humanity, required changes in individual thought, feeling, and action. It could never be achieved so long as the jingo-ism and individualistic ethos characteristic of Europe and the western world was the ruling one. For socialism to be created it was necessary that individuals identify with the rest of humanity as a whole rather than with their own particular nation, class or tribe. But humanity is not an abstract category, it is represented by one's neighbours, colleagues and all other disparate individuals. For socialism to work, then, it was necessary for each individual to acknowledge that their neighbours and all those with whom they came into direct and indirect contact were of equal significance and value as themselves. They must really feel as the writer of the Epistle to the Romans phrased it, "As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members of one another." (Romans 12, 4-5) Sophia, the Holy Spirit, could only be incarnated by and as a community of free, self-conscious individuals; individuals who had transcended the individualistic ethic to a new "supra-human" consciousness, something akin to Solovyov's depiction of love: "The meaning and value of love as a feeling consists in the fact that it makes us actually, with our whole being, recognise in another the absolute central significance which owing to egoism we feel in ourselves only."[64]

It was only through the consciously creative action of those that valued others as much as themselves that Universal Humanity could be realised. "Self-resurrection and self-creation are the infinite need of the human race today . . . ," wrote Mitrinović, "Beginning from the individual self-transcendence and ending with the resurrection of Sophia from her chaos, human consciousness demands in this hour a new and holy breaking up and a new mystery."[65] If the world was a single living organism with the different races as constituent organs; then the cells of these organs and the organism itself were made up of the individual members of the different

races. The organism could not change without the cells themselves changing; and the cells would not change unless they recognised that they were all parts of a single body sharing an indivisible fate and future. The bulk of Mitrinović's energy in the 1920s and '30s was devoted to working with others on ways to develop such a "supra-human" consciousness. Having sketched out the grand scheme, the world context, in *The New Age,* he was henceforth to work towards Sophia/Socialism/Universal Humanity with individual friends and associates and through a constant stream of public initiatives right up to the outbreak of World War II.

Chapter 5

THE ADLER SOCIETY

In the early 1920s psychoanalysis made its first impact on British intellectual circles. Orage and his associates around *The New Age* were amongst the first to acclaim the discoveries of Freud. Orage described this new psychology as "the hopeful science of the dawning era," acclaiming it as the new form of "the gnosis of man," the only sure basis for morality.[1]

Under his initiative a group was formed to discuss the relevance of this new body of knowledge to religion and morality. The group included Rowland Kenney, Dr. E. M. Eder an associate of Freud's, Dr. Maurice Nicholl an associate of Jung's, and Mitrinović. According to Mairet this group had, by the autumn of 1921, arrived at something of an impasse. They had failed to develop much further than gazing into the abyss of the unconscious and had been unable to develop a new morality, a new religion, a new guide for their life and studies. In October 1921 Orage discussed with members of the group the idea of forming a new group in association with P. D. Ouspensky who had just arrived in London from Constantinople. Ouspensky had met Orage in London in 1914 and had returned to renew their acquaintance after spending some years of intensive study and training with Gurdjieff. He came armed with a proposal to set up a school in London to teach the Gurdjieff system.

The new group was immediately convened and met at Lady Rothermere's studio in St. John's Wood. According to Orage "Ouspensky had found what I was looking for,"[2] but Mitrinović was unimpressed by the Russian and soon ceased to attend. A fortnight after Ouspensky's arrival in London Mitrinović's last and shortest article in the pages of *The New Age* was published. Then, in February 1922 Gurdjieff visited London. Shortly afterwards Orage resigned from the editorship of the weekly and left for France where he joined Gurdjieff's recently founded Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man at the Château du Prieuré near Fountainbleau. He

had found the 'master' he had been seeking: "after Gurdjieff's first visit to Ouspensky's group I *knew* that Gurdjieff was the teacher."[3] But if Orage had found his master, he also discovered that the regime at the Château was a strict and demanding one.

> My first weeks at the Prieuré were weeks of real suffering. I was told to dig, and as I had had no real exercise for years I suffered so much physically that I would go back to my room, a sort of cell, and literally cry with fatigue. No one, not even Gurdjieff, came near me. I asked myself, 'Is this what I have given up my whole life for?'[4]

The loss of Orage was undoubtedly a deep disappointment to Mitrinonvić. Not only had he lost a personal friend and intimate associate, but an important and influential patron. He was also disappointed in Orage himself, the way in which his friend was prepared to submit himself to the will of another, apparently without question. When he heard that Orage had been set to work as a garden labourer he is reported to have remarked, "If he had said 'no,' he would not have needed a master . . . He could have been one himself."[5]

For Mitrinović the age of world leaders, rulers, masters and gurus belonged to the past. The key process of the age was the assumption by individuals of responsibility for their own lives in alliance with others. Through his involvement with the Blutbund initiative, he had become disillusioned by the proven inability of the great personages of science, philosophy and the arts to cooperate together for the sake of world peace. He had determined henceforth to work with any individual who would join as co-worker with him in an initiative for a new order of humanity. Just as any organism grows from a small seed, so he believed that the movement towards Universal Humanity must start with individuals who were prepared to commit themselves to one another in open and equal alliance. Philip Mairet and Helen Soden had been amongst his first recruits. Valerie Cooper was another. She was later to record the first occasion on which she believed she managed to grasp something that Mitrinović had said:

> It was this, 'It is no use attempting to reform anything in the world. Everything is too wrong. What should happen is that a body of thought should arise between the artists, priests and scientists, which could in time take its place beside the world power. And then, as this body of thought grew stronger, it could reach over the seas and join with similar bodies in other countries.' Later I knew that was his way of describing to me the Senate Conception.[6]

This was to be, perhaps, the major theme of Mitrinović's life and work: the preparation of a group of individuals for a new world-transforming initiative, to which he gave the name Senate. The function of senators would be that of working in and through all levels of society, helping people and groups to relate to each other cooperatively as constituent members of a common humanity. Senates would be composed of individuals capable of viewing all human problems within the context of a single, whole world. They would not lead or rule, or be committed to any partial cause, but speak for the whole of humanity. Alliances of individuals, extending throughout the world at all levels, committed to humanity and to one another as individuals, they would work to integrate the different parts, interests, and groupings into a genuine world community; providing each with an interpretation of their significance in the context of the wider, organic world order. The practical training of people to perform this function, was to reach its greatest intensity in the 1930s, but the origins of the group that gathered around Mitrinović at that time could be discerned in the 1920s. Given his depiction of the whole of humanity, past, present and future, as a single developing organism it followed that a change in consciousness anywhere, if of sufficient significance, could affect the whole. The important task was to make that initial cut in human nature, to plant the seed, to achieve that change in human consciousness and action. No matter how small or insignificant in number the original bearers of the new consciousness of world responsibility might be, the effect would be felt in the course of time.

How to develop this new consciousness for the sake of the world was the problem that Mitrinović seriously began to confront in the early 1920s with the group of intimate friends and acquaintances who gathered together at Valerie Cooper's studio in Fitzroy Street. Amongst their number was Lilian Slade, a sister of the artist Frank Slade with whom Valerie Cooper shared the studio. A woman of independent means, Lilian Slade had a house at 16 Temple Fortune Lane, Golders Green, which acted as another venue for Mitrinović's discussion groups and classes attended by a younger age group than those held at Fitzroy Street. The subjects on which he spoke were wide-ranging: philosophy, religion, psychology, sociology and the arts in general. He also led discussions of ancient religions and 'occultism.' He had a tremendous regard for Madame Blavatsky, "the first woman genius" he called her, acknowledging her role in bringing the religions of the orient to the west. He was not, however, interested in exploring such spheres of knowledge as mere theory, but only insofar as they gave the individual a greater power of initiative, a clearer image of the world, and heightened

their ability to work with others towards genuine community. The emphasis upon ancient religions and 'wisdom' did not stem from a desire to enable a few individuals obtain a pleasant sense of their own spiritual superiority. He believed that in their depiction of the world as a single whole and the related notion of the divine thread that linked all things together, ancient belief systems and their western variants such as Theosophy and Anthroposophy enabled people to grasp the image of the world as a single, developing organism made up of a variety of different yet inter-related parts.

If a major emphasis in the groups and classes was on obtaining an understanding of the world as a whole and examining different cultures and belief systems, there was an equal emphasis laid upon the development of the individual. If one looked towards a new age when humanity as a whole would become aware of shared interests, if one anticipated a period of history when humanity would take conscious control of the world's development, then it was essential that those who sought to play a part in creating such an age should themselves develop their self-knowledge, and thereby their self-control and their capacity for self-direction. In pursuing this goal Mitrinović drew increasingly upon the work of Alfred Adler. Of all the new schools of psychology and psychoanalysis that came out of Europe during the post-war period, he considered Adler's Individual Psychology to be "the one most humanly creative and least destructive."[7]

Alfred Adler was born near Vienna in 1870. After studying medicine he was invited to join Freud's circle in Vienna. In 1907 he published his "Study of Organ Inferiority and its Psychological Compensation." After breaking with Freud in 1910 he worked as a doctor during the first world war. The horror of war and the social unrest that followed made a deep impression on him. He began to lecture on Individual Psychology, not only to doctors but also to teachers and lay people. He was instrumental in establishing a number of child-guidance centres in Vienna and whilst continuing with his clinical practice he became increasingly committed to communicating his social vision to as wide a public as possible.

Like Mitrinović, Adler adopted an holistic approach to the understanding of phenomena. Just as Mitrinović attempted to locate groups, nations and other collectivities in the context of the world as a whole, so Adler emphasised the 'wholeness' of the individual and the personality. For Adler the individual was an indivisible unity and could only be understood as such: one of his basic axioms was "You must never divide the individual." Moreover, just as the individual's neuroses could not be understood except in the context of the whole individual, so the individual could only be understood in the context of his or her environment and social relationships. He called his

system 'Individual Psychology' because for him each unique individual was the central figure in their own environment. Only by establishing a proper relationship with these surroundings could the individual achieve health and sanity. Consequently, Adler was particularly concerned with exploring the relationship between the individual and the community—the relationship that was the focus of so much of Mitrinović's attention.

In contrast with Freud and Jung, Adler focussed less on the depths of the unconscious but turned his attention to things that lay within people's conscious power to change and remedy. His emphasis upon individual responsibility and freedom corresponded to Mitrinović's stress upon the need for people to take upon themselves the responsibility for recreating the world. According to Adler the personality was the centre of the individual where they were free and, since free, responsible for their actions and feelings. He taught his patients that whatever they did, their activities and life style belonged to them. He asserted that at all times individuals followed their own chosen path in life and therefore had no one to blame for their troubles but themselves. The neurotic were those who sought to avoid the responsibility of their individual freedom in various ways and, as such, they were the creators of their own disease.

In developing his ideas Adler, like Mitrinović, found the theory of fictions as developed by Hans Vaihinger in *The Philosophy of As If* of value. According to Vaihinger, in any sphere of life and knowledge, we need to base our thinking in the first instance on fictitious assumptions. These may be self-contradictory or have no corresponding objective reality, but they are indispensable as a starting off point, as 'scaffolding' from which to proceed with the building of knowledge. One of Adler's fictions was the 'law of social interest,' that individuals had an innate disposition for spontaneous social effort.

> The high degree of cooperation and social culture which man needs for his very existence demands spontaneous social effort, and the dominant purpose of education is to evoke it. Social interest is not inborn (as a full-fledged entity), but it is an innate potentiality which has to be consciously developed.[8]

The capacity to identify with another was the basis of social interest for Adler: "To see with the eyes of another, to hear with the ears of another, to feel with the heart of another."[9] All the main problems of individual life were related to the problems of human cooperation. In essence neurosis was anti-social behaviour arising from the fact that the neurotic do not feel part of the society in which they live, they lack community feeling. Individuals must be helped and educated so that they might learn to transcend

their selfish, egocentric life goals, or destruction would follow. The central problem of society was the individual. If there was to be social change, there must first be a change of attitude on the part of individuals. Thus, if the first part of Adler's programme as an Individual Psychologist was to help create self-reliant individuals who were willing and able to take responsibility for their own lives, the complement to this was to help these self-reliant individuals to cooperate with their fellows and neighbours for the welfare of society as a whole. For Adler the meaning or purpose of life was cooperation:

> . . . our functions and feelings are developed rightly if a person is concerned about the whole of mankind and feels the need for cooperation.[10]

He fully endorsed Dostoyevsky's proposition that "each is responsible to all for all."

On the question of how to proceed, Adler adopted an essentially pragmatic approach which recommended his work to Mitrinović. No one possessed absolute truth. "There are," he wrote, "as many meanings to life as there are human beings . . . True means true for mankind, true for the purposes and aims of human beings."[11] According to Mitrinović the real significance of Adler lay in the fact that he emphasised in modern and scientific terms what religions had always known, that humanity was the source of all meaning and value, that "man, with his free will, can produce every vision, can draw every power from himself."[12]

For Mitrinović the world was out of joint, a world in which individuals, groups and nations were struggling against each other for their self-aggrandisement rather than for the sake of humanity as a whole. Moreover, people had lost confidence in their individual and collective ability to shape the world according to their ideals.

> We have lost the notion that the whole is more important than the parts . . . We, as a race, especially in the Western civilization, are losing confidence in our whole being. We doubt the whole concept of free will, and the possibility of arranging the human household and the organic order of mankind according to our human intuition and needs, although we are the sovereign beings and the world is for our needs, where we can realise our own ends.[13]

Humanity itself was the only saviour of the world. A key responsibility therefore fell upon those who realised this fact:

> . . . only that which is really best, only that which is self-conscious, and only that which believes in mankind, has the supreme value; that alone can govern

> and save the world. The true ruling principle, the true self-imposing superior caste, the best man, the best characters, the best hearts can save the world by imposing upon it that spiritual aristocracy which is the aristocratic expression of the belief that the best is immanent in mankind, and that mankind must not worship any higher power than itself.[14]

In the work of Adler he found a rich fund of practical advice and theoretical insight upon which to draw in pursuit of the "best" that was "immanent" in those around him.

Adler made his first visit to England in 1923 to attend a conference at Oxford. In 1926 he returned to deliver some lectures in London. Lilian Slade attended one of these presentations and arranged a meeting between Mitrinović and the psychologist. The two men got on extremely well together and had a number of long and intimate talks at Valerie Cooper's studio.[15] At Mitrinović's invitation Adler also gave a lecture at the studio on the subject of Dostoyevsky and Nietzsche, and later entrusted Mitrinović with the formation of the British branch of the International Society for Individual Psychology. The first recorded meeting of this group took place on March 27th 1927 at the studio. On Sunday April 24th of that year, after a meeting addressed by W. H. Sampson on Astrology, people transferred to 55 Gower Street where premises for what was to become known as the Adler Society had been found. At midnight a lecture on Individual Psychology was delivered by Alan Porter to mark the formal opening of the rooms which, for the next five years, served as a centre for public lectures and private discussions covering a whole range of subjects. The Society took over the basement and ground floor of the property in Gower Street. To the left of the entrance hall and passageway was the lecture room which could hold up to 75 people. It also housed the books of the society's lending library. Downstairs in the basement the original kitchen area was turned into a private study for Mitrinović. In a way the two levels of the property reflected the different 'levels' of his activities: the public and the private, the exoteric and the more esoteric, the formal and the informal. The ground floor was where the more public and formal activities of the Adler Society took place—the lectures and open meetings. The study was used for smaller private meetings and discussions amongst intimate friends and co-workers. It was the inner sanctum where one entered only by invitation—a dark and cluttered room lined with books, paintings and works of art.

The ground floor lecture room was open to the public most days from about 2 p.m. onwards. Each evening saw some activity or other taking place there. An idea of the range of lectures and courses presented can be obtained from the programme for the last quarter of 1927. On Monday

evenings between 6.45 and 7.45 there was a 'speaking class' led by Rex Campbell. At 8.30 a meeting of the Sociological Section of the society was held, organised by the treasurer of the society, W. T. Symons. Tuesday evenings were devoted to an open meeting for the benefit of newcomers at which Mitrinović attempted to provide an introduction to the work and significance of Adler and Individual Psychology. A School of Philosophy and Psychology also met on Tuesday evenings, led by Alan Porter. Wednesday evenings during the winter months of 1927 were devoted to a series of talks on astrology by W. H. Sampson. An 'education group' met on Thursday evenings at Gower Street, whilst a course on psychoanalysis was also held on Thursday evenings, led by a Mr. Rabineck. Fridays were set aside for a series of lectures on Adlerian subjects given by Mitrinović and Alan Porter. At weekends music and drama evenings were held.

Administratively the Adler Society was organised into different sections or schools: Education, Sociology, Philosophy, Arts and Crafts, Music, Eurhythmics. In addition there was a Medical Group whose members were all medical practitioners. There was also a Men's Group and a Women's Group. Each school or section had its own programme of meetings, courses and lectures. The programme for February 1929 gives some idea of the range of activities taking place. On Monday evenings the Educational Section were scheduled to meet for a series of discussions on experiences of childhood. Tuesday evenings were devoted to a series of presentations by Mitrinović on Individual Psychology. Titles included "Husserl and phenomenology in relation to Adler" on February 5th, "The 'As If' philosophy of Vaihinger in relation to Adler" on the 12th, "Gestalt psychology in relation to Adler" the following week, and "Hans Driesch and the philosophy of the organic in relation to Adler" on February 26th. The Philosophical Section also met on Tuesday evenings at the studio in Fitzroy Street under the direction of Alan Porter. They were engaged in a series of discussions of Nietzsche and his relationship to Individual Psychology. On Wednesday evenings the Sociological Section met to study "Political synthesis and organic social order in the light of Individual Psychology." Speakers for February included Philip Mairet on Bhagavan Das[16], Major J. V. Delahaye on "Modern Europe," and Rev. E. Egerton Swann on "Pax Christiana." The Medical Society met on Thursday evenings. The Friday evenings of February 1929 were devoted to a series of lectures on Individual Psychology: Dr. Cuthbert Dukes on "Organ inferiority," Philip Mairet on "Life Goal and life plan," Alan Porter on "Self-valuation" and Dr. O. H. Woodcock on "The Nervous Child." Saturday February 16th was the occasion of a viola recital by a Miss Dorothy Barker.

This level of activity was sustained by the Society up until 1932. Amongst the leading members were Alan Porter who, according to Mairet, "was a marvel . . . by the time he had done, there was probably as much 'head-knowledge' of Individual Psychology about the quarter of Bloomsbury as in half Vienna"[17]; Philip Mairet himself; and medical practitioners such as Cuthbert Dukes, O. H. Woodcock and Dr. Crookshank, who was described by Adler's biographer as "the most intellectually convinced of all Adler's English adherents."[18] Much of the day to day administrative work fell on the shoulders of the Honorary Secretary Rose Graham, the wife of Stephen Graham, Lilian Slade, and the treasurer W. T. Symons. Whilst they provided their services voluntarily, the expenses of maintaining the premises amounted to something like £250 per annum. To meet such necessary costs a minimum subscription of 1 guinea was required of members, but larger contributions were expected from those who could afford it. Subscriptions and donations for the period April to November 1927, for example, amounted to £220.6s., of which £100 was donated by Valerie Cooper.

The central figure and driving force behind all the activities was Mitrinović.

> It was the eloquence, personal magnetism and tremendous intellectual brilliance of Mitrinović that turned Alfred Adler into a sort of 'movement' in London.[19]

In the summer of 1927 he attended the fourth International Congress for Individual Psychology held in Vienna. In the years 1927 through to 1932 he delivered over fifty lectures at Gower Street, in addition to speaking engagements elsewhere, as well as chairing the general meetings for newcomers that were a regular Tuesday evening event. He was, moreover, a regular attender of other people's presentations, occupying an armchair by one of the fireplaces. Watson Thomson, who was to become a close associate of Mitrinović, vividly recalled their first encounter at one of the Gower Street lectures.

> The lecture room was a transformed drawing room and still contained the original fireplace and other such fixtures. It also had one or two armchairs in addition to the straight rows of hard chairs. In one of these, between the fireplace and the lecturer's table, sat this remarkable figure: a large man dressed in frock-coat, pearl-grey vest—far from immaculate—and an old-fashioned stock tie. His most striking feature was the shape of his head, enormously high-domed yet flat at the back, all clean shaven like a billiard ball. The eyebrows were jet-black and full, the eyes dark and magnetically compelling.[20]

Following the lectures on the ground floor of the Gower Street premises Mitrinović would retreat to his basement study to talk with friends and

associates until the early hours of the morning. He would then retire to his rented rooms a short walk away in Bloomsbury Street to read and sleep, rarely stirring from his bed until mid-day. After lunching at one of the small restaurants in the vicinity, his afternoons were often spent wandering around the bookshops and art galleries. There is also some evidence that he devoted some time during this period acting as unpaid psycho-therapist and counsellor to various individuals who sought his assistance.

Meantime Adler was becoming increasingly committed to spreading the doctrine of 'social interest' to an ever wider public. As a consequence the late 1920s and early 1930s was a period of increasing tension and suspicion between Adler, his lay-followers, and members of the established medical professions. Undoubtedly Adler's belief that the ordinary difficulties of human life lay well within the scope and capabilities of trained lay psychotherapists, coupled with his conviction that each individual was responsible for their own well-being, represented something of a threat to the status of the medical profession. It was alleged that Adler was more of a preacher than a scientist. He despised statistics and tended to illustrate his theories with case-material; he abandoned the use of standard control measures in his practice and research, arguing that each individual was unique. Consequently it was claimed that his approach to psychology was speculative rather than truly scientific.

This tension between the Individual Psychology movement and the established medical and scientific communities was reflected within the London branch of the International Society. Under the influence of Mitrinović the Gower Street society had attracted to its ranks not only members of the medical profession but also substantial numbers of young, idealistic folk: teachers, artists, students, journalists. For them the society was a social movement, a movement for social change and renewal guided by the insights and principles provided by Individual Psychology. As such, they made uneasy bedfellows with those members who were medical practitioners and who were primarily committed to Individual Psychology as a new body of knowledge and practice upon which they could draw in the pursuit of their professional activities.

The unease experienced by the medical practitioners at being associated with lay-persons with such 'unprofessional' interests was heightened towards the end of 1928 when a group of socially concerned individuals who had become known as the "Chandos Group" resolved to ally itself with the Adler Society. The Chandos Group had come into existence in 1926. On September 16th of that year Mitrinović, Maurice Reckitt and W. T. Symons had met for dinner at the Chandos public house "to plan work together and regular meetings for the furtherance of their common objectives."[21] This

was the beginning of a group which met regularly at the Chandos, from which it took the name. They had come together in response to the social crisis that faced Britain after the failure of the General Strike, which Mitrinović in particular believed had been a marvellous opportunity to reorganise British society and industry—a chance which had been missed. It would appear that it was disappointment with the outcome of the Strike that led to the new initiative: fortnightly meetings of a group of like minded men who shared a commitment to the principles of guild socialism and the Douglas social credit scheme and who recognised that the crisis of society could not be resolved by a merely administrative tinkering about with the system but required a thorough-going re-orientation of individual and collective life. The members of the group included Philip Mairet, Rev. V. A. Demant, Alan Porter, W. T. Symons, Egerton Swann, Albert Newsome and Maurice Reckitt. Most of them had known each other in the days of Orage's editorship of *The New Age.* In his autobiography Reckitt recalled that the initiative to form the group came from those centered "round the powerful, if somewhat elusive, personality of a Jugoslav sage, Mr. D. Mitrinović, who had not been without some influence on Orage himself."[22]

Although instrumental in founding the group, Mitrinović was an infrequent attender at their meetings. However, through Porter, Mairet and Symons in particular, his presence was felt. At one of their early meetings on October 12th 1926 the group resolved to publish a pamphlet on the crisis in the mining industry:

> which should be framed by Mr. Newsome, the quickest writer among us, with the collaboration of Mr. Porter. With each member of the circle contributing his own amplification and his own direction. For instance Mr. Demant should write upon the crisis as a failure of will, Mr. Symons should criticise it in its implicit economic assumptions, Mr. Mairet's contribution should deal with the constitutional issue raised by the crisis.[23]

Coal: A Challenge to the National Conscience was published by the Hogarth Press in 1927. Specific recommendations were made for the establishment of a national economic council which would unite trade unionists and employers in the management of the economy, whilst demands were also made for a reform of the financial system in the direction of social credit. However, the main thrust of the book, as its title suggested, was an attack against what was interpreted as a failure of will and vision on the part of all sections of society. People were evading the fact "that history is the accumulated result of the impact of the human will on the environment,"[24] they were leaving the management of the nation's affairs

to leaders who were themselves "muddled, characterless, and incapable of vision."[25]

To avoid "the ominous possibility of a revolution in blood"[26] the authors made their plea:

> We wish men to realise that civilisation is the work of men. We wish a synthesis of the aims and interests of the whole community to be found, to be declared, and to be put into practice . . . It is our faith that this age, this mean and miserable twentieth century, can be a heroic age, an age of great culture, of a great prosperity, of a great peace, if only we choose to make it great.[27]

They advocated the formation of "national inquiries" to study the interrelated economic, social and political problems of the age, and urged their readers to form "self-appointed councils" to act as study groups which should act "to bring the new social synthesis into consciousness, using every means to persuade the nation to act upon it."[28]

Following the publication of *Coal* the links between the Chandos Group and the Sociological section of the Adler Society were strengthened. In January 1928 it was resolved to devote alternate meetings of the Sociological group to a consideration of *Coal* "as a basis for an examination of the present condition of national life." Reckitt, Egerton Swann, Mairet, Newsome and Porter regularly lectured to the group on such topics as "National guilds," "The position and prospects of Christian sociology" (Reckitt); "Party politics today," "The meaning of revolution," (Newsome); "Leisure," "Aristocracy and the politics of today" (Mairet); "Internationalism and finance" (Egerton Swann); "The principles of politics" and "Methods of reform" (Porter).

It was therefore not too surprising that on December 20th 1928 it was resolved "that the Chandos Group find its vehicle of expression in the Sociological Group of the Adler Society, and while continuing to meet as a separate body, it do so as the Senate of the Gower Street Society." In so doing, the members emphasised the importance of study, to discover the "absolute and eternal principles of true sociology"; but they laid equal stress on the necessity for action to "incarnate" such principles "on the plane of modern industrial life." The specific reforms that they sought to promote embraced constitutional changes in the form of political devolution, social change in the form of guild socialism, and economic and financial reform in the guise of social credit. They observed that such a programme "must be regarded as partaking of the nature of a revolution."

This formal acknowledgment of the links that existed between the Chandos Group and the Adler Society undoubtedly increased the sense of unease experienced by the members of the Medical Group within the Society. It

could have left them in no doubt that the Society was clearly taking upon itself the characteristics of a movement for social change rather than those of a professional association. Indeed, the coming together of the Chandos Group and the Sociological Section marked the beginning of an increased involvement of the members of the Adler Society in the sphere of practical politics, a trend which was reflected in the greater emphasis placed upon non-medical issues in the lectures and discussions.

Consequently, on July 1st 1930 the secretary of the medical group, Thomas Lawson, wrote to Mrs. Stephen Graham, in her capacity as secretary to the Society, to inform her that the medical practitioners had decided that "whilst desirous of maintaining the friendliest relations, it has been decided to make separate arrangements for meeting and subscriptions."[29]

Following the formal withdrawal of the medical section, the activities of the Society became more clearly centred on the Educational, Philosophical and Sociological sections. Instructional courses on orthodox Individual Psychology were still held, but it was clear to many that the prime focus of the Society had shifted towards a concern with social and political issues. Thus it was that at the annual general meeting of June 18th 1931 a decision was taken to reorganise the Society. In a confidential memorandum issued by Philip Mairet in his capacity as Chairman prior to the meeting, he outlined the reasons for the proposed change.

> The Society was founded by a small group of persons who, before their contact with IP were already hoping to initiate a movement of a human value and of psychological classification. They brought with them therefore certain studies in sociology and philosophy which were not to be found in IP as such with its practical concentration on the problems of therapy. This was reflected in the organisation of the English society which from the first had sections for the study of philosophy and sociology as well as for psychotherapy and psychology. The group of friends who founded the English section had already gained some systematic approach to these studies under the guidance of Mr. Mitrinović. Now their work in these fields became coloured by the ideas of IP. Naturally also, their studies of IP were influenced by their philosophy and sociology but to a much smaller extent. Orthodox IP of the straightest sect of Adlerians has been well and truly taught at no. 55 Gower Street, sometimes enriched by other ideas but not falsified by them. Dr. Adler himself has recently circulated a paper on the importance of correlative studies and it is his policy to encourage them. Nevertheless it has been possible for persons who did not happen to like us to pretend that there was some absolute difference of aim or incompatability of method between IP and the work of the groups which with Mr. Mitrinović as its leading spirit introduced IP into England.

> What is much more unfortunate—some of our associates have lent an ear to this option. The view which I hold and which is, I believe, shared by some or most of you is that the cooperation between Dr. Adler and Mr. Mitrinović is both more loyal in spirit and productive in effect than that which we see between its detractors. The respective teachings of these leaders are individual and complementary, but in no important respect irreconcilable. In their appeal to the public however we must recognise a certain difference and it would be, I think, advisable to express this difference in our reorganisation.[30]

The decision was taken to restrict the activities of the Adler Society to 'psychology proper,' leaving the Philosophical and Sociological sections to organise an independent programme. It was further agreed that the new society thus formed would rent the Gower Street rooms for its own use for three evenings a week.

Despite this further erosion of the activities and formal scope of the parent society, the report on the activities of 1932 was hopeful and bouyant. The Society boasted of more than 70 active members; a full programme of lectures and meetings had been sustained; and two of Adler's colleagues, Dr. Erwin Wexberg and Dr. Leonhard Seif, had delivered lectures to the Society, strengthening the links between the London branch and the international network of individual psychologists. The report concluded that it merely required "but a little more spirit" by just "a very few more" to "make the next year's work the most successful we have ever known."[31]

It was not to be. Adler had insisted with increasing emphasis that Individual Psychology had nothing whatever to do with any form of politics. He had always refused to associate himself with any political party. Only a better individual could make a better system, and politics was an inadequate substitute for individual growth. He likened Individual Psychology to "a basket of fruit, out of which any passer-by can take whatever agrees with him!"[32] This concern to keep Individual Psychology untainted and unsullied by political associations or bias of any kind increased with the growth of European fascism and the threat posed by such regimes to the Individual Psychology movement. It was undoubtedly the fear that the activities and concerns of the London branch might provide sufficient evidence of the subversive nature of Individual Psychology to threaten the lives and activities of his followers in Germany and Austria that led Adler to the decision to disassociate himself from the London society. He wrote from New York on November 14th 1933:[33]

> In all friendship I want to tell you that because of the development of things in your society and *some new acquaintances abroad who cannot line up with*

Indps I am proposing you to make yourself entirely independent. This would mean only that we shall mention no more your society as a neighbouring part of other Indps. societies.

In spite of this very earnest proposal which you probably understand and recognise, I send my best greetings to my old friends in your society if there are still any.

Awaiting your consent I am going to cancel the name of your society off the advertising page of my journal.[34]

By 1933, however, the Adler Society was reduced to little more than a shadow of its former self. In a lecture given to the Philosophical Section of the Society on October 30th 1928 Mitrinović had maintained that "our aim is to become live and sincere members of a centre of European Culture at Gower Street." He became increasingly concerned with developments in Europe, and the focus of his attention and energy was redirected from the Adler Society to a variety of new organisations and public initiatives with which he was associated throughout the 1930s.

Chapter 6

PUBLIC INITIATIVES: NEW EUROPE AND NEW BRITAIN

According to Philip Mairet, the various public projects set in motion by Mitrinović and his followers, such as the Adler Society, can really only be understood as instruments or vehicles for the personal development of the participants. He suggested that the publicly proclaimed goals of such organisations were subordinate to their real purpose—the furtherance of the initiation process through which Mitrinović was guiding his intimate associates, observing that:

> every one of the public projects launched by DM came to an end, usually chaotic, after a brief life of intense activity and sacrificial expenditure. But this is the way with most, if not all authentic esoteric schools; any enterprise or organisation they undertake in the outer world must be of some public value or interest, but that is not the primary purpose. It is a communal exercise, which the teacher ordains for the development of the pupils as individuals: they must not be allowed to identify themselves with it, still less must the school or the teacher himself become committed to that exoteric work. It must achieve some success; but then it must be dissolved or abandoned.[1]

There is much in the life of Mitrinović, especially during the decade prior to World War II, that lends support to such a thesis. During the 1930s his followers were involved in a myriad of public ventures on a variety of fronts. Most of these enjoyed only a brief, if active, life before they became transformed into some new organization with a new name, a slightly different emphasis in the public programme and image, but composed largely of the same personnel.

There was an apparent refusal on his part to commit himself to any public initiative for any lengthy period of time. Often it would seem that he had no sooner directed his own energy and that of others into one project before he had abandoned it for some new scheme. Mairet explained this

phenomenon as a natural consequence of Mitrinović's group as an 'esoteric school':

> turning the attention of pupils to some public work is an absolute necessity if the group is not to sink into obscure self-regarding *in*activities. But at the same time, when the public undertaking has been brought to some success it must be dropped; otherwise it becomes a society for some special study or work which is not what it was formed for. And then the teacher himself would lose his central importance and his initiative.[2]

The implication in this analysis is that Mitrinović withdrew his support from public initiatives and redirected the energies of his associates from fear of losing his pre-eminent place as their teacher and guide. It is in fact true that he never allowed those who worked closely with him to become too deeply involved in any one public initiative. However, amongst those who suffered and were frustrated by his apparent whims and changes, there were some who on reflection came to the view that this mirrored his concern to stop them becoming blinkered and bogged down, overly committed to one single project or aspect of his holistic philosophy and programme and thereby losing sight of the wider perspective. He had a great fear of things becoming institutionalised and 'fossilised.' Initiatives must be ever-changing, in a continuous approach towards the truth. An endless process which he expressed in the notion of 'Infinale.' Moreover, as he had written in "Aesthetic Contemplations" so many years before, he considered the truth to be many sided. Consequently his personal method consisted in "embracing the whole horizon of truths, no matter how disparate and paradoxical, and thus, through casting furthest and encompassing most, coming closest to the truth and aiming closest to the centre." This personal method was reflected in his approach to communicating with disparate audiences beyond his own circle of friends and co-workers. Each public venture expressed a partial truth and insight but not the whole. Therefore a variety of schemes and enterprises were called for, each embodying a dimension of the whole. Moreover, if truth was many sided, then different potential audiences and constituencies required different messages and different channels for the communication of such messages.

All this helps to explain what still remains something of a puzzle—the way in which Mitrinović would launch new public ventures, only to apparently abandon them for some other enterprise when it seemed that they were about to 'take off.' Further light is cast on the question, however, when one considers the fact that throughout the 1930s his sense of urgency about the crisis facing the international system and his fear of an impending world

catastrophe grew. So grave was the situation that it called for guerrilla type tactics to jerk people out of their lethargy and resignation. The strategy was to hit them with a continuous stream of new ventures and propaganda ploys—anything that would shake the British especially out of their complacency.[3]

This sense of urgency and the need for action in the face of impending crisis was reflected as early as 1931 with the launching of the *Eleventh Hour Flying Clubs.* "Join with us immediately, it is the eleventh hour" it was urged. The call was for European federation as a step towards world federation, financial reform, and the reconstruction of the state. Those who responded to the call were invited to contact Mrs. Helen Soden and Mrs. Ethel Mairet, the wife of Philip Mairet.[4] People were encouraged to form Eleventh Hour Clubs in any house, town or village "before it is too late." The emphasis was upon the ability of those of "sound human intelligence" to cooperate together to generate sufficient impetus for the re-ordering of social, economic and political life: "We live together: we must now THINK and prepare to ACT together." Clubs, once formed, were advised to ally themselves with others to form a federation: "Together all clubs should constitute a new personal alliance for the regeneration and preservation of our social life."[5]

By 1932 the Eleventh Hour Clubs initiative had become the *Eleventh Hour Group* with offices at 60 Gower Street. In one of their leaflets issued in August 1932, signed by Lilian Slade, the need for financial reform was emphasised:

> Science, machinery, workers, can bring to our doors wealth from the ends of the earth to enhance health and comfort and enjoyment. Only one thing is lacking—that is the proper distribution of all this wealth. The meaning of money is abused and power has been taken by the few to enslave the many . . . The XI Hour Group proclaims the possibility of altering this state of affairs . . . The XI Hour Movement is acting directly towards economic change, by speaking publicly the facts of the present false system and stating the rational way of distributing wealth throughout the community by National control of the issue of credit. This requires a revolution in thought and revolution of will.

In the autumn of 1932 a series of ten lectures at 55 Gower Street were organised under the auspices of the Eleventh Hour Group on the need for monetary reform and social credit.

Another group also blossomed into existence in 1931 which seemed to enjoy an even shorter life than the Eleventh Hour Flying Clubs, to judge from available records. This was The Women's Guild for Human Order

which called upon women from its headquarters at "International House," 55 Gower Street, to join together to "rediscover the meaning and function of womanhood and express it in the modern world." Competition between the sexes was condemned, "woman as complement to man must relearn to cooperate." Woman was essentially the "preserver of life" who must supply purpose to the cold reasoning and inventiveness of man. As with the Eleventh Hour Clubs, women were urged to join together with friends and neighbours and to work at the level of day-to-day life to create a better world:

> Any woman can begin today in her own sphere by making an inspiring background for the men she meets, enabling them to act positively and optimistically in the world; she can and must realise how necessary is her right attitude and support to his right action.

It is extremely doubtful whether any of these groups ever consisted of much more than a set of letter headings and nominal office-bearers. At the same time they were of significance insofar as they provide some indication of the type of analysis that was being elaborated by Mitrinović and his co-workers during this period, and also provided pointers to the forms of organisation and action that were to be developed further as the 1930s progressed.

An early expression of these ideas as they pertained to the British political and social scene was contained in a 1929 publication of the Chandos Group entitled *Politics: A Discussion of Realities.*[6]

The contributors to *Politics* started from the initial recognition that the co-existence in society of unfulfilled needs and unemployment was enough to show that society was wrongly organised. These unmet needs embraced not only material want but also those of the mind and the spirit. "There is," it was argued, "a deep and instinctive need in every one of us to feel himself of value to his fellow men; and to find a function which he can usefully fill in our common life."[7] There was, therefore, a fundamental need to consciously reorganise society. In an age characterised by diversity and the division of labour, one could no longer rely on the social good developing automatically from the innate nature of individuals. Similarly, one could not rely on the established politicians and political parties, each of which only represented partial and sectional interests.

To achieve this reorganisation it was necessary to recognise that politics was only one function of society, one dimension of human activity, and that there were others—the economic and the cultural in particular. "The ultimate aim of politics is such organisation as will free men to fulfil their

economic and cultural needs."[8] From this it followed that it was necessary not only to severely limit the powers of the central political authorities, but to devolve such powers to other central and local bodies. "It demands," it was argued, "a technique of representation sufficiently complex to correspond to the versatility of man's nature. A democratic society will therefore be one in which there are several coordinating representative bodies."[9]

Amongst such bodies, it was suggested, there should be local and central Economic Councils which would coordinate the activities of the organisations of producers that would have control of the economic sphere of life.

> A true politics will not attempt to organise production. It will only see that men are, as producers, properly related to each other in order to organise their productive work themselves. This will involve the control of each industry and profession by its own organisation of workers, subject to their mutual adaptation in general councils, and right relations with the whole community of consumers.[10]

Likewise, the institution of Cultural Councils was called for:

> a conclave of the higher interests of the nation, consisting of the men of known achievement in all science, learning and art, legislating for education, assisting the coordination of the sciences and improving facilities for culture and leisure.[11]

However, for the authors, the reconstruction of the state entailed by the establishment of such councils presupposed the overhaul of the existing financial system. The control of credit and the supply of money, it was argued, lay in the hands of the private banks and financial institutions beyond the control of the state or the community. Such institutions, through the issuing of credit and the creation of debt, preserved their control over a wide range of human activities. Thus, it was posited, unemployment was largely due to a chronic lack of purchasing power, caused by the "inadequacy of the financial mechanism in each country to effect the sale of the increased quantities of goods which is made possible by industrial and scientific progress."[12] Following the theories developed by Douglas in *The New Age,* the contributors seemed to believe that a technical change in the accounting system would facilitate the necessary transformation of the financial system so as to allow "money to be administered solely in the interests of the community's powers of production and needs of consumption."[13]

All these ideas and proposals were reflected in less developed form in the publications issued by the Eleventh Hour Group and the Flying Clubs. Similarly, their injunction that people should set about forming their own

discussion groups and seek to implement the ideas in the realm of their daily life was also contained in *Politics:* a new age required a new citizen.

> The task of the new citizen will include not only—not even primarily—the organisation of political societies, but the organisation of the very sphere of life in which he finds himself. He will know and feel the roots of all politics in the structure of everyday life; he will know how the health of public discussion depends upon the relations that prevail in more intimate cooperation. To make his household communal, to make his business cooperative in spirit and practice, and to share his life of recreation and ideals with others—these will be his sure and certain work upon the very foundations of politics . . . the State's politics, different as they are in form and application, are all based ultimately upon these lesser politics of social gathering, factory, office or fireside.
>
> It is from the daily activities of such individuals that a new politics will be born.[14]

Ultimately, the contributors to *Politics* argued, the future of Britain and of the world depended "upon those citizens, whoever they may be, who can rise to world-orientation and maintain it in the affairs of the common life."[15] But if the future of Britain lay in the devolution and decentralisation of power and decision-making, the future of the world lay in federation. Such a development, however, could not be imposed by some super-power:

> The solution of the world problem—the 'parliament of man and federation of the world'—can only come from the cooperation of free peoples.[16]

World federation, then, was "the inescapable need as well as the highest hope of the future."[17] But such a development within the international system depended, in the final analysis, upon reconstruction within societies and changes in the consciousness and actions of individuals. In the evolution towards such a world system, a particular responsibility lay with the British people, the British nation:

> Her own foresight and sagacity, apart from loftier ambitions, should impel England to work openly for the synthesis of world politics and world economics; now that her relative supremacy cannot endure for very many decades. Hers is potentially the world language, hers is the widest world empire, which might be the pattern for the Republic of Mankind, and hers and hers only whilst there is yet time, is the greatest persuasive power to propose it. No enterprise in her whole history, full of glory as it is, could equal such an effort in splendour and historical consequence.[18]

For Mitrinović European federation was seen as a major step towards world federation. The significance of Europe was that it was the continent where individual self-consciousness was most highly developed. But individual liberty was threatened by what he called the 'Block State,' the over-centralization of power and control. The transformation of the European order was called for, a 'revolution of order,' a conscious, planned voluntary revolution guided by the twin principles of devolution and federation. These represented the twin opposing principles upon which every human organisation was based—the forces of cohesion which tended to preserve unity and stability and the forces of diversity which tended to preserve individual differences and freedom. Devolution, the application of the principle of diversity, meant that every decision should be taken in the smallest possible grouping of those who either had to implement it or would be affected by it. Such devolution, if it was not to result in chaos, needed to be complemented by federation whereby all those with a common interest through their work, place of residence or cultural activity should consult together to reach agreement on matters of shared concern. The ideal of devolution was complete liberty for every individual. The ideal of federation was total harmony between all people and groups up to the level of world federation with the will of the larger whole or grouping continually prevailing over the smaller. Tension and conflict between the two principles was therefore inevitable and neither could ever be fully attainable, yet Mitrinović insisted that they be taken as regulative ideals, each to be taken as an absolute guide to action, maintaining the conflict and tension between them so that neither principle should prevail at the cost of the other.

To promote and develop these ideas a new organisational vehicle was launched in 1931—the *New Europe Group.* Unlike many of the other groups and movements initiated by Mitrinović the New Europe Group (NEG) was to enjoy a relatively long life, continuing after the war until its last recorded public meeting took place on September 21st 1957 to commemorate the death of Professor Frederick Soddy the previous year. Despite this, its early recruiting leaflets bore a striking resemblance in style and content to those issued by the Eleventh Hour Group.

> The New Europe Group is convinced that the PRESENT SITUATION can only be saved from BECOMING DISASTROUS by the active cooperation of individuals. Politics have failed . . . We are drifting towards violence for want of vision. There is no school of thought which has surveyed the situation as a whole . . . No one is proclaiming that all man's activities are interrelated, since the forces which produce these activities are all connected at their source, which is the human organism. And no political or economic system which fails to

take into account all man's needs and potentialities can satisfy the individuals who make up a community . . .

This Group proposes that similar groups should be formed in a rapidly growing organisation designed to gather together those who wish to examine the situation and inform themselves of what are the possibilities for a reconstructed, renewed social order.[19]

Interested people were invited to contact the secretary of the NEG at Gower Street, Miss W. G. Fraser. Winifred Gordon Fraser had been working in a South Kensington bookshop when she had been 'discovered' by Mitrinović who promptly recruited her as his secretary and general factotum. She was to remain a devoted colleague and co-worker until his death. One of her first tasks as secretary of the NEG was to solicit support and assistance from various influential personages. Amongst those contacted were Sir Charles Trevelyan and Sir Patrick Geddes. Trevelyan declined the invitation to lend his name to the new organisation, observing that "in some ways the aspirations sound very good, but it is all quite vague. . . ."[20] Geddes responded positively, and readily agreed to accept nomination as President.[21]

Other recruits were drawn in through the series of lectures that the new group organised. The first lecture of which a record exists was delivered by Mitrinović on December 7th 1931 on the theme of "A United Europe in a World Order." Amongst those who attended this series was a graduate of Glasgow University, Watson Thomson, who had recently moved to London after working abroad in Jamaica and Nigeria. On about his third visit to 55 Gower Street he encountered Mitrinović for the first time, heard him speak, and was enthralled.

> I went home to my little attic room in a daze. Here, I thought, is a very great man. Here is the kind of wisdom the world desperately needs . . . Why have I never heard of this man? Why is he not proclaiming to the world? Why is he wasting his time with a little Bloomsbury lecture society? Who is he anyway?
>
> As may well be imagined, my attendances at Gower Street became more regular after that, though D. M. did not appear again for quite a long time. Meanwhile I got to know some of the officials of the two societies and did some writing jobs for them, preparing new pamphlets—projects which brought me to Gower Street in the afternoons. One afternoon a girl, one of our volunteer typists, came up to me and said, "Mr. D. M. would like to meet you. Would you come downstairs and have tea with him?"
>
> In some excitement, not unmixed with trepidation, I descended the stairs to a large basement room. It was a strange room, dark and cluttered, its walls lined with books, dark draperies everywhere, some paintings here and there, and many

objects of symbolic shapes suggestive of Oriental rather than Western cultures. But all this I registered then merely as a somewhat exotic atmosphere: my attention was focused on D. M., who welcomed me with dignity rather than with any effusive warmth. He asked many questions about my background: indeed, most of our time was spent in my giving a general account of myself. Three or four others were present. An hour passed pleasantly, nothing of great significance transpiring.

Thereafter I became more and more involved in the practical affairs of the lecture societies and developed a steadily increasing admiration for and friendship with some of those who were carrying the considerable burden of these expanding organisations. I began to learn something of, and to identify myself with, their ambitions—for the New Europe Groups especially.[22]

In the summer of 1932 a major series of lectures entitled "Popular Myths Exploded" was organised by the NEG at the Caxton Hall, Westminster. The advertised speakers included Frederick Soddy, Arthur Kitson, J. MacMurray, Raymond Postgate, Hamilton Fyfe, Gerald Heard and J. V. Delahaye. Amongst the myths that they exploded were "That poverty is of God," "That science will see us through," "That the press is instructive to the public," "That capitalism has anything further to offer us," and "That there is nothing to be done about it."

Mitrinović was clear in his own mind what could be done about it. A change was needed, but a total change: a change in the human race itself. The human community was an organism and must be reconstructed as such—in the form of the Three-fold State wherein economics, politics and culture were made the responsibilities of three different assemblies. Guild socialism and social credit, regionalism and devolution—all were necessary. Above all else, however, was the need for the 'perfected individual': "Self-guidance, self-integration, self-realisation; that is the aim of our Group," as one member expressed it.[23]

For this to be attained a final myth needed to be exploded: "the separateness of men." Hence the significance of Europe in the evolution of the world. It was in Europe that individualism had reached its furthest point, therefore it was natural that "Europe must take the initiative to turn individualism into communal recognition of personality and personal acceptance of community." This was the myth that was to be explored rather than exploded—and Britain should pioneer the route: "her position as inheritor of European civilization and as the founder of a great empire gives her this unique position of responsibility." This was the initiative demanded of Britain:

> We do not believe that "Nothing can be done about it," but for New Action, we need New Minds, New Men. The British people pride themselves on their colonies. There is a new realm to conquer, the realm of Spirit and Deed, where Personal Initiative unites in Personal Alliance to create a New Social Order.
>
> Then will arise a New Britain which by her sound sense and courageous action will lead the way to World Socialism and World Peace.[24]

Whether Mitrinović seriously believed in the likelihood of such an eventuality is highly doubtful, but it was a myth worth exploring, a great adventure necessary to pursue. Whatever intellectual scepticism he experienced, he always believed it was necessary to act with the utmost confidence if one was to achieve anything, no matter how 'unrealistic' the goal. His invocation left some members of the NEG cold, however. One of them jotted his thoughts down in the margins of the printed commentary on the lecture series:

> I hate to say it but I do most earnestly implore the New Europe people to revise the *tone* of their appeal to the country. This sort of thing simply won't go down, and if put to the people in this way the campaign is already doomed to failure . . . Don't know who is responsible for this last page but no matter what real truth it embodies, the manner of it is entirely alien to the English mind . . . Stick to Professor Sir Patrick Geddes. I implore Mr. Mitrinović to learn a little of the psychology of the English *people.* At present, obviously, he only knows the intelligentsia!

Following the "Popular Myths Exploded" lecture series, plans were laid for the next major public initiative—the launching of a journal. The first issue of *New Britain Quarterly* was published in October 1932. Watson Thomson and David Davies an ex-Welsh miner, socialist and congregationalist minister were the co-editors. Nearly forty years later Davies recalled just what being an editor on one of Mitrinović's publications entailed:

> Late one Sunday night in August, 1932, after a day in Bournemouth, I was at supper in Bogey's bar, in Southampton Row. There I found Mitrinović—an unexpected and pleasurable meeting. He broke the news to me that he was bringing out 'The New Britain Quarterly,' in October, "and you are to be editor," he said casually. The fact that I knew nothing about the trade of journalism or of type setting, lay-out and a hundred and one other things was immaterial. That I was to edit was the great thing: I was immediately in ecstasy . . . I burst with a sense of importance, and set about the task of planning the first number. But Mitrinović could not be got to discuss it with me . . . But at last he asked me to go the printers and discuss the size, format and other details of the proposed

quarterly. I did so, and got a dummy copy made up in a green cover, similar in size and shape to the 'XXth Century' magazine . . . When I took this outcome of hours of work with the printer to Mitrinović, he threw it into the wastepaper basket after one withering, contemptuous look. "You are not going to stab the Unconscious of the Englishman with *that* kind of thing," he said. And in the next ten minutes he sketched out the format and design of the magazine . . . I began to learn that to be editor meant being Mitrinović's office-boy.[25]

The quarterly magazine that emerged from Mitrinović's sketches had the unusual page size of 16" x 14", laid out in three columns. It provoked the printer to ribald laughter, but the first issue sold some 2000 copies and Davies was forced to concede that the odd format made an immediate appeal to readers. The contributors included some familiar names: Soddy, Delahaye, Philip Mairet, and Professor J. MacMurray. Mitrinović's name did not appear—but his mark was everywhere to be seen. He suggested the contributors to be sought out, he produced relevant European material for inclusion (amongst which were translations of Van Eeden and Gutkind), he chose the illustrations, and decided what books should be reviewed. He also, with an eye to the future, decided to promote certain members of the group by printing under their names extracts of articles or lectures that had been produced by other group members.

In an article in the first issue entitled "New Europe—New Britain," Delahaye explored the nature of the world crisis confronting humanity and outlined the changes necessary to bring about a 'revolution of order.'

> It is a total revolutionary change that is necessary. We are sick, culturally, politically, economically. Leaders continue to tinker with symptoms, whereas it is the disease which has to be attacked. It is a new way of life and work that must be established. Not planning only is required but planning for a new purpose. That purpose, briefly stated, is to achieve a maximum of individuation, i.e. the maximum devolution of power and significance and responsibility in the spheres of politics, economics and culture, upon the maximum number of individuals.
>
> Each individual then must see to the change in his own outlook, rather than urge others to take the first step. And, though our ultimate vision is one of world unity, New Britain is our immediate task, and New Europe the setting in which it must be conceived.[26]

For the second issue of the quarterly Mitrinović sent Valerie Cooper and Gordon Fraser to Tring in Buckinghamshire to solicit an article from 'the father of guild socialism,' S. G. Hobson. Hobson had left Orage's *The New Age* shortly before Mitrinović began his "World Affairs" series and had

since retired to the country. He was, by many accounts, a difficult person to work with.

According to Davies he was even more prickly than Frederick Soddy: "If Soddy was a porcupine, Hobson was a hedgehog. He was all toes, with corns on every one of them."[27] Montague Fordham, a contributor to the first issue, remarked that if Hobson "were one of the Twelve Apostles, he would find a reason for resigning in less than a month!"[28] Despite this, Hobson was to remain associated with Mitrinović and his circle for many years, confessing to a friend that "these young people found me old and weary. Now I almost wish I were young again."[29]

Sales of the second and third issues of the quarterly failed to match those of the first. It continued to appear until Autumn 1934—but with constantly changing names. By October 1933 it had become *The New Atlantis:* "for Western Renaissance and World Socialism." Mitrinović's name appeared in this issue for the first time when, as general editor, he addressed an "Urgent Appeal to His Excellency the Chancellor of the Reich." This concluded with the words:

> Oh German! Man! Adolph Hitler! hero and saintly man! Your Germany is leading on to war, to self-extermination of the Continent, of which Germany is the form and the spine.
>
> Propose Disarmament, to Germany and to France! Propose the Atlantic Alliance to England and to U.S.A.! Your own violence and bloodshed would be consecrated and forgiven.[30]

Such a "bizarre and utterly impossible proposal" was, for Davies, a perfect illustration of Mitrinović's "fatal and fundamental weakness: his adherence to fantasy." And yet he combined this with what Davies conceded was "a profound skill in political analysis."[31] Thus, in the same issue of *New Atlantis* he urged Britain to adopt one of a number of alternative strategies. If war was to be avoided Britain must either "take a new and final initiative for the United States of Europe" or else declare to the world that she would act against "the aggressor in any future European war and will side positively with the nation or block of nations that might be attacked." The NEG was urging at this time the need to bring the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. into a defensive alliance with Britain in order to counter the threat of European war.

By April 1934, after two issues of the *New Atlantis, New Albion:* "for British Renaissance and Western Alliance" was born, only for it to give way to *New Britain:* "for British Revolution and the Social State" in the

autumn. Whilst this was the last number to appear in what might be described as the "New Britain Quarterly series," a lot had happened in the two years since the publication of the first edition. Amongst other things, the people gathered around Mitrinović in their Gower Street headquarters had found themselves at the centre of something akin to a mass social political movement—the New Britain Movement (NBM).

This had grown out of the New Britain Group (NBG) which had developed around the quarterly. Initially it differed from the NEG only in emphasis—Britain and domestic affairs, rather than Europe and world affairs. "The task of the New Britain Group is literally to conceive a New Britain" it was boldly announced. It was an attempt to plant the seed of an alternative, "above and between" communism and fascism. The universe, it was argued, represented a synthesis of balanced opposites, and civilisation would perish unless a similar synthesis of community and individuality, the forces of cohesion and diversity, could be generated. Communism and fascism both represented efforts to solve this problem

> They are obvious over-compensations. Russian communism is a Slav compensation for its own repression of rational thinking over long centuries during which Europe was developing intellectually. Fascism is both an imitation of, and a reaction against, communism. It imitates the method—the sinking of the individual for a common cause—in order to emphasise the necessity for a dictatorship of a different order.
>
> Must our attitude towards both of these take the form of an imitation of, or reaction against? Must we eternally accept a thesis or produce an antithesis? . . .
>
> It is for us to solve this problem of Community versus Individual in our own way.
>
> The New Europe Group exists for this purpose. If England with her tradition of wisdom and leadership will recognise that by facing this problem and helping Europe to face it a new and lasting peace can arise . . .
>
> A deliberate effort directly contrary to the line of least resistance is necessary before we can understand the meaning of England's significance. The New Europe Group was such an act—a still more conscious act is necessary if that understanding is to be applied. THE NEW BRITAIN GROUP has now been formed.[32]

The year in which the New Britain Group was formed, 1933, was the third year of the great depression and also the year of Hitler's rise to power. Besides the threat of another European war there was also the possibility that nations would be torn apart by violent civil strife between the forces of the right and the left, fascism and communism. Both these creeds, according

to Mitrinović, contained elements of the truth. Communism's emphasis on socialism and equality was absolutely correct when applied to the economic sphere. Fascism's concern with hierarchy and the superiority of some people compared to others was equally correct when applied to the cultural sphere, for we are not all equally gifted when it comes to creativity or the appreciation of creativity. But both fascism and communism were dangerously wrong when applied to the whole of life as universals.

What was required was the creation of a social order wherein different organisational principles were applied to the different spheres of life. In life, individuals perform different functions: as producers and consumers in the economic sphere, as citizens relating to others in the political sphere, and as unique individuals with their own special abilities, ideals and values in the cultural sphere. A proper social order, then, would be one which acknowledged these different functions; one where the economic, political and cultural dimensions of life were distinguished from one another and organised according to their own proper principles. Equality was the appropriate principle for the economic sphere, for in terms of nature all human beings are equal and should have equal rights to the means of subsistence. Fraternity was the appropriate principle upon which to organise the political sphere, for in their relationships with each other all people depend alike upon the tolerance and understanding of others in order that social life can be maintained with the minimum of externally imposed restraints. Liberty was the organising principle appropriate to the cultural sphere where individuals should be free to develop their own special talents and abilities.

Some indication of the way life might be organised in accordance with such principles was provided in a manifesto entitled "The Social State" first published in the Spring of 1933.[33] With regard to the economic sphere a system of guild socialism was advocated. The control of each industry should be devolved to those who worked in it in such a way

> that every worker has a say in the organisation of his immediate workshop, the smaller groups being included in larger, until those who are in the central administration are not controllers or directors but representatives who functionally express the policy of the whole industry.

These representatives would constitute a national Economic Chamber where the important relations of industries to each other and the community would be discussed.

The business of politics was to do with the preservation of law and order at home and with the execution of foreign policy. In a functionally devolved

administration there would be no need for the Political Chamber to concern itself with economic questions, these were the preserve of the Economic Chamber. The Political Chamber would represent neither class nor party interests but regions.

> The villages or wards would elect on the governing body of the country that man or woman who best represented its inhabitants. From those delegates to the county the regional and national members would be chosen. The voting would then no longer be for abstract principles or party labels but for those individuals who best represented the opinion of the region on questions of administration and on home and foreign policy.

The third element in the proposed Social State would be the Cultural Chamber which would be concerned with the problems of general human well-being such as housing, public health, education, the arts, religion, science and philosophy. The Chamber would have as its members the best authorities on these different subjects, who would be kept informed of all the relevant problems and issues by councils spread throughout the country who would investigate and report on the conditions and needs of each region or city. Services and provisions would be designed to meet the needs and aspirations of people rather than the greed of private profiteers. Scientific research would be directed towards human ends rather than the means of war. Once inventive genius was employed for genuinely constructive purposes people would be relieved from much of the drudgery and monotony of manual labour and machine minding, opening up the prospect of an age of leisure.

> Then man will know the joy of extending knowledge for its own sake . . . The arts will then become socialised not only in their application as crafts but as interpretations of man's common experience . . .
>
> In this age of mechanisation, mass production and standardisation, such a Cultural Chamber will be the safeguard of human values. That individual is free who is wise enough to discipline himself so that his physical, moral and mental activities can be a true and complete expression of his own powers. That State will be free in which the community is enabled to establish standards of cultural value which can direct political and economic policy, instead of being dominated by them.

From the start the NBG pursued a far more aggressive and sustained propaganda programme than had hitherto characterised Mitrinović's public initiatives. A stream of penny leaflets and policy statements supplemented the usual round of lectures and lunch-time addresses. The pace of activities

became almost frantic, however, as plans were laid in the spring of 1933 for the launching of a mass circulation weekly newspaper. A major portion of the funds for this ambitious venture was provided by an associate of Mitrinović's, the wealthy daughter of a millionaire manufacturer. It was decided to recruit a professional journalist to take editorial control of the proposed paper, and Charles Purdom, an associate of S. G. Hobson and a past editor of *Everyman* was invited to take on the post. Purdom, the professional journalist, found himself entering a rather strange and exotic milieu:

> The paper was to be called *New Britain,* and to put forward the ideas of the New Britain Group. These ideas were not different from my own. Although it seemed that I was expected to bring out a paper under that title, and discussions took place every day, I found it difficult to discover who was responsible. There were numerous people, some of them obviously with means, but I found it hard to pin anything down or to get decision on any matter, until I discovered that Dimitri Mitrinović, a strange but attractive Serbian, who was usually present, would always give a definite and immediate answer to any question I put to him and on his answers I acted. Somehow, the preparations went on, offices were secured in Bedford Square, staff was engaged, and a contract was entered into for printing. Much, however, remained vague. The New Britain Publishing Company Ltd. was formed, but who were to be the directors, what capital it was to have, and when a meeting of the company was to be held I could not ascertain. Decisions about the company taken one day were changed the next, and so far as I know from first to last the directors of the company never met. Neither could I get the lease of the office signed so that we could take possession. The delay dragged on, and the staff had to meet in the street and in local pubs, and I had to accommodate my secretary in an office of my own, the other side of London. It was a comic opera situation, and the staff, all of whom knew me, wondered what had come over me; but I assured them all would be well. A week or so before the paper appeared we got into the offices, and all was well, at least for the time being.[34]

The first number of *New Britain Weekly* appeared on Empire Day, May 24th, 1933. The choice of date was not accidental, given the significance attributed to the empire as a potential synthesis of both East and West and as a staging post on the way towards world federation. Moreover, Mitrinović had the insight to realise that any appeal to the British public had to pay token regard to the strength of patriotic feeling. "You can do nothing in England," he used to remark, "unless you unite the Bible and the Union Jack. Even their football crowds sing 'Abide with Me'."[35]

Advertised as "A sixpenny weekly for 2d," the paper consisted of 32 pages. It had a green cover on which was printed in solid black a map of old Britain

with an orange outline of new Britain superimposed, moving towards the European continent. It contained a weekly commentary, "The World We Live In" which, in the first issue, opened with the words:

> It is with modesty moderated with confidence that we announce ourselves and state that the event of this week is in all truth the appearance of this paper. It is well to have faith in the fact of one's earnest intention; and our endeavour will be to live and work for the renaissance and self-fulfilment of the British nation. There ought to be a New Britain; such is our heart's desire, and such is the announcement. A new world and a better humanity must arise out of the present upheaval in human existence if that existence itself is not to be fatally thwarted. The moment has come for British men and women to take charge of their national destiny. In the dark labyrinth of the human crisis it is right for this Britain to lighten the darkness and find the way.

A group of regular contributors of a high quality were soon gathered together. Hugh Quigley, Matthew Norgate, Frederick Soddy, S. G. Hobson, Eimar O'Duffy, G. McEachran, J. MacMurray and John Grierson, and others.

Mitrinović, under his old pen-name of M. M. Cosmoi, also contributed a series of articles to the first ten issues of the paper. Written in a style reminiscent of his first series of articles in *The New Age,* and with the same title of "World Affairs," the main theme was an extension of the ideas developed in that first series. They consisted of an examination of the crisis facing the world in the context of its evolution to a new age, a new Christendom. Hence, the crisis in Europe was nothing less than "a planetary spasm of birth and ascension into greater and new existence."[36] The responsibility for the creation of this new age lay not with the large collectivities of nation, race and class, but with alliances of individuals who were aware of themselves both as unique individuals and as constituent members of the whole of humanity. Such an order of knowledge could not be attained through "the imperialism of Science and the dictatorship of Technology."[37] What was required was the confidence and the faith to acknowledge "the glorious truth of the immanence of Divinity in our human essence."[38]

> Our human essence and meaning is the realisation in enfleshed and perishable experience of the true and actual universality of the Infinite in the actual and single uniqueness of the separated and unrepeatable individuality.[39]

> The goal and glory of humanity is to realise, both in action and will and also in the understanding and presentation, the vision that Reality is Spirit, and that

> our own collective human reality and our single human selves are that Spirit which is God. Such is the human quest . . .[40]

It was essential that people in the West should guide this quest. It was in the West that individualism had developed furthest, although this in turn entailed the danger that western man would remain entrapped "in the seductive experience of mere individualism, of materialist self-divinisation."[41] To avert this, some kind of synthesis between the worldviews of the East and West was necessary. Although people in the East had still not attained "the proper rational individuation" of the West, they possessed its necessary counterpoint: the awareness of the organic relatedness of all things, "the universal awareness, the experience of the inner, of the whole."[42]

Whilst a key role fell to Israel, the Jewish people, to work towards the necessary synthesis between the world views of East and West, the major responsibility for the future of the world order lay with the western hemisphere, and with Europe in particular:

> . . . the integration and synthesis of the Western world is a preliminary and essential task of human guidance . . . World synthesis, the organic order of our race must be preceded by the Western synthesis and purification. Needful for the human whole is the self-attainment of the Western mankind . . . The self-creation and greatness of our kingdom is at stake and is in the keeping, is given to the human care of the Western hemisphere with Europe as its seed and focus.[43]

Such integration depended, finally, however, upon the initiatives and actions of free, self-conscious individuals:

> . . . The chief issue of the world-crisis is the birth of the Spirit of our Whole in our single souls. From the New Birth in singles depends the era which is in front of us: the era of world planning and planetary building, of luxurious plenty of material abundance . . .[44]

The articles proved as unfathomable and as frustrating to many readers of *New Britain* as the first "World Affairs" had to the readers of *The New Age*. "Why in the name of sanity must you publish articles like the one in this week's issue by M. M. Cosmoi?" demanded one correspondent. "Is it necessary for M. M. Cosmoi, writing on World Affairs, to use the language of mysticism? Why this tortuous and involved, not to say obscure, literary style? Why all these strange new words?" begged another.[45] Purdom, who described Mitrinović's contributions as the most outstanding of all the work published during his time as editor of *New Britain,*[46] advised patience and recommended his own method of reading "World Affairs" to the protestors:

> Don't expect to get more from a first reading than the atmosphere. Then put your mind at work; then read a third time with attention; and finally read a fourth time so that you may hear the music of its hidden meaning.[47]

For those without the time or inclination to persevere through to the "hidden meaning" of M. M. Cosmoi, the early issues of the paper also carried a seven-fold statement of "What New Britain Stands For," with Purdom providing a commentary in successive issues.

1. "The belief that an altogether new and different Britain is necessary and possible."

The call was for a reconstruction of the British economic, political and social order through individual initiative and personal alliance. In Purdom's words:

> We in NEW BRITAIN are here to help to lift up the whole consciousness and feeling of the nation so that the clash of the sinister forces of Fascism and Communism may be prevented. We must succeed because nothing else is left but to expect the worst and civil war.[48]

2. "The conviction that in this emergency the initiative of every British man and woman is called for."

Just as Britain needed to make a unilateral move towards the reordering of Europe and the world, so must the British people make their own efforts to reconstruct Britain without relying on leaders bankrupt of ideas and policies.

> Unless there are sufficient men and women who will translate their beliefs into action, the new society will not arise . . .
>
> Whether you live in London or a country town or are isolated in the country; whether you are a clerk or a Member of Parliament, a charwoman or a duchess; whether you are an employer or a trade unionist, you can act upon your own initiative for the creation of the Social State. You can take the first step just where you are. That is what we invite you to do. Take upon yourself the responsibility for New Britain.[49]

3. "The affirmation that the perfection of the individual is the true aim of national existence."

The twentieth century was an age of mass industry and mass politics. The development of late-capitalism and the pre-eminence of the finance houses had reduced the worker to a wage slave—individuality was lost,

there was no space left for individual creativity and initiative. Democracy was mere mob-rule—everyone was free to do just what everyone else did: to vote the same way, to read the same newspapers, to act the same way. People had lost sight of the true nature of individuality: the uniqueness and divinity of each and every individual. A new individualism was called for, so that "each individual accepts responsibility, that he acknowledges the obligation to excel himself, that he has the courage to make decisions."[50] The test of any political, economic or social order was the extent to which it helped or hindered such a development. "Separate yourself from the mob," readers were urged:

> . . . be conscious of your own worth, recognise the worth of others, claim nothing for yourself that you do not allow to others, fight for nothing for yourself unless your fight is also for others, and take upon yourself the responsibility for the new order.[51]

4. "The personal alliance of all who believe that Britain should be transformed into a Social State."

Personal alliance, according to Purdom, was the means by which Britain would be transformed. It involved the recognition that "we are each as Gods" and therefore acknowledging the God that is likewise in our neighbour. Personal alliance was "an attitude in which we each grant to other personalities their own worth," whatever their station in life.[52] Only by changing the manner in which we related to each other in all spheres of life could a total reconstruction of political, economic and cultural life be achieved.

5. "The immediate and thorough adaptation of production and distribution to realise the new age of plenty."

This was the demand for the reform of the monetary system along the lines advocated by Frederick Soddy. Money was likened to the blood of the body: its circulation through the social body brought sustenance to all its parts. When money does not circulate, society declines and disintegrates. The dominance of the banks in the control of the money supply by means of cheques and other forms of credit had resulted in money being created and traded for private profit rather than for public benefit. If money was to perform its true function as a circulation system, a means of transporting goods from one person or group of persons to another, it was essential that its creation and control should be the responsibility of the state on behalf of the whole community and that mechanisms be developed to ensure that the quantity of money in circulation could be adjusted so that it retained an unchanging purchasing power.

6. "The guidance of the national wealth processes by the direct producers."

This entailed the proposal that economic life be organised in the form of guilds for each industry, to which all engaged in the industry should belong. The planning and coordinating of economic life as a whole should be the preserve of an Economic Chamber composed of representatives of the guilds. In conjunction with the Political and Cultural Chambers the Economic Chamber would be a constituent part of the three-fold Social State advocated by New Britain.

7. "The federation of European nations leading to and forming the basis of world federation."

Until New Britain, a society of new individuals was created, the world would be without leadership. It was the destiny of Britain to lead Europe towards federation. Moreover, by virtue of her Empire Britain should become a world force for "Western civilisation."

> New Britain, making possible European federation, acting through the Commonwealth as the organ of our civilisation, will prepare the federation of the world which is the goal of statesmanship.[53]

By the time Purdom had finished the seventh of his commentaries on what New Britain stood for, the sales of the paper had reached over 32,000 a week.[54] It appealled particularly to disaffected youth, disillusioned with the state of Britain, searching for answers, but unwilling to embrace fascism or communism. "Young Britons Wake UP!" was the call. "You are to live in the Britain of the future. Are you prepared to do your share in the building of it?"[55] The correspondence columns of the paper showed that the call was not unheeded. One student wrote from London:

> NEW BRITAIN fires me with enthusiasm. There must be thousands of young men like me, who, bewildered by the state of affairs in which they find themselves, search their minds for solutions of the various problems facing the world today, and come to the conclusion that a new social order is required. Most of us conclude also that none of the established political parties can bring it into being. So far we have been powerless individuals; NEW BRITAIN gives the leadership required . . .
>
> I am studying for an examination for next year, but in 1934 all my powers will be at your disposal. Until then I shall "do my bit" by recommending NEW BRITAIN to all my friends and acquaintances.[56]

In addition to the young, the emphasis on guild socialism attracted support from socialists and trade unionists, whilst the concern with devolution drew regional nationalists and the followers of Patrick Geddes into the movement.

Readers were urged to form New Britain groups in their own localities and neighbourhoods. Within two months of the launching of the paper there were 57 groups established around the country. By September 1933 the number had grown to 65, 13 of which were in the London area. David Davies was appointed national organiser, with Professor J. MacMurray as President. The central office was snowed under with requests for leaflets, pamphlets and literature, whilst Watson Thomson and Davies in particular found themselves travelling the length and breadth of the country addressing meetings and local groups.

Amongst the most active of the provincial groups were those of Rugby, Birmingham, Merseyside and Oxford. One of the members of the Oxford group who was later to become a close associate of Mitrinović recalled the feelings and experiences which led to his involvement in the New Britain movement.

> In my younger days the two things I saw wrong with the world were war and violence on the one hand and ugliness on the other. This ugliness struck me largely in the form of slums and dismal houses round London. It was the ugliness which struck me before the poverty, of which when I was very young I was hardly aware. Later I came to see that this was not just—or even primarily—an aesthetic question but also—and rather—a moral one; that the disgrace was not merely the ugliness but even more the social injustice. This realisation was developing during my adolesence and by the time I got to Oxford I had it quite clearly in my mind that the two world problems to be dealt with were war and poverty.
>
> The only political club at Oxford which seemed to be at all alive to these problems was the Communists. The Conservative, Liberal and Labour clubs seemed to be full of young people who were practising debating for the sake of a future political career. One of my closest friends belonged to the October Club, which he persuaded me to join. I did, and stayed for about a year, but in the end I found them mindless. They just kept on repeating the same old stuff, full of catchwords and slogans, and I got to know exactly what statements would merit the abuse 'Counter-revolutionary!'. So I left.
>
> My problem was that my sympathies were basically with the 'left,' but I could not go the whole way with them. I did not accept the need for violent revolution as the Communists did—even though they said that they were only preparing for the violence which would be started by the ruling class when they found themselves being dispossessed of their wealth. Nor did I see the struggle or the solution as a class one. 'Workers and students unite!' was to me an unconvincing slogan. The world seemed to me to be more divided between those who saw and wanted to do something about the social problem and those who did not, than between proletariat and bourgeoisie. I was not willing to believe that everything

about the culture which had been handed down over centuries—and which I was invited to condemn as bourgeois—was necessarily wrong and degenerate just because it had been the preserve of richer people rather than the poor. Nor was I willing to accept that all poorer people were necessarily 'goodies' and all who were better off were necessarily 'baddies.' So I saw no reason mindlessly to ally myself with one particular class of society called 'the working class," because I saw no reason to believe that a mass movement of the working class would produce a world much better than the existing one.

Consequently I was in a difficult situation. I felt very strongly the need to be active doing something about the social problem, but I found no body of people with whom I could unconditionally ally myself, because they all seemed to be grinding a partial and divisive axe. And it was in this situation that one afternoon I picked up the first number of the New Britain Quarterly in the Junior Common Room. I was really thrilled by it. Here was a journal which really stood for social justice and had a serious and radical programme, and at the same time maintained the best values of human culture . . .

I did not at that time make any move to get in touch with anyone in London. I bought the next two numbers of the Quarterly and when the New Britain weekly came out in May 1933 I bought it first thing every Wednesday morning and did nothing else until I had read it almost from cover to cover. One thing I found most exciting, having in my studies gained a great admiration for Plato's Republic as an ideal state, was that it made serious proposals for putting the main principles of the Republic into practical effect. Although people were invited to start groups in the provinces, I did not myself volunteer to start a group. I was still too diffident. But when I saw that one was started I got in touch.

The Rugby group had been formed after a number of those who had been in on the founding of the movement, including Gladys MacDermot[57] whose son Niall was then a pupil at Rugby School, held a public meeting in the town. Amongst those who attended were a group of engineers who worked at the B. T. H. factory in Rugby. Some of them were also members of the Independent Labour Party. One of the women was particularly impressed by Watson Thomson's lead article in the first issue of *New Britain Quarterly*[58]: "There was something there that I had never read anywhere else—and I liked it." The friends began to meet regularly in each other's homes. Eventually some of them determined to pay a visit to London to meet members of the founders' group at 55 Gower Street.

We went into this very large room. There were two or three people who greeted us very warmly and made us feel less nervous than we might have been. In a very short time there seemed to be quite a number of people who had gathered

> around us . . . Somehow there was a great warmth about it all . . . they were all so welcoming.

On a later visit they encountered Mitrinović for the first time. Nearly half a century later this informant was still able to recall the impression he made upon her:

> On the second or third time that I went to '55' I was sitting with a number of women at one end of that big room. At the other end of the room DM had come in. I saw this man for the first time. . . . He had such a presence that you only had to look at him to know that you were in the presence of someone great. As far as I was concerned I really couldn't take my eyes off him.

Other members of the group returned from visits to London similarly moved.

> The first time I met Mr. Mitrinović was in July 1933 . . . Don't ask me to describe him. It is beyond description in my view. An incredible man . . . My first impression was, of course "How un-English" . . . most remarkable . . . And his eyes. I shall never meet anyone like him.

Back in Rugby they began to draw their friends and associates into the group and the intensity of activities heightened with group meetings on several evenings a week, selling the weekly paper, and organising public meetings.

> The astonishing thing I remember was that there was such a release of psychic energy that you could do with a very few hours of sleep. We would read and talk until sometimes 4.00 in the morning, and then the men would go to work at 9.00.

One of the men had an old Bentley which was used as the group's means of transport:

> Sometimes they would be asked to speak at other groups. On one occasion I remember we got into Robert Oliver's car and motored down to Bristol and gave a long talk there. The men never went alone, they always went as a team . . . Discussions would go on after the actual meeting. We would get back to Rugby around 2.00 or 3.00 in the morning and have a post-mortem on how it had gone . . .
>
> By this time the men had met Mitrinović and knew that they had been privileged to meet a very great man. From then I think they were prepared to sacrifice

> anything to further the aims of what they had come to know through the *New Britain Weekly* and what they had learnt in London . . . They would get into the Bentley at 5.30 when they had all finished work and swish up to London as if they were just going into the next village, and come back at 4.00 or 5.00 in the morning, having been further inspired.

Such was the growth of the movement that by November 1933 there was no longer sufficient space in the weekly to print the names and addresses of group leaders around the country. Groups were in existence in 47 towns and centres whilst in addition over 30 groups had been established in the London area. Undoubtedly it all took Mitrinović and the founder members based at 55 Gower Street by surprise. Purdom, however, quickly realised that the paper had struck a rich vein of political dissent and yearning for change. In order to render this effective in national political terms a political movement, a national organisation, needed to be created that could weld all these disparate groups into a unified whole that could exert pressure and influence in the decision making centres of the land. By August 1933 he was proposing the establishment of just such a national organisation, "Personal Alliance for New Britain," which would provide the necessary 'body' for the 'spiritual movement' that had emerged.

His initiative struck an answering chord in many of the new members of the movement, particularly amongst those in the London groups. On October 29th 1933 over 50 delegates from the London groups met at Chiswick to draw up a draft constitution and plan of organisation for the London area. In November Purdom returned to his original theme when, in his capacity as editor, he reviewed the achievements of the paper after six months of publication. He acknowledged the criticism that the weekly had been too vague in its proposals. The reason, he suggested, was that a nationally organised movement had still not emerged to translate the ideas and visions into specific plans of action:

> . . . A New Britain Movement needs to exist. Until a movement is in being with declared aims, a defined policy, and a programme of action, the proposals we discuss in these pages must remain vague. The ideas we put forward depend upon an organised movement for crystallization, and require the backing of an organised body of people to give them reality. That organised movement does not exist. We have called for it, but it has not come. There are groups throughout the country, and now there are coordinated groups with a central committee in London; but an organised national movement is not in being. It must exist or we shall continue to talk in the air.[59]

At least a part of the frustration to which Purdom gave vent in this article can be attributed to a piece that had appeared in the paper a fortnight previously and which had obviously been penned either by Mitrinović himself or one of his close associates. Addressing the readers in the fashion of a Papal nuncio it was announced that:

> the New Britain Movement, the New Britain Alliance, is not a party. A party, political or otherwise, the New Britain Alliance can never become. It shall not be a party. All parts and parties of our nation shall be contained in our New Spirit, in our New Way . . .[60]

For Purdom such a stance was totally unrealistic. Moreover, there was more than a suspicion that such a view was little more than a manifestation of the selfish concern of those who had initiated something which had grown at such a pace that they were no longer able to control it—protective parents who had just discovered that their children intended to follow their own pathways in the world. In concluding his demand for the creation of a formally organised national movement the editor observed that such a step would involve the "surrender of egotism, the giving up of cherished ideas, and the painful effort of getting down to earth . . . It is the end of private property in the ideas which the movement exists to further . . . we have to trust not only the people we know but those we don't know and the unseen powers."[61]

It was clear to the informed observer that a split was developing within the ranks of the young movement. At its core the conflict centered on the nature and form that the New Britain movement was to take: whether it was to remain as a 'spiritual movement' concerned with propagating new ideas for the new individuals that would be at the heart of a New Britain, or whether it should be transformed into a conventional political movement, actively engaged in organising not only to promote new ideas but eventually to attain the political power to implement such ideas and proposals through conventional parliamentary processes. In terms of personnel the split was between the original founding members centered around Mitrinović and based at Gower Street, the Central Group, and certain activists who had joined the movement and whose strength was reflected in the London group and certain of the Yorkshire groups, Leeds and Sheffield in particular.

Mitrinović once remarked that he was a Bakuninist rather than a Marxist. In his attitude to the issue of organising for change he certainly revealed similarities with the nineteenth century revolutionary anarchist. Both were opposed to hierarchically organised political movements that aspired to capture state power. Like Bakunin, Mitrinović believed that revolutionary

change was indivisible as a process from individual self-change and both regarded the conscious initiative of an active minority as indispensable to this process. The New Britain Movement, for Mitrinović, was essentially a means of communicating a new vision and world-view to as wide a range of individuals as possible, to individuals who would then try to translate their newly found insights into the realm of everyday practice in the home, the community and at work. As he had written in *New Britain Weekly,* "from the New Birth in singles depends the era which is in front of us."[62] By establishing new kinds of relationships with those with whom they came in contact the New Britons would act as the leaven in the dough of society, through their example and their deeds transforming the very basis of society—the realm of everyday life. The new society would thus grow and evolve gradually from the grass-roots upwards.

In such a scheme there was little or no place for a mass political party with card carrying members who met once a year at annual conference to endorse their elected leaders; with executive officers who would undoubtedly develop into a self-perpetuating élite, making decisions and pronouncements on behalf of the less able followers on issues that had been decided by the 'tyranny' of the majority vote. This refusal of the founder members of the central group to accept that decisions should be reached by conventional democratic means created a great deal of confusion and anger amongst those who, like Purdom, wished to transform the movement into a political party. A conference of group representatives was held at Rugby on Sunday, November 19th 1933 to discuss the issue of the draft constitution that had been drawn up by certain members of the London groups. It was reported in *New Britain Weekly* that "the frankness of speech and success in reaching a common understanding showed a high degree of realisation of the spirit and purpose of New Britain." It was, however, agreed that "the question of constitution was premature" but that those who had been involved in drawing up the draft should form themselves into a Provisional National Council with the responsibility of drafting a final document.[63] Headquarters of this Provisional National Council were established at 3 Gordon Square, London and the members returned to further conferences at Rugby (December 17th 1933), Birmingham (January 1934) and London (February 25th 1934) in their search for agreement on a formal statement of the aims, objects, and organisational form of the movement. On each occasion they were frustrated by the founder members who, fighting to retain guardianship of the direction of the movement, refused to countenance voting on such issues. David Davies, at the London meeting, argued strongly that "the sole authority for all matters relating to aims, policy, literature and organisation must be

obtained by agreement and that decisions by voting belong to Old Britain and must be scrapped."[64]

In a statement issued after the London conference representatives from some of the provincial groups gave vent to their anger and disenchantment.

> The founders of the New Britain Alliance have consistently failed to inform any of these Conferences in specific terms of their position on or of their claims to authority within the Alliance . . . So far as we Provincial Groups are concerned there is little doubt that the Founders knew perfectly well all the time what was their attitude to the Alliance. They would not permit any authority to pass to a National Council elected by the Groups, nor would they allow an elected Committee to decide the principles of Aims and Policy.
>
> This attitude is perfectly consistent providing that they "put their cards on the table" and not refrain from witholding from the members the true position.

The authors of this statement concluded that the "dictatorial attitude" adopted by the founders meant that it was pointless to continue with the efforts to reach an agreement on the nature and form of the movement. This view was reiterated by a member of the Sheffield group who, in a letter to Watson Thomson, explored the nature of the division within the movement as he saw it.

> Do not think that we underestimate your religious or spiritual ideals. As a result of close contact with some of the members we now realise what you mean by New Britain, it is not easy to explain but it is the feeling of unity to be obtained by working mutually together for a common purpose.
>
> The common purpose is a good one but the mutual feeling of comradeship and unity, a feeling of oneness in God is the main idea and to live it is I now understand New Britain . . .
>
> Well it is quite a good and beautiful ideal for those who want that sort of thing, I am either not ready for it or I have passed it and it does not matter which. My idea of New Britain is entirely a material one. I want to alter the environment so that individuals will have an opportunity to express themselves according to their own desires. To give them leisure so that they will be compelled to develop their individuality.
>
> Whether they join a religious society or whether they go their own way is a matter entirely for themselves to decide. I am prepared to prove that the idea of converting them to certain religious schools of thought does not help in the least to evolve their personality, individuality, ego, soul or whatever name you like to give it.

There is a certain amount of satisfaction to be gained by working together along mutual lines to attain a common end, to individually feel this spirit of unity. It is the sort of thing which is behind most religious revivals.

Such a religious revival might conceivably bring about the desired change in environment that I desire but I should be prepared to lay very long odds against it.

Then there is the selfish idea. If I were to join in this New Britain spirit I should gain because of this mutual contact and feeling of unity. In my opinion it is a high form of selfishness. I don't care a damn about myself and I shan't last very long in this particular body anyway . . .

You are offering the suffering man in the street relief in the spiritual sense. I am not . . . We want to concentrate on improving the environment and making the world a better place, a better geographical New Britain with better conditions of working, with more wealth, with less hours of work and with more leisure and always with the means to enjoy the leisure.

You will reply that you want the same. Agreed but your wanting is a means to an end, the end being the individual. I ignore your end and want the objective to be the better conditions.

Now perhaps you realise why we cannot be in the same organisation and why we speak two different languages or to put it better why we mean two different things from the same words. We feel that you ought to have said straight out at the First Rugby Conference. That it is incompatible with our views to organise a New Britain along democratic lines. That we are the founders and that we mean to be the sole authority and that we shall not recognise any other organisation. That the job is a personal one and that the environment is merely a means to secure this personal feeling of unity. We should have saved a lot of time, a lot of money and we should not have had our patience tried by the inconsistencies of Davies or the inefficiency of Lohan . . .[65]

The split in the movement was reflected in the pages of *New Britain Weekly* where, in the space allotted to news of the groups there was a clear division between the London groups that were listed under New Britain Alliance with headquarters at 3 Gordon Square and the section devoted to news from the provinces appearing under the name of the New Britain Movement with 'Sammy' Lohan as national organiser based at the central group's office in Gower Street.

Once the nature and the extent of the division in the movement had become clearer to the parties involved, the scene was set for the first national conference at Leamington Spa which was scheduled to take place over the last weekend in March 1934. It was clear that at this gathering of

representatives of New Britain from all over the country the struggle for the control, direction and nature of the movement would be decided.

In preparation for the national gathering the London groups held a one day conference on March 11th 1934 at the University of London Club in Gower Street at which the issue of the constitution was once again discussed. Following this meeting a final draft of the proposed constitution was sent out to the provincial groups a few days prior to the Leamington conference. It proposed a federated organisational structure for the movement with groups coordinating at district and area levels up to the regional level, with councils of delegates from each level responsible for coordinating group activities in the districts, areas and regions. The supreme coordinating body was to be a National Council made up of four representatives from each region with the exception of the London region which would have twelve co-opted members and just two representatives of the 'central group'—defined as "those who founded the movement, and those who have since joined them or shall do so." As it was proposed that decisions within the National Council were to be arrived at by a three quarter's majority if unaniminity proved impossible to achieve, it was obvious that the proposed constitution, if accepted at the Leamington conference, would mean the virtual emasculation of the power of the central group members.

Over 300 people attended the conference at Leamington Spa at the end of March 1934. There was, according to Charles Purdom who took the chair at most of the sessions, "every sign of the initiation of a strong movement."[66] In fact, the conference marked the defeat of the London group and its allies, including Purdom, who saw the conference as their opportunity to obtain approval for their proposals to put New Britain onto a proper organisational footing as a means to becoming a genuinely mass based party. The first sessions on the evening of Friday March 31st passed uneventfully enough, although there was a noticeable contrast between the first two speakers. Professor G. E. C. Catlin, the husband of Vera Brittain, addressed himself to the question of how to avoid a violent revolution whilst the second speaker proclaimed his faith in marxism and his belief that the fundamental question to be tackled was the abolition of private property. This was Jack Murphy, one time leader of the Shop Stewards Movement, who had been attracted towards New Britain by its emphasis on workers' control and management of industry. For him the issue was clear:

> The New Britain of our aim must be a Socialist Britain free from the profit motive, free from financial swindlers, indeed, a classless Britain. Our task is to ensure the movement will dare to be Socialist and build a new Socialist Britain.[67]

David Davies suggested in his autobiography that Murphy had been brought along to the conference by the central group "with the specific object of injecting an upsetting element into the proceedings and bringing the conference to nought."[68] Whether or not this was in fact the case, Murphy's strident call for socialism from the platform must have been a little disconcerting to Charles Purdom and the members of the London group who, in pursuit of their aim of transforming New Britain into a mass movement with wide political appeal, had been attempting to attract a number of business people into their ranks. Certainly, Murphy, an experienced and powerful public speaker, was to make his presence felt on a number of crucial occasions during the weekend. Not least on the Saturday morning when Andrew Campbell, one of the leaders of the London group and a major advocate of an organisational overhaul for the movement, presented his proposals for a practical programme. Campbell tried to convince the assembly that his programme of industrial planning and monetary reform would "antagonise few interests and if prosecuted with vigour and efficiency should be applied in a very short time." His proposals promised "the immediate abolition of poverty, a general increase in the standard of life, increased time for leisure, and a people more receptive to the higher ideals of New Britain."[69]

In fact, Campbell's proposals came in for sharp criticism from significant sections of the gathering. He advocated industrial planning without specifying who was to do the planning; he made no mention of workers owning the means of production; and he envisaged the maintenance of production for profit, at least "to start with." It was suggested that Campbell's programme, in essence, "differed in no way from the claims made in the Fascist programme."[70] In some frustration Campbell appealed to the conference: if only they would water down their antagonism to the capitalist class he could guarantee the recruitment of 10,000 new members into the movement, thus helping to make it a truly effective political organisation with mass appeal. At this Murphy stood up and retorted that "If you went a little further and turned it into a capitalist party, I could bring you in 50,000 new members!"

Saturday evening was devoted to an address from Frederick Soddy on monetary reform and social credit as a prelude to the discussions on the constitutional proposals that were scheduled for the following morning. However, just before the close of the Soddy meeting, at around 10.15 pm, Lilian Slade stood up to propose "That this conference should solve the problems of leadership which must arise in the early stages of a movement by appointing six of those here who obviously had the confidence of the delegates. And one other who was known to many."[71] The six present whom

she nominated were Professor Soddy, Rev. A. D. Belden, Lt. Colonel J. V. Delahaye, Jack Murphy, David Davies, and Winifred Gordon Fraser. The seventh was Mr. H. F. T. Rhodes. So powerfully did she address the gathering that her proposal was accepted by general acclaim. One of those present recalled the evening many years later:

> I remember Lilian Slade getting up and making a most marvellous statement. She really was inspired. She carried it off beautifully. She gave a potted biography of each of these people that were proposed. She did it marvellously and was almost on fire . . . Most impressive. After all the years I can still remember that. It was carried of course by acclamation. I can remember at one stage my friend who was sitting next to me said, "Isn't it about time we got up and cheered?" We were so moved. So we all got up and cheered.

The address from the platform might have been moving, just as the cheers of this informant were undoubtedly genuine, but what they were witnessing was the execution of a coup. Members of the central group had met with Mitrinović the previous evening. Fearing that the constitutional proposals that were to be presented on the Sunday might be accepted, with the consequent erosion of their guardian-like position within the movement, they had planned their pre-emptive strike and had got away with it. They might dismiss formal voting procedures as belonging to 'Old Britain,' but they could rival the most devious of the old world politicians when the occasion and their own interests demanded it.

One has to feel some sympathy for the outflanked Andrew Campbell who, the following morning, had the task of presenting the constitutional proposals to the conference in the aftermath of the previous evening's events. Moreover, he had to contend with Gordon Fraser, one of the key movers behind the coup, who, whilst claiming to recognise the advantages of organising the movement efficiently, objected that "to impose an elaborate system in order to strip of authority the very persons who are responsible for what exists was a very Old Britain idea of democracy!"[72]

Little headway was made with the discussion as people were too busy trying to find out what had happened the previous evening, arguing about the decision to appoint seven leaders and debating the legitimacy of the means adopted to obtain that decision. In the afternoon Charles Purdom expressed from the chair his dissatisfaction with the proceedings and with the decisions arrived at. Again it was left to Jack Murphy to publicly defend the interests of the central group. People had nothing to fear, the new leaders were not going to dissolve any organisations that the members had created, they would draw up a new constitution and present it to the movement,

the new leaders represented the true spirit of the movement, objections to their appointment were "formal objections and not in keeping with the spirit of the movement."[73] Meanwhile some people were walking out in disgust and dismay. It was decided to put the issue of the seven leaders to the conference once again. Of the 127 who voted, only two opposed the appointment of the new leadership.

The conference ended the next day. According to one report "the sense of national crisis and of confidence in the future of New Britain were deeply felt as the conference broke up." The sense of national crisis reflected the state of reality, the confidence in the future of New Britain as a movement was somewhat misplaced. Within a week Purdom had resigned as editor of the weekly. In his farewell to his readers he explained he had taken the office on the understanding that "there must be a national organisation with its ultimate aims defined and a practical programme of immediate action." He was leaving the editorship because that understanding could not be acted upon. "The moment is too soon. The movement is not yet ready to be born."[74] Certainly there was no possibility that Mitrinović would allow New Britain to become the kind of movement Purdom envisaged. After Leamington control of the direction of the movement was firmly established in the hands of the central group.

Davies took over the editorial chair vacated by Purdom, but "to sit was all I did. I was editor only in name. The real editor was Mitrinović."[75] In the weeks immediately following the conference Davies, Thomson, Lohan and others toured the countryside addressing groups, trying to raise morale and the funds necessary to keep the weekly paper alive. By July 1934 it began to seem as if the movement might survive the political chicanery of Leamington and the consequent defection of a substantial number of committed followers and activists. People were looking forward to the second national conference which was to be held at Glastonbury over the August bank holiday weekend. Then, in the July 4th issue of the weekly Mitrinović called for Britain to rearm, to impose a peace on Europe and forestall the impending European bloodbath. Those who sought peace must prepare for war. A fascist Germany would disfigure the human race and the universe. A new war would mark "the end of Europe and of Great Britain in the hell of bacterial and gas suicide of Christendom."[76]

There was an immediate outcry from the pacifists among the ranks of New Britain and those with a commitment to international socialism. The Southend group called upon the seven nominal leaders to clarify their position. On July 27th having failed to obtain a satisfactory response they resolved to sever their connection with the movement, having recognised that "the

Socialist advocacy of the New Britain Movement is inextricably entangled with, and irretrievably marred by, a simultaneous panic propaganda of *materialistic religious militarism* which can only serve to strengthen the forces of reaction and help to plunge this country into another European War . . ."[77] The Secretary of the Coventry group recorded that the issue of re-armament revealed a "fundamental cleavage of opinion . . . resulting in the most heated discussion in the history of the group,"[78] and urged the central group "in future to avoid mentioning rearmament or any other term likely to antagonise the left wing and pacifist elements in the movement."[79]

Whilst a number of groups joined Southend in severing their connection with the movement, others were complaining about the quality of the weekly following Purdom's resignation. The articles were too heavy and required too much concentration from the readers. There was a lack of consistency in policy between articles—whilst this might be stimulating it was also extremely confusing for the average reader. In addition at least one of the seven so-called leaders found the demands too exacting. On July 19th Harry Rhodes wrote a letter of resignation to Watson Thomson:

> My reasons are quite definite. I am very busy and pressed. I never have more than three hours notice of any meeting, and then I do not know what the meeting is to be about. Last night is an excellent example: a number of people, I don't know how many or whom called to ask me to attend an urgent meeting. Of course, I was not in. I never am unless you arrange to see me, so I didn't get your message until too late . . . I am not withdrawing out of annoyance or anything of that sort. I merely feel that my position is impossible.[80]

Rhodes, in fact, was only witness to a fraction of the chaos and frenetic activity that characterised the life of the central group during this period as they struggled to maintain regular publication of the weekly paper. It had never carried a great deal of advertising and, perhaps not surprisingly for a paper advertised as the sixpenny weekly for tuppence, it had never made a profit. As the membership of the movement declined, so did the readership of the paper and the revenue from sales. The supply of funds from original patrons of the paper such as Gladys MacDermot was also drying up. David Davies recalled the nightmare situation in which he found himself as he sat in the editor's chair:

> The paper had exhausted its initial funds, so that it experienced increasingly enormous difficulty in keeping alive, and its circulation went catastrophically down. We literally did not know from week to week whether the next number would appear or not. I was not initiated into the mystery of the paper's finance;

but on occasions I was asked to accompany a few people to interview some wealthy or influential person. Among many others I went to see the late Lord Allen of Hurtwood. He was very charming but I came away empty-handed. There would be weeks when salaries were delayed. Towards the end, the money for printing had to be found for each issue before the printer would put it on the machine. Many a time I was informed at luncheon hour on the Monday when we went to press that there was no money to print. Miraculously it turned up . . .[81]

The fact that the money to pay the printer kept on turning up for as long as it did was due less to the intervention of supra-mundane forces than to the efforts of the central group who went on regular 'money runs' around the country, wheedling money out of wealthy individuals and loyal New Britain groups. Watson Thomson was later to recall one such run he made when he hired a car and sped around the country searching for funds, including £10 from the then Archbishop of York, William Temple; returning to London within 48 hours with just over £700 in time to prevent the printer refusing to put the paper to press.

It could not be sustained, and the August 8th 1934 issue which came out during the second national conference at Glastonbury was the last "weekly organ of national renaissance" to be published under the banner of the New Britain Movement, although a fortnightly newsheet *Eleventh Hour Emergency Bulletin for New Britain* continued to be published.[82]

Glastonbury has long been renowned as a spiritual centre of Britain and the significance of the venue for the second national conference of the New Britain Movement was not lost on those who gathered there over the weekend of August 4th-6th 1934. Although the coffers to finance the weekly paper were empty, delegates from around the country arrived in good heart and high expectations. The Rugby group, which by this time was publishing its own occasional magazine *(New England),* addressed a personal message to all New Britain groups in the issue of July 25th:

> All men and women who have the vision of New Britain before them, shall make the Glastonbury Conference of August 1934 great history. For this we shall take personal responsibility.

Unaware that the seven leaders that had been nominated at the Leamington Conference had, in fact, never met together as a body, the gathering of nearly 200 looked forward to a thorough discussion and examination of the constitution and statement of New Britain aims that had been promised them the previous spring. A document emanating from the central group

was in fact presented to the conference and was eventually endorsed. It reiterated the view that the social, economic and political crises facing Britain and the world were all part of a single process, that humanity was now at a turning point in its evolution. A new order was imminent, a new age which could only be brought into being by new methods rather than through the bankrupt policies and programmes of existing parties and institutions. The introduction of this new order was not so much a technical problem (". . . man has now the knowledge and power to order his communal life in such a way that none need fear want . . .") as one of creating the necessary will to bring it about—"it is for want of vision that people are perishing" it was pronounced. The way to bring about the wider societal changes was through individual change and a transformation of social relationships—the key lay in the creation of situations wherein "each individual gives the same recognition to the personal uniqueness and the opinions and interests of others as he would wish them to grant to him."

Such calls to love one's neighbour as oneself, however, remain little more than empty if well-meaning rhetoric, unless they are supported by clear guidelines as to how the structures of society might be reorganised in order to facilitate such a proposed transformation of social relationships. Consequently, the document reiterated the programme and policies of New Britain. It called for the reorganisation of the political decision making system in line with the twin principles of decentralisation and federation; the establishment of the three-fold state with the functional division of power in accordance with the different spheres or dimensions of life—economic, cultural and political; workers' control of industry and production through the guild system with ownership of the means of production being vested in the community; the establishment of a "universal citizen's allowance" which would free people from economic insecurity; and the reform of the monetary system along the lines developed by Soddy. In addition, looking forward to the eventual establishment of a world federation the conference called for the transformation of the British empire into a genuine commonwealth of free peoples, the establishment of a Federation of Europe and the conclusion of an Anglo-American Atlantic alliance.

As regards the organisation of the movement itself it was proposed, and eventually accepted after some discussion, that control and direction should be lodged with the central group. However, it was pointed out that membership of the central group was open to all, that it was not a specifically geographical group but was open to those who possessed the necessary degree of devotion to New Britain to acknowledge it "not merely as an intellectual or political programme, but as a way of life, demanding nothing less than their complete

dedication." Whilst the central group members were to be the guardians of the movement, the basic unit of organisation was acknowledged to be the local group which should be "autonomous and self-moving" within the guidelines established by central group members.

The constitutional proposals were eventually passed with only four dissenters amongst the 160 present. The formal conference finished on the afternoon of Monday August 6th, but for those who remained a week long summer school had been organised—lectures, demonstrations and classes by the Valerie Cooper School of Movement, and cricket in between the rain showers. For those who participated it was a memorable communal experience. As the report of the conference that appeared in the Autumn issue of *New Britain* claimed:

> New Britain as a movement made an important step forward in action by the acceptance of a clear statement of aims—but the value of the eight days spent at Glastonbury was a new experience of personal relationships in a new order without which political agreement would be a mere continuance of the old.[83]

This statement was, in fact, a clear pointer to the direction that the movement was henceforth to take. Without a weekly paper, with funds exhausted, it became clear even to the most committed and optimistic that the days of New Britain as a popular public initiative for the re-ordering of individual and social life were numbered. This was acknowledged in a letter that Watson Thomson wrote in his capacity as Secretary of the Movement inviting people to attend the first of a number of conferences held at 46 Lancaster Gate through the winter of 1934–35.

> Our feeling here is that the next phase should be one of interior concentration, personal equipment and research rather than of enlarged publicity.

At the first of these, held over the weekend of December 15th/16th, it was resolved that the New Britain Movement should devolve into four separate, if related, organisational forms, each focussing on a major aspect of the overall programme of the movement. Thus it was decided to inaugurate a League for the National Dividend, a British League for European Federation, a League for the Three-fold State, and a House of Industry League. Although each of these Leagues met at some stage or another, issued leaflets and had their own letter-heads, it was really only the House of Industry League that developed beyond a small study circle into anything approximating a public organisation.

S. G. Hobson accepted the invitation to become President of the fledgling organisation whilst an even greater luminary of the trade union movement,

Ben Tillet, was prevailed upon to become one of the vice-presidents. The inaugural meeting of the League was held on August 14th 1936 when its purpose was announced: "to implement the logical purpose of the Trade Unions: namely, the total abolition of the wage system, and the ensuing change in status . . . of all those engaged in industrial production."[84] This was to be achieved by vesting formal ownership of the means of production "in the Crown and the People through the House of Commons, with actual control of the production processes residing in the industrial guilds which would be represented in a new Economic Chamber to be known as the House of Industry."[85]

During the Autumn of 1936 and the Spring of 1937 the League established itself as an active pressure group oriented particularly towards influencing trade unionists. Weekend conferences were organised, weekly lecture-discussion meetings were held in London, provincial groups were established, and articles placed in the trade union press. Office accommodation was obtained in the National Trade Union Club in New Oxford Street where the secretary, Arthur Peacock, was later to become secretary of the League.

Although Peacock had read Mitrinović's articles in the pages of *New Britain* it was at the Trade Union Congress in 1936 that he was first approached by "this far-seeing, yet rather perplexing man," as he was later to describe Mitrinović. "I want to know Arthur Peacock. Not the journalist who is secretary of the National Trade Union Club, but Arthur Peacock, who wears the big black sombrero and red tie." Once again, Mitrinović was fishing for a new ally, someone with access to circles not normally open to Serbian exiles or to the young people who had been attracted to him and his ideas through the New Britain movement and who did most of the mundane administrative work of the League. As with most people upon whom he turned his charm, Mitrinović made a lasting impression upon Peacock who, like so many others before him, could not help but notice the strange uses to which he adapted the English language and the speed with which he rushed from one subject to another in his discourse. "Until all of us," Mitrinović informed Peacock, "working for the new order of man understand each other completely, until we know each other in every relationship, are prepared to accept one another whole-heartedly and to share all we have, pooling our resources for the common good, we shall achieve just nothing . . . In politics everyone lives to cut the other fellow's throat. The new order of man demands new ways, new standards, new ideas. You must bring the new spirit of personal alliance into your unions, your General Council, otherwise your leaders will be like the old leaders, your party like the old parties, and all of you will be no better than the people you condemn."[87]

According to Peacock the House of Industry League had some influence with engineers and intellectuals, but gained "sparse support from trade unionists generally."[88] Consequently a new medium was created in 1937: the Council for Workers' Control of Industry with the same platform as the League but catering specifically for trade unionists. The activities of both organisations continued until the outbreak of the European war which Mitrinović had foreseen so many years previously. The war succeeded in bringing the curtain down not only on public ventures such as the House of Industry League, it also dispersed the group of people who had formed themselves into an intimate circle around Mitrinović, forming a household which became the main focus of his attention in the years after the New Britain Movement until the war. It was with these people that he worked to create the seed of the new social order in microcosm, and it is to an examination of their experiences and life in and around Bloomsbury during the latter half of the 1930s that attention will be paid in the next chapter.

Chapter 7

INITIATION FOR THE SENATE INITIATIVE

The main theme of Mitrinović's series of "World Affairs" articles in *The New Age* in the early 1920s had been the notion of the world and humanity as a developing organism moving towards the goal of Universal Humanity, a new commonwealth. He continued to pursue this idea throughout his life. The New Britain Movement had been one of the vehicles through which he had attempted to communicate his vision, and its practical application in the different realms of life, to a wider audience than had been possible through the Adler Society. The main issue that concerned Mitrinović throughout this period was how one could model a social order that would preserve the necessary synthesis between the values of individual freedom and liberty (upon which the twentieth century western world placed such a high estimation) and the sense of community and interdependence between all things that was the basis of life in ancient cultures and in those of the eastern world. How could one bring freedom loving, self-seeking individuals to a consciousness of the part they had to play in the life of society as a whole, an awareness of their mutual dependence upon each other? What kind of social order would combine social equality with diversity, a developed sense of community with an awareness of individual uniqueness and freedom?

As we have seen, Mitrinović's model for such an ordering of social life lay in the natural organism. An organism such as the individual human can be seen as a single whole consisting of different parts. Each part can be characterized as performing a function, fulfilling a purpose, which contributes to the maintenance and well being of the whole organism. Yet each part also functions according to its own laws and principles, achieving its own ends in the process of serving the purposes of the more complex organism of which it is a constituent element. Thus, in the human organism it is possible to point to three predominant systems, each performing a distinct function which contributes to the maintenance of the whole organism: the

metabolic system by which nourishment is taken in to provide energy and waste is excreted, the respiratory and circulation system through which air is inhaled and energy distributed through the blood stream, and the nervous system which receives and interprets sensations from the outside environment and transmits impulses to action. All three systems permeate the whole body. There is no governing function. The body is only healthy when the major functions are all operating in proper balance. If one of the systems fails to function properly some or all of the others try to modify their own operation to try and restore the balance.

The Social State which was the focus of so much attention and discussion during the period of the New Britain Movement was an attempt to apply this kind of organic model to the social world. If one looked at society as if it were an organism, then individual human beings could be likened to single cells, whilst groups of individuals could be compared with the different organs performing different functions within the whole organism. Each individual and group thus had its own contribution to make towards the maintenance and well being of the rest of society. Like the different organs in the body each would be autonomous and free to make that contribution in its own way, according to its own principles, fulfilling its own ends in the process, except insofar as their performance interfered with the functioning of other constituent elements of society.

The twin principles of devolution and federation which were at the core of New Britain's proposals for a re-ordering of society represented the expression of this idea of the organic social order in organisational terms. The one principle being that all those with the same interest, performing the same function, should associate with each other and consult together; the principle of devolution being that such groups should be self-managing with every decision being taken at the lowest possible level by those who would either have to implement it or would be affected by it. Similarly, the emphasis on the three-fold nature of the social state represented the application of the organic model to society. The metabolic, circulatory and nervous system of the body could be viewed as the production, distribution and consumption systems of the organism. The metabolic system absorbs raw materials and produces energy, which is distributed around the body through the blood stream by the circulatory system and is eventually consumed in the activities stimulated by the nervous system. In the social organism these three major functions of production, distribution and consumption are performed by the economic, political and cultural systems respectively. Economics is concerned with the whole process of providing the material necessities and amenities of life. The realm of culture, including religion,

science, the arts, education and so forth is the ultimate consumer of the products of the economic system. The proper concern of politics is with human relationships and in facilitating the distribution of the outputs of the economic system for the sake of the cultural realm. Each and every individual plays a part in each of these three spheres of society. Consequently any organic ordering of social life would need to take account of the fact that each individual has certain definite responsibilities and tasks in the realms of economics, culture and politics and requires the necessary power and authority to freely fulfill such functions to the best of their abilities.

In developing his vision of an organic social order Mitrinović was seeking to sketch out the guiding principles of the ideal society: a society made up of free and autonomous individuals where chaos is avoided not by the imposition of external force and central state coercion but by the feeling of unity between all members, the awareness that they are all part of and responsible for each other and that they are all equal to each other. The only basis for such a society was an organic one. The unity of the organism was the only kind compatible with such an anarchistic vision. An organism is not governed by any authority imposed from above. Each cell is free to do its 'own thing' as a function within the whole. There is no conflict between the self-fulfillment of the individual cell and its function within the whole organism of which it is a part. Each cell is equal to those around it, there are no top or central cells which regulate the functioning of all the others. The model of the organism provided Mitrinović with a vision of society of complete unity and complete individual autonomy—a harmonious social order which would not be free of conflict but which, like the harmony in music, would be maintained so long as the tension between conflicting notes was held in balance.

Stated so baldly, of course, such a vision can be quickly dismissed as so much idealistic, wishful and misguided thinking. Apart from anything else there is a fundamental difference between a natural organism and society that resides in the nature of their constituent 'cells.' The cell in the human body or any other natural organism lacks the essentially human characteristic of being able to interpret its own life and that around it in creatively symbolic terms. People are not programmed. They create their own activities according to their own interpretations of their own interests in the situations in which they find themselves. It is not 'naturally given' to human beings to act in pre-ordained fashion in ways that will further the general well-being of the collectivity of which they are a part. The idea that a group of random individuals could get together and immediately create the perfect anarchist society simply by each of them doing their own thing and being tolerant

of those around them doing likewise is hopelessly naive. It is the rock upon which many utopian experiments have foundered. Somehow or other this group of people would have to agree to organise themselves functionally. Each would have to freely choose their function, and their choice be freely accepted by the others. Each would have to be completely satisfied with the functions chosen, foregoing any claim to impose their demands on others against their will.

The possibilities for mal-functioning and conflict are endless. Apart from personal conflicts between individuals, some would be envious of the functions of others; some functions would appear more 'glamorous,' more intrinsically rewarding, or more powerful than others. Some, out of dissatisfaction with their function or out of a feeling of inadequacy would refuse to play their part. Some would try to obstruct others in the performance of their function. Some would invest so much of their personality and sense of individual worth in a single function that they would be unable to cooperate satisfactorily in the functions of others. Moreover, the organic social order to which Mitrinović aspired could not be imposed on people by force or coercion. It could only exist on the basis of the free will and mutual cooperation of the participants.

Clearly, then, world change required self change as the columns of *New Britain Weekly* had pronounced. To achieve an organic social order individuals would have to rise to a higher order of consciousness, to transcend the narrow confines of their individual consciousness. Such a level of consciousness would involve people living as much in and for the rest of humanity as they did in and for themselves. In practice it meant people living as much for those with whom they associated as for themselves, or, as Polonius advised in *Hamlet,* "to thine own self be true. And it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man." Such an injunction rested on a deep faith in the ultimate unity of humanity—that if anyone expressed their true will and remained true to the innermost promptings of their soul, then their will would not prove to be incompatible in the final analysis with the reality of another person. For, as Weininger wrote:

> . . . there is only one duty and only one morality. Man acts either morally or immorally, and if he is moral towards himself he is moral towards others.[1]

But such a change of consciousness could not be achieved overnight. How was such a transformation in the stance people adopted towards themselves and the rest of the world to be attained? Furthermore, even if an organic social order was created, even if the institutions of society were transformed in the ways advocated by New Britain, there would still

be tensions and conflict between individuals and groups in society. How would these be resolved or kept in balance in the absence of a central state power to impose 'law and order' on society?

As regards the first issue, clearly one could not wave a magic wand and thereby transform the consciousness of other people. In order to 'construct' a tree it is necessary to plant a seed in the ground and let it grow. The full potentiality of the mature tree is contained within that seed, but it has to absorb material from the surrounding environment if it is ever to grow to full fruition. Likewise, to create an organic social order, a seed needed to be planted. A conscious human creation by a few individuals who carried within them the vision of a fully developed organic ordering of life. A vision which might grow into a small prototype example of the new society, as they sought to develop the new consciousness and the human relationships necessary for its realisation amongst themselves. A vision which they could communicate to others through their own example.

At the same time, those who carried within them this new consciousness, this seed of a new age, would also have to be prepared to nurture its growth in those around them. Just as in a natural organism there has to be some means of maintaining the necessary balance between all the different parts and functions, a similar function was required by the new social organism in the absence of a central state. This function Mitrinović called Senate. It was the creative essence of the new order which was required from the very beginning of its birth, and which would eventually grow to supersede the mechanisms of state rule. The function of senate would be to possess a clear vision of the necessary functions in the social state and their proper relationship to one another, and to steer the various groups in society towards a genuine functional relationship through devolution and federation. The senate, through providing each group with an interpretation of its own significance in the context of the whole, would perform the necessary integrating function whereby the requisite balance between groups might be maintained by mutual agreement rather than force. The senators who performed this function would be all-pervasive in the sense that they would serve to hold the balance between all persons and functions throughout the new social order and ultimately the whole of human life. In any association of persons at whatever level of purpose, there would be those who were committed to function as senators. The authority of such senators would not reside in their control of the means of violence or persuasion, but on the recognition by others of their impartiality and their ability to perform their integrating function. They would not constitute a new power group or élite with their own special interests. They were not to be conceived

as a new national or world government or central council of experts. Senate would be an alliance of individuals that shared the ability to view particular human problems and conflicts from a perspective that embraced a consciousness of the needs of the social organism or of humanity itself *as a whole,* and who would refrain from taking sides in any dispute.

How, then, would senate operate? What methods and techniques would senators bring to bear in a conflict situation that would enable the participants to reconcile their differences? Mitrinović depicted the senate method as that of Third Force. The first and second forces have been encountered already as the two principles underlying federation and devolution: the first force being the tendency to preserve unity and stability, the second force being the tendency to affirm the autonomy of the parts of a whole. In a conflict between two parties or forces, the argument can never be finally settled by throwing one's support into one side as against another. If one side suffers a reversal, the resulting sense of resentment can lead to an intensification of the struggle at some later date. Mitrinović further maintained that intervening in a dispute in order to arrange a compromise in which each side agrees to give up some of their demands in exchange for similar sacrifices by others can also lead only to a temporary peace, as both sides will have lost and both will look for ways of regaining what they have forfeited. The approach of Third Force was not the 'either-or' of taking one side against another, but neither did it consist in locating the truth somewhere in between the two. Rather, the approach of Third Force to a problem of conflict resembles that of the Irishman who, after several unsuccessful attempts to direct a stranger to Cork, finally gave up and said, "If I were going to Cork I wouldn't start from here."

In other words Third Force does not attempt to solve a problem in the context in which it is immediately presented. It seeks to transform and widen the context of any conflict beyond the limits within which it is being considered to a wider one within which the points of view of the conflicting parties can be seen as co-related rather than contradictory. Mitrinović characterised Third Force as "above, between, and beyond the extremes and opposites of reality." Drawing upon a faith in, or intuitive vision of, the organic unity of humanity, even if that unity has yet to be consciously attained, Third Force seeks to bring about the required balance between the parties in the light of this potential wholeness above and beyond the limits of the situation in which the conflict occurs.

In this sense the central role of senators, at whatever level they sought to exercise their function, was to maintain and convey to others their consciousness of the ultimate organic wholeness of humanity. Equipped with

such a vision and ideal, Mitrinović maintained, it would be possible, through sincerely and fully embracing the point of view of all sides, to arrive at a mutually acceptable agreement on the most beneficial way conflicts over how different functions might be performed should be resolved. In addition senators would be able to reveal to others the major contradictions (such as the private ownership of the means of production) which were the root cause of so many conflicts, conflicts which were in fact merely symptoms of the disease in the body of the organic social order.

All this sounds extremely far-fetched, and it is certainly hard to portray without using words for which it is difficult to imagine any corresponding practice. It is hard to imagine how Senate would function in anything other than a utopia, some yet-to-be-achieved ideal social state. It seems utter naive idealism to suggest that it might be possible to permeate social life at all levels with senators who, by their imaginative wisdom rather than by force or propaganda, would be able to facilitate the emergence of a synthesis from the thesis and antithesis contained in disputes and conflicts—by conveying to others their particular all-embracing vision of the ways in which all things and beings are functionally related to each other and have their purpose in the ultimate scheme of things.

Yet Mitrinović was not a simple and naive idealist. His management of the coup at Leamington revealed his grasp of 'real-politik,' whilst people who knew him have borne witness that he saw the difficulties of creating the Social State, the organic social order, far more fully and vividly than they themselves. That is why it is important to recall the various far-reaching changes in the structures of society that Mitrinović advocated at the same time as he was developing his ideas on the role of senate and Third Force. Personal change and institutional change were co-equals in his scheme of change—both were necessary to the creation of the new order, neither were sufficient on their own. Once the major contradictions or dysfunctional diseases in the body of society had been transcended, when people no longer had to fear material want, economic exploitation or political oppression, when they could exert control over their own lives through the devolved system of decision making in the various spheres of life—within such a framework the exercise of the senate function as the integrating presence starts to appear somewhat less fanciful.

But, of course, in the 1930s, as now, these transformations in the social order were not on the immediately foreseeable agenda of change. This did not and does not mean, however, that one should not work for such changes and prepare for them. From Mitrinović's perspective, however pessimistic a conclusion one might arrive at after a cold intellectual analysis of the

condition of the world, it remained vitally important that one should act and talk as if social transformation was just around the corner. If one's ideals were ever to become real, then it was imperative that one act as if they were 'realistic'; not only in order to embody them in microcosm in the here-and-now but also in order to galvanise other people into action, to break the fetters of their taken-for-granted views of the world and its future.

It was to the training and preparation of a group of individuals for that far-off social order to which, it was hoped, they would help give birth that Mitrinović devoted most of his time and energy from 1935 until the outbreak of war. Indeed, there are some grounds for arguing that a major role of the New Britain Movement for Mitrinović was as a recruiting exercise whereby possible senators might be discovered and drawn into the central group gathered around him in London. After the demise of the movement the amount of energy spent on public initiatives was substantially reduced, as was the concern with working out the framework of the Social State at the theoretical level. It was a period in which Mitrinović and those around him attempted to work out the personal and interpersonal disciplines and standards which would be necessary for the realisation of senate. As part of this process they also attempted to evolve the pattern of an organic social order within the group itself.

The members of this group numbered between 30 and 40, although the actual personnel changed over the years as people dropped out and the new recruits were drawn in. They included close associates of Mitrinović such as Valerie Cooper, Gordon Fraser and Lilian Slade who had been involved in his life and his work for many years. There were also those like Watson Thomson and Rex Campbell who had been involved with the New Britain Movement right from the start. The bulk of those who shared a group life with Mitrinović and each other during the latter half of the 1930s, however, were a younger generation of idealistic men and women, many of them university graduates, who had become actively involved in New Britain as a political movement and had gradually become involved with the central group at the heart of the movement. Although most of them, to begin with, were only dimly aware of the process of personal and group development which Mitrinović was to orchestrate for them, such was the impression he made upon them that they were prepared to throw in their lot with him and accept his guidance.

One of those who became actively involved in the New Britain Movement, and who came under the 'spell' of Mitrinović was Alan Watts. In 1934 he had been active in the Bromley group of New Britain. He was later

to emigrate to America where, as a leading western authority on Zen, he was to exert a considerable influence on the 1960s generation of young people who were themselves seeking new ways of relating to each other and the world around them in the ranks of what came to be known as the counter-culture. In the mid-1930s, however, it was Mitrinović who exerted an influence over Watts:

> . . . the atmosphere of Mitrinović fascinated me—his humour, the power of his eyes and voice, his secretive and night-owl habits, his oracular way of writing (under the pseudonym of M. M. Cosmoi), and his exotic tastes in art and literature.[2]

Another group member had become involved with New Britain while at university and eventually encountered Mitrinović on a visit to London.

> All he said seemed both exciting and imaginative and also right and reasonable. I felt sure in my heart that I had found what for so many years I had been looking for and almost expecting.

Such was his enthusiasm that after leaving university he decided against taking a job in order to work full time for the movement, planning to live for a year off his savings.

> After that I had no idea what would happen. But during the early months of 1935 it became obvious that the political movement was dissolving away and that DM was even encouraging this. I was disappointed, because it was a political movement which I had joined and to which I felt I had dedicated my life.
>
> However by that time DM had opened up to me such wide horizons of other sorts that I felt great confidence in him personally and in the rightness of what he wanted to do . . .
>
> Gradually all DM's work with us came to be concentrated on the notion senate. He had undoubtedly been working on this notion with those closest to him, but there came a time of extending this working to a wider circle of people—in fact to any of those from the New Britain groups who were prepared to stay with him into the new phase. So what happened at that time was a narrowing and reduction of political activity towards social state and a widening and extension of that activity which DM saw as a necessary condition for making social state possible. I did not at first fully understand this, and only worked it out as time went on, but some of those who had worked with him before New Britain—in whom I had great confidence—saw it quite clearly.[3]

At the core of the various activities in which the group engaged was the irrevocable commitment they each made to the other, the Personal Alliance that they established between themselves to share their lives together, that whatever might happen they were fundamentally 'for' each other. Arthur Peacock witnessed the fact that personal alliance was more than an empty phrase to the people gathered around Mitrinović.

> They practised what they preached. To the common pool they gave their possessions and shared one with the other. An irrevocable bond of friendship exists between them all. Seldom in my life have I come across a body of people so sincere and earnest.[4]

If all things were mutually interdependent, then each member was responsible for the spiritual, psychic and material welfare of each other. If each individual was a part of the whole, a single cell in the body of humanity, then in giving to others one was also giving to oneself. The sharing of oneself, however, also necessitated the exercise of the utmost honesty and frankness in one's relationship with others—truthfulness to oneself and to others. Only by being true to oneself, to one's own values and inner promptings, could one be true to others. Only by making an irrevocable commitment to each other could the tension and distress caused by plain truth-speaking be withstood. It was only on such a basis that a real community of real individuals could be established. By being loyal and truthful to each other, they were also being loyal and truthful to themselves and to the whole of humanity of which they were a part. Moreover, only by establishing such relationships with each other could one start to approach an intuitive understanding of the organic relatedness of the whole of humanity. Lived experience, rather than mere acquaintance with theories and facts, was the only basis from which such an insight might be grasped. And the way to obtain that experience was to start in the 'here-and-now' with one's immediate colleagues and friends.

As with so many of his complex and fundamental notions, Mitrinović coined simple aphorisms and terms taken from other contexts to express the essense of his thoughts and ideas. Thus, the twin dimensions at the heart of the personal alliance that the group members formed with each other were referred to as 'Barley,' the establishment of a genuinely warm and caring human household; and 'Cactus,' the telling to each other the real, often harsh and uncomfortable truth. 'Barley' stood for an almost religious devotion to absolute community. 'Cactus' stood for radical individuality and self-affirmation, with the rigorous dedication to truth of a scientist. Taken to their extremes, these two dimensions were incompatible and mutually

destructive. Therefore a third dimension was needed to mediate between them. Mitrinović called this 'Hyacinth.' This referred to what can perhaps best be described as that artistic sense of graciousness and sensitivity which enabled both 'Barley' and 'Cactus' to be observed in practice, though in principle they were incompatible.

In similar vein, whilst the members entered into what they considered to be a life time's commitment to each other with the appropriate seriousness, the acceptance of a new member into the community or 'household' could be marked by a kind of theatrical symbolism which contained elements of comic relief. In his autobiography Alan Watts came close to breaking the bond of secrecy which those who entered into personal alliance vowed to keep. He was invited round to Mitrinović's apartment in Bloomsbury Street.

> I found him sitting at the head of his bed like a plump Buddha, clad in a loose robe, smoking a fat Churchman's Number One cigarette, with a glass of straight Johnny Walker on the table beside him. After some amiable preliminaries in which he apologized for being "a bit whiskey," he said, "Alan Watts, I love you but I do not like you. Nevertheless, I am going to invite you to join an eternal and secret fellowship which will watch you, guard you, and keep track of you wherever you may go in the world. We call it the Wild Woodbines, named after the cheapest cigarette in England. Every member is to carry a package, and the sign of recognition is to produce your package and say, 'Have one of mine.' Now if you are inclined to enter into this masonry you must confer with the Jehovah which is in your heart of hearts, and answer me yes or no." After a suitable pause, in which I realized how much I admired Mitrinović and how many close friends I had in his following, I said, "Yes, I will" . . . he produced a tiny package of Woodbines saying, "Have one of mine!" And, as I accepted, all the other members in the room rushed up and embraced me.[5]

The ceremony and the Woodbine, like the marriage service and the ring, were symbolic of a change in the circumstances of one's life, a rite de passage. The secrecy stemmed from the fact that it was a life-long commitment to each other that they undertook, and it was a commitment to each other as unique individuals and members of the human family. As such it belonged to the private and personal realm of life rather than the public and political, and should be treated with the appropriate seriousness and confidentiality. It was to be lived, not talked about. As Watson Thomson observed, reflecting on his life with the group:

> Genuine community is the association of human beings—not because they belong to the same tribe or church or party, but simply because they are human. Yet

> it must be personal, a personal concern about particulars, about the unique beings each of us are.[6]

In making a commitment, one was making it to the whole person, warts and all. If one was to develop the ability to wholeheartedly embrace the standpoints of others, then it was a pointless practice just to share one's life and concerns with those who felt, thought and acted like you. Ultimately senators would have the task of speaking to other people on behalf of humanity as a whole. It was therefore crucial that they should be exposed to and share their lives with as wide a range of human types as possible—rogues and villains as well as saints and angels. Thus, there was one particular member of the group who had been actively involved in the organisation of the New Britain Movement who had proved himself to be almost completely amoral. He was the archetypal male rogue—friendly, bright, not to be trusted with women, and continually letting the other members of the group down. So much so that they were eventually ready to reject him. At such times Mitrinović reminded them of the depth and the reality of their contract with each other—and with the culprit.

> His badness is the world's badness . . . That darkness we have to turn into the light. And how? Why, by swallowing it! Take it! Swallow it! Eat it up! It's good for the stomach. It will make your stomachs hardier for the next meal and the next.[7]

Whilst at such times it was the Barley element that was to the fore, this in its turn provided the context within which the painful spikes of the Cactus might be exposed. The understanding and acceptance of each other made it possible for them to make explicit the sharpest of differences between them. This was what took place in 'group work' when the harshest truth-speaking about oneself and about others was practiced. It could be extremely painful for the 'victim,' as David Davies experienced on more than one occasion.

> The technique was simple. Six or seven of us would meet for a session of three or four hours, generally late at night, for one's unconscious was supposed to be less remote in the deep night. One of the group would start, perhaps, by criticizing something I had done—a speech I had made, or the way I had behaved on some particular occasion. Against that criticism I would defend myself. By this time we were fairly launched, and gradually were out in deep waters. A member of the group would then say, in language that lacked nothing of brutality and candour, exactly what he, more frequently she (which made it worse!), thought

> of me. I was an unprincipled liar; or a shallow, pretentious poseur; a hollow, insincere tub-thumper; an impossibly vain, egotistic trumpet; a twister. And much else.
>
> "What about yourself?" I generally answered. Adept at the art of stringing words together I did not ask myself what I really thought. I merely replied out of the anger and resentment aroused in me by the "truth-speaking." Many of the things said to me were true, and I knew they were true. But the spirit in which they were said was rarely truthful. Frequently those group meetings ended in electric storms. After they closed, we all made our way to a cafe, generally Lyon's Corner House, because it was open all night, for a meal, and the atmosphere cooled down. We were good friends once more.[8]

Another participant recalled going home at night "after very soul-searing sessions, very difficult ones—a lot of us were strained to the point where we wondered whether we could go on with it. All of us must have gone back feeling that. I remember I would go back and I would have to work out for myself what it was all in aid of."

The worst fate that could befall a group member was when they were made the target of a bout of 'truth-speaking' from Mitrinović himself. According to Davies

> He had a way of penetrating one's last defences, of peeling off, not only one's clothes, but one's skin, and flaying one alive.
>
> Just as his masterly flattery made for ecstasy, so his equally masterly criticism made for torment . . . The victim was helpless. He was battered (physically) into stupidity. But—amazing man!—he had a marvellous way of dissipating the hatred. At the end of the session (four, five, six hours), he would whisk me off in a taxi to a restaurant, and then explain that he was subjecting me to all this process, because I was important, because I was strong. He left the weaklings alone, he said; but I was destined to play a great part, therefore I must be disciplined, purified, hardened. Whom the Master loveth 'He also chasteneth.' He rubbed salve into my wounds and soothed my vanity.[9]

One of the ways in which members coped with the physical and psychic strain of earning a living during the day, then spending the evening until the early hours in some group activity or other—maybe being 'grouped' in the process—was to go on an 'outing' as it was called. Watson Thomson regularly 'ran away,' taking himself off into the country to escape the tensions and occasional torments of the intense interpersonal life. Invariably while he was away he suffered heavy guilt feelings about deserting his 'family,' who always welcomed him back with open arms.

There were, however, other sources of relief and outings of a more conventional kind. Mitrinović loved the theatre, and especially the variety theatre, the music hall. Groups of them would make regular visits to places like the Windmill Theatre where he particularly enjoyed the humour of comedians such as Sid Field and 'Monsieur' Eddie Gray. He showed his appreciation of his favourite performers by presenting them with elegant walking canes, of which he had quite a number. The story is told of one occasion when Eddie Gray came on stage, spotted Mitrinović and his friends in their usual seats in the front stalls, and suggested to the rest of the audience that they might like to leave for a while as "there's a friend there and I want to have a chat." In later years the comedian Richard Hearne, 'Mr. Pastry,' recalled that

> It was always a great joy when one was appearing on the stage performing to an audience in which he was present. He was a great theatre-goer with a wonderful sense of humour. I shall always see his beaming face with his happy party of friends beside him.[10]

He loved jokes, especially vulgar ones. He also had a healthy appreciation of good food. In the Bloomsbury and Soho areas of London that were his main haunts there were restaurants of almost every nationality under the sun. Group members would join him in visiting them, eating the food and drinking the wine of each country in turn. Alan Watts, who was present on a number of such occasions, was later to describe the image that Mitrinović presented to the world on such occasions.

> He was a stout Slavonic man with a completely shaved head, black winglike eyebrows, and entrancing eyes. On the street he wore extremely formal clothes—an exalted bowler hat (a sort of cross between a bowler and top hat like the one used by Winston Churchill), cutaway morning coat, and striped trousers. He carried a walking stick with an amber handle, always paid his bills with crisp white five-pound notes, which in those days looked like legal documents, and smoked very fat Virginia cigarettes. He also drank formidable amounts of whiskey . . . He used to take us to dinner in the Hungarian, Greek and Russian restaurants of Soho, order six different dishes, and mix them all up.[11]

Watts failed to mention that Mitrinović had been known to take his shoes and socks off and walk home barefoot after such evenings out.

Despite such apparent eccentricities and exhibitions of spontaneity, like the time he did a handstand in the corridor of the First Avenue Hotel after a formal dinner to launch one of the quarterlies, of one thing all those

who grew to know him were sure: he never did anything without purpose—and there was usually more than a single purpose. Thus, dining out not only brought friends together and helped relieve the intensity of the group sessions, there was another and deeper reason. The function of senators was to represent the interests of the whole of humanity to those with whom they came into contact, they needed to be able to identify themselves with the whole of mankind. Consequently an important aspect of their training along this path to the universalisation of the individual lay in obtaining an appreciation of different cultures, of the full range of world views held by different nations, races and other groupings in the world. Learning to appreciate the food and wine of different lands, along with their folk tales and music, was part of this process.

If senators were to be world citizens, then it was also important that they could speak the different languages of the world. Different group members studied various languages,—the choice frequently suggested by Mitrinović himself. One young follower was sent off to visit Margaret Murray, the Egyptologist, to discover how to set about learning the hieroglyphs. He directed Lilian Slade to study Spanish. Another group member, keen to study Indian philosophy, was encouraged to study Sanskrit. He himself was particularly interested in languages and spoke quite a number—he had taught himself sufficient Chinese, Tibetan, Japanese and Sanskrit to read the religious and philosophical texts in the original. Group members were also expected to study and become familiar with the different belief systems that commanded allegiance throughout the world. There were regular study sessions on philosophy and comparative religions, from Hegel and Marx through to the Vedanta, Buddhism and the Kabbala. He would provide his own interpretations of the thought and belief systems of the world, both ancient and modern, East and West; his 'pupils' taking notes while he talked. The pupils themselves were also expected to make presentations on the different themes and books which they had covered as part of their course of study. All this taking place in the context of the wider educational process that was an integral part of the group life. As one associate of Mitrinović later recalled:

> . . . as a young person at that time (the '30s to the outbreak of war) I received in common with my companions a great widening of my general cultural horizons—in music, in art and in literature.
>
> We heard wonderful music from DM's collection of classical records, including the Serbian Folk songs, and we learned to respect the great composers. I remember that Beethoven's music was only played on special occasions as he was a composer we learned to regard with extra respect . . .

> Books on art, with great reproductions of great paintings were available to us, and sometimes given to us to keep as our own.
>
> We were taken to art exhibitions, also to museums, and our sense of discrimination was encouraged. DM entered into (or took up) the Surrealist movement in art and as Valerie Cooper entertained many of the painters in her studio for DM we met them also. At that time we were not only meeting political figures but painters, writers, and thinkers of the time.
>
> In general I think that all of us would agree that our general cultural education was greatly increased and widened. We were made to form our own judgments on all we saw, heard or read.[12]

The main feature of the evenings spent together in Bloomsbury Street was the amount of talk that went on. Arthur Peacock witnessed a number of sessions:

> . . . he would sit arguing hour after hour with his followers.
>
> The technique was strange, sometimes bewildering, and I think not very effective. All day, and sometimes until the early hours of the morning, Mitrinović would sit discussing matters. Talk would go from subject to subject. Politics and economics, philosophy and the occult, psychology came into the picture, too . . .
>
> The same topics would come up for discussion again and again. Blueprints would be drawn up and he hurried forward their completion as if the end of the world was at hand, and these blueprints alone would save it.
>
> At times one came away feeling completely exhausted. But there was something intriguing about the man and most of us returned to participate once more.[13]

The New Britain movement was once characterized as "a bottomless abyss into which documents, plans and programmes disappeared for ever and ever."[14] A similar kind of observation might have been made about the speed with which groups were formed, constitutions drawn up, then disbanded, reformed and revised within the group life of the latter half of the 1930s.[15] It occurred to at least one participant during this period that, as in *Alice Through the Looking Glass,* they were all characters in Mitrinović's dream—albeit a 'dream' which at least some of his intimates understood. The dream was the creation in microcosm of an organic social order in which the perennial conflict between individuality and community could be transcended and reconciled according to the organic model, with each person fulfilling their own needs through the performance of specific functions which also met the requirements of the wider community.

No one person in real life could fulfil their potential for growth and self-expression through the performance of a single function—so it followed

that the structure of an organic social order would be as complex as the individuals from which it was constituted. In attempting to create the prototype of such a structure Mitrinović was playing for real—hence the sense of urgency to which Peacock referred. It was crucial to the future of humanity that he and the people around him confronted these organisational problems as they occurred in their group life—not only as a means of developing possible blueprints for the future, but also for the sake of the personal development of the individuals around him over whom he exerted such a powerful influence. Performing the function of Senate to the group as a whole, a considerable portion of Mitrinović's time was devoted to trying to get the right relationship between personalities and functions; trying to create the contexts in which the members might begin to learn how Senate should act in different situations, start to acquire the qualities and aptitudes required of the potential senator.

The role of senators was to intervene at all levels of human life in the interests of humanity as a whole. If humanity is considered as an organic whole with individuals as cells of this organism, then there lies within every individual the potentiality to become aware of the whole of human nature within themselves, to become a universal individual. The person who is most aware of all the different elements within their own nature is the person who is most aware of all the different aspects of human nature within themselves. To the extent that such people are not only aware of these different elements but are also able to control and choose which aspect they will express at any time, then those people are best able to get on with a wide range of other people, able to embrace and understand their perspectives and points of view, and hence able to fulfil the integrative function of Senate. It followed then that the training to develop such a capacity required the creation of as many different contexts as possible within which potential senators would have to relate to many different types of people, relating to them not as abstract performers of functions but as complete and complex individuals with their own foibles and failings. As one of those who was involved in this process observed, it was too easy just to relate with those people that you liked, "what was far more difficult was to see every other member of the group as an individual, to see their specialities—all the ways that each one of us could work with one another. These were the different contexts he was trying to create so that we all knew in what different ways we could meet together and integrate."

Mitrinović was continually proposing new and different constitutions and group formations within the wider group, endlessly rearranging the personnel and the functions for which they were responsible. As in life, nothing was

permanent. One informant advised that "it would take many pages—or even many books—to describe all the changes we went through and all the different notions, mythologies and constitutions which he suggested." Another described the constant shuffling and reshuffling of groups as possessing "the complexity of a problem in higher mathematics but the kinetic intensity of a dervish dance," remarking that "if stability comes from inertia and if inertia is the enemy of consciousness, we should have become the most conscious group of people in the western world."

One of the more stable group formations within the wider circle was the division between the sexes. Each group met apart from the other, had its own constitution and its own allocation of functions within the group—there would, for instance, be a woman's senate and a man's senate. As with all groupings, the sexes each had their different function in Mitrinović's scheme of things, and consequently formed a 'natural' basis for group formation. Women were essentially a force for the preservation of life, a unifying and reconciling influence. The essence of woman was earnestness; that of man was sincerity, the search for truth through individual initiative. In the conditions of modern life both these qualities had become distorted. Crushed under the pressures of life the average woman had become callous, believing that change was impossible, whilst the ordinary male was distinguished not so much by his sincerity as by the aggressive pursuit of self-interest at the expense of others. Modern civilization was a male civilization. The male had become selfish, materialistic, uncreative, totally instrumental in his approach to life—always doing something for the sake of something else without any sense of goodness or the glory of human values. New principles and guidelines were needed to stop the downward path. Such an initiative must come from women. Through joining together in mutual confidence they might recover and reassert their earnestness for life and the preservation of life. They could then provide the necessary support and guidance for men who might then reclaim their manhood and independence through acting to recreate the world. In this sense the men in the group were referred to as 'auxiliaries'—instruments of the feminine initiative. The real power lay with women, without their support and guidance men were directionless and helpless. Ultimately, of course, the goal was to become truly individual and human, transcending the characterological differences between the sexes—for women to seek truth as actively as men, and for men to care for goodness more than success.

> There is a mystery in becoming truly human—in repenting of being a woman, of being English, of being a certain type. The true entity to be attained is the Ego which has no attributes. Then let men treat women as their sisters, and

> let women treat men as brothers. And let each make a pact about the child, so that both together live for the future.
>
> The new male should be good; he should care more for failure and goodness than for success and truth. Would this not be a novelty? A man who would dare to fail; to go on failing like Christ in the World? And the new Woman: is there a woman who is not essentially a liar, does not Woman express enigma instead of truth? The new Woman should care for truth. Of course men must not cease to be true and women good. Both must attain a higher level of truth than ever before. The new female should have as straightforward a desire to know and speak truth as a male. Such individuated females and males could start the new civilization.[16]

The basic formation of male and female groups was cross-cut by a sub-division along age lines, whilst another relatively stable basis for allocation to groups was on the basis of one's 'colour' and personality. Mitrinović was well-versed in the field of psychology and psycho-analysis. He was, of course, especially familiar with the ideas of Alfred Adler. Apart from Jung and Freud he also derived considerable insight from lesser known figures such as the American Trigant Burrow, author of *The Social Basis of Consciousness* from whose work much of the theory behind the practice of group work was derived; Fritz Künkel, who gave a lecture, introduced by Mitrinović, at 115 Gower Street on August 14th, 1938; and Georg Groddeck, author of *The Book of the It* and a warm friend of Mitrinović.[17] In addition to his firm grasp of the theoretical area, people who came into contact with Mitrinović were impressed, if not shaken, by his profound psychological insight. Time and again people remarked that they sensed that he could see right into, and through, the deepest recesses of their being.

One diagnosis of character which Mitrinović introduced to group members was based on what he considered to be an individual's sense of time. Thus, 'Whities' were people who experienced time as continuous and who therefore possessed a strong sense of the past. Consequently they were less volatile, less mercurial than others because they were aware of the long evolutionary future ahead. They thus kept a more even keel than their fellows, less swayed by their emotions. 'Blackies,' in contrast, lived in the present, experiencing time as a series of discrete moments. They were not so concerned with what had happened in the past nor what might happen tomorrow, the immediate moment was what mattered. According to Mitrinović such people were always swayed by their emotions, and were always running away from them. 'Monsters' were those who were always looking to the future, always working towards some future goal. The purpose of such an analysis was to help the different types appreciate each other better, to enable group

members to be more tolerant of the annoying habits of others—seeing them not merely as personal idiosyncracies but as whitie, blackie, or monster characteristics.

Apart from such 'natural' groups as those based on sex, age and colour, there were more temporary or transient groups formed and reformed. Frequently the focus of the group would be upon some public activity or other. Although the New Britain movement had ceased to exist in 1935 the area of public endeavour had not been completely abandoned. After 1936 a number of the group members were closely involved with the House of Industry League.[18] Moreover, whilst the *Eleventh Hour* had ceased publication in the summer of 1935, a continuous stream of leaflets, pamphlets and news–sheets continued to be issued. Many of these were published in the name of the New Europe Group which continued to organise lectures, luncheons and discussions. Occasionally these activities would reach fever pitch, as at the time of the Munich Crisis. In the two week period following September 20th 1938, the New Europe Group was responsible for fly-posting thousands of copies of sixteen separate posters throughout London. In addition some 20,000 leaflets were printed and distributed and scores of telegrams despatched to political leaders and opinion-makers throughout Europe. The call was for an American alliance with Britain and the establishment of a federation of Europe with Prague as its capital.[19] The longest telegram was to Rudolph Hess. He did not reply. The Archbishop of York, Dr. Temple, was sure that "in the long run the Federation of Europe is the only solution of the problem . . ." but Robert Dell telegraphed back his opinion that the proposal was "inopportune and quite impracticable."

In addition to the groups primarily concerned with external tasks, there were groups formed for a myriad of other purposes—for study; for dealing with visitors, potential patrons and newcomers; there were also on occasions attempts to create a model of the three-fold state within the group as a whole. One particular 'constitution' had three groups of people, all men, concerned with economics, culture and politics. They had their own particular names. 'Potentat,' which was concerned with economic and financial affairs of the group; 'Orientat,' which was concerned with cultural matters; and 'Administrat,' representing politics, which was made up of those members who were active in outside endeavours such as the New Europe Group and had links with other organisations. Each group sent delegates to the others. It sounds like some enormous role play situation, with the participants playing out the various parts allotted to them, perhaps as a rehearsal for larger scale experiments that might one day have to be mounted. To those taking part, however, it was for real. They were a community of people

and the well-being of the group as a whole required certain functions to be performed—funds to be raised, people to be contacted, pamphlets to be written, lectures to be arranged, posters to be pasted, meeting rooms to be booked, interpersonal conflicts to be faced up to and reconciled.

In such 'constitutional' groupings Mitrinović often placed discordant people together deliberately in order to ensure that people had to make a serious effort to get on and work cooperatively together. However, particular functions were frequently performed by members of certain of the more basic 'natural' groups. Politics—going about meeting people, maintaining contact with outside social and political organisations—was frequently the function of Blackies and men, and most of all the Blackie men. The care of home affairs—looking after the financial concerns of the group and of the individual members, caring after the well-being of the members—was more the function of Whities and women.

As in any community there was conflict. One source of interpersonal tension was the creation of a nucleus of people to perform the senate function vis-a-vis the wider group.

> Though the persons who took upon themselves this central function could be changed from time to time, there were in general some whom he judged from their whole general attitude to be more suitable for the role of Senate than others. This implied no personal superiority, but only a greater aptitude for the function of Senate. This differentiation within Senate was characterised by DM as the distinction between Senate and Folk. Some persons were always in the role of Folk, and DM tried to impress upon them that this was just as honourable and worthy as being Senate. However it was very difficult to convince those who were not chosen to act as a 'senate within senate' that they were not being consigned to an inferior status, and those who were chosen for this role were often happier and more energetic in their action than those who were not. So none of us who took this work seriously could have any illusions about the difficulty of establishing a Senate who were neither considered nor considered themselves to be personally superior to those performing other functions. However the mere facing of this problem fairly and squarely was in itself a small first step towards overcoming it.[21]

Whilst many of the participants in the wider group life might have had, initially, only the vaguest of notions of what 'Universal Humanity' actually entailed, one thing was very clear—they were trying to create a human household, a family of people held together not by ties of blood and kinship but by a personal commitment to each other. Much of the group work, consequently, was devoted to working out the 'rules' and gaining experience in the dynamics of such a household.

> He (DM) might talk about creating Human Household . . . You created, as it were, an invisible entity. These various invisible entities had different names. If it was Human Household you talked around that subject. You created a reality between you, so to speak . . . We spoke in a way imagining that we are now a Human Household . . . How do we proceed? . . . So that as a result of it you felt that you had sort of built it in imagination and were able to reproduce it to someone else who knows nothing. You then had the experience . . . It was a reality that you had created. It was a composite reality . . .
>
> You might have to write up the points that you had agreed on, so that you had some formulation . . .
>
> Then you would have to include someone else. Then it was taken for granted that it would be part of your attitude with anyone you met . . .
>
> It wasn't just a good idea. If you had created it and had agreed together that this was the right thing, the right way to be, then you would do it, you would be it.[22]

In addition to such group formations there appeared to be a pattern which could be likened to concentric circles around Mitrinović at the centre, with members graded according to their degree of intimacy with the more esoteric aspects of his thought and practice. On the periphery were those 'important personages' who, it was believed, could be of value to the wider aims of the group in some way or another. Perhaps they had access to the media or to circles which were not normally accessible to Mitrinović or his followers. Perhaps they had funds which could be tapped, or ideas and intellects which made them valuable contacts. They included people who had made major contributions in one way or another to Mitrinović's publications and with whom he shared certain areas of common ground such as Major-General Fuller, Professor Soddy, S. G. Hobson, Ben Tillett, Charles Purdom and the like. They were not exposed to the possible torments of group sessions—they were like visiting dignitaries and treated as such.

Within this outer circle of acquaintances, collaborators and patrons there were other circles or levels. Just as within the New Britain Movement there had been a central group at the heart, the membership of which was not widely known amongst the rank and file and to which access was only obtained by personal invitation, so within the group around Mitrinović there were 'secret' circles. It was a rule of group life that what transpired in one group belonged only to those who were in that group and was not to be divulged to anyone else. The link between the members of a particular circle might be, for instance, the possession of some particular insight or

interpretation of an aspect of ancient mythology, gnostic scripture, or western philosophy introduced to them by Mitrinović. There were 'inner circles' which were so secret from one another that the persons in each of them thought that those in the other were really 'outer.' However, any sense of self-importance that the 'inners' might enjoy rarely lasted long. A newcomer might, within a matter of days, be invited to join the innermost circle. Contrariwise, someone who had been very close to Mitrinović might find themselves excluded for a time. Nothing was ever allowed to remain unchanged for long. Nothing was ever final. The secrecy and the secret circles were always temporary and provisional. After a time he always revealed the 'secrets' to a wider audience and thus broke up the circles, only to create new ones.

Was it all a game with a Serbian magus deciding the rules as he went along to satisfy his own whims and pleasure? It can certainly be interpreted as such. Alan Watts, for example, likened Mitrinović to Gurdjieff as "a great magician and 'rascal-guru,' " claiming that his own Buddhist and Theosophical friends were of the opinion that Mitrinović was a black magician.[23] There is another explanation, however. As one of those who participated in this merry-go-round of 'secret' circles and groups expressed it:

> This sounds rather like a game, but a game and a serious exercise have this in common, that they are both carried on with self-imposed and freely accepted rules. There was always a real content and meaning to each such 'secret' and those who heard it had its significance impressed more strongly on them by the observance of secrecy. Furthermore such secrets never stayed secret for long and Mitrinović never pretended that he was thereby imparting some mysterious revelation or 'occult' knowledge. It is in the sense of training in discrimination that secrecy as Mitrinović used it should be understood and not as a love of the esoteric, of the occult or of mystery, nor . . . as a conspiratorial passion and a love of secret societies.[24]

"Training in discrimination" refers to the development of the proper use of one's power of critical judgement. One form of discrimination resides in the awareness that we cannot communicate on the same level with everyone. People have different aptitudes and possess different levels of understanding and awareness in different areas. There is no point in divulging certain things to people who cannot understand them or are likely to misunderstand for one reason or another. Hence it is possible to interpret Mitrinović's uses of secrecy and secret circles as a means of training those around him to

a greater sense of discrimination and conscious control over what they divulged to whom in different circumstances.

It is possible to attribute a similar serious intent to other aspects of the group life which appeared, on the surface, to have a certain game-like quality. For example there was the institution of 'Thomson's Ticket' which was explained by one of the 'gate-keepers' charged with issuing or withholding the 'tickets.'

> There were three of us—Watson Thomson, myself and another woman. At one time or other we were charged with interviewing singly everybody in a certain group. It was interesting because we had to work in accord and we had to discover whether there was any artificiality—we didn't speak about this as our aim—but talking to that person we could see whether they were really speaking from the very centres of themselves or just mentalising or just trying to be clever. If they tried to be clever and artificial, they weren't given the ticket. If they threw all that out and really spoke genuinely, they had what we called the 'Thomson Ticket.' DM used this device to try and get to the centre, the core, of people—because there was a lot of jockeying for position and being clever and all that sort of thing . . .
>
> And when you got your ticket? That really meant nothing. All it meant was that for that occasion, at that moment, you had your ticket. But you could lose it the next day—nothing was ever permanent. One had to be got out of the thing that most people tried to do, which was to do the things that they thought would please DM and other people rather than what was really them.[25]

It was not too surprising that people tried to please Mitrinović rather than themselves, given the impression he made upon those with whom he came into contact. Apart from anything else there was the sheer scale of his visionary imagination coupled with the depth and range of his knowledge and learning. Charles Purdom, writing after the war, described it thus:

> His mind is encyclopaedic. There is nothing in which he is not interested; his reading is comprehensive in half a dozen languages, and includes art, philosophy, philology, theology, history, anthropology, archaeology, physics, biology, psychology, politics, science and economics. A student of Sanskrit, in recent years he has been learning Chinese. He is passionately devoted to music. He knows as much about modern as about ancient pictures and sculptures . . .[26]

As one young associate explained, "You really felt you were in the presence of someone who was so immeasurably above anything that you knew."

Watson Thomson remarked that "the important differences between oneself and DM was one of scale and dimension."[27] This applied not only to his vision, his learning and his imagination, but also to his temper. On more

than one occasion Thomson was the victim of one of Mitrinović's rages. If one was not awed by his mind, then there was a good chance you would be cowed by his storms of fury. One occasion a group of people had gathered together at 55 Gower Street to discuss the organisation and constitution of one of the four movements that emerged, on paper at least, from the ashes of the New Britain Movement. Mitrinović broke up the proceedings by kicking over a coffee table, laden with glasses, and haranguing the shocked people for half an hour on their passivity and lack of independent initiative. Another time a formal dinner had been arranged by Mitrinović in honour of some visiting Yugoslavs. One of the after dinner speeches was delivered by Watson Thomson who had drunk a little too much wine, was ill at ease, and his speech was an abject failure. After the dinner a number retired to the Regent's Park home of Rex Campbell. Watson went upstairs to sleep, only to be woken by shouting and heavy footsteps on the stairs. It was Mitrinović who cursed everything about him, what his mother had made of him and what he had become, for despoiling the evening "with your miserable bit of unconsciousness." The confrontation was concluded by Mitrinović smashing his walking cane, decorated with ivory and silver, down onto the bannister with such a force that the stick splintered into pieces.

Yet, despite the fury which he would vent, there was occasionally a glimpse that he was never totally immersed in his passion. At the end of one explosion when he directed his wrath at one of the women in the group, he held out his wrist to one of those sitting next to him after the woman had left the room. The pulse was apparently perfectly calm and steady. He rarely if ever did anything without there being some purpose to it—even losing his temper. According to one of his associates, "He would get tremendously cross with a person who was afraid of anger. Somebody who wasn't particularly afraid of anger, it wouldn't have had any effect on them." Very often his anger was directed against those who, he claimed, were too deferential towards him. "Be equal with me" he would plead. He bemoaned the dependence of group members upon him, referring to the miserable throne upon which they had elevated him which prevented him from becoming a mere comrade amongst comrades, one amongst equals. Only by facing up to each other, and him, in full honesty and frankness, including losing one's temper, could they really learn to know and love each other as individuals. He was invariably disappointed. Few of those around him had the courage to be as frank and spontaneous as he was, either to him or to one another.

There was, indeed, little that was predictable about Mitrinović. His waking day might start in the late morning. Afternoons might be spent browsing

in his favourite bookshops, wandering round art galleries. As often as not one or two people would come round to see him of an afternoon, when the discussion and talk could easily go on into the small hours of the morning without a break. As the evening progressed they would be joined by others who had been at work during the day. Eventually people would begin to drift back to their respective homes. Then came the time for relaxation. He would retire to his own rooms with a small group of his most intimate friends and associates. This was the time for being what he called "small friends"—for sitting back and relaxing, listening to music or just chatting. If things had gone badly during the day for some reason—if he felt that someone had let him or themselves down, if some scheme had failed to come to fruition—then it was also the time when those closest to him caught a glimpse of the self-doubt that he would suffer, the occasional periods of resignation.

But if he experienced doubt and dismay himself, he was no less moved by the sufferings of others. If someone arrived during an evening who was in some kind of distress he would send everyone away, cancel everything that was planned for the evening, in order to cope with the personal problem. When S. G. Hobson died in poverty, it was Mitrinović who raised the bulk of the money to pay for the funeral. In his autobiography Charles Purdom recalled the support and comfort he derived from Mitrinović on the death of his son Philip. David Davies observed that Mitrinović "would take infinite pains with individuals and allowed nothing to put him off," remembering the time when Watson Thomson had returned home to Edinburgh suffering from a bout of malaria and Mitrinović insisted on travelling north to visit his sick friend.[28] Even Davies, who had his disagreements with him, admitted that "there was not a trace of malice in him or any bitterness. Never have I met anybody more free of either."[29] For Davies, also, "Mitrinović was a man of amazing generosity. He had no sense of *meum* and *teum*. For property and money (its symbol) he had utter contempt."[30] There were quite a number of old friends and colleagues from the New Britain days and before who relied on him for 'loans' and subsidies during times of financial embarrassment.

How does one reconcile such personal generosity and kindness with the merciless assaults that he would regularly launch against one or other of those around him? So much about Mitrinović seems paradoxical. For example, he was always telling people what to do, often with a ferocity and insistence which was hard to resist—they should leave him, they should read this book, they should pursue this course of study and so on. But within the course of a short time he would often proffer several mutually incompatible

pieces of advice or instruction. He could get furiously angry with someone for doing exactly as he suggested, whilst he would often praise people for acting contrary to his advice. He would impart to those around him some thought or interpretation of an event or book as if it was the final and absolute truth on a particular matter, only to advocate a totally contradictory insight and analysis with equal force and conviction the next night, or even on the same night to a different group. The result of such apparently unstable and certainly unpredictable behaviour was that there was never any question of trying to earn his praise or avoid his wrath, because one could never be sure of how to do so. One was therefore forced, in a way, to exercise one's own freedom rather than rest secure under his direction and will.

In this sense the process of initiation that he orchestrated most resembled that of Zen. In Zen the person being initiated is expected to see the whole wide panorama before them, to feel strongly all the reasons for and against any action, and then to act freely in that situation "in a positive way in which the opposites are perfectly harmonized,"[31] transcending the antithesis between 'either-or,' 'yes' and 'no.' This was the notion which Mitrinović expressed as "Above, between and beyond the extremes and opposites of reality." According to Suzuki, "the Zen method generally consists in putting one in a dilemma, out of which one must contrive to escape, not through logic indeed, but through a mind of higher order."[32] Thus, the initiate would be placed in an impossible situation in which everything they did was wrong. They then had to act. If the action revealed sufficient imagination, intelligence and common sense, if it flowed "out of one's innermost being,"[33] it was accepted by the master.

To talk of initiation and to compare Mitrinović's method with that of a Zen master would seem to imply that the group life was, in essence, an 'esoteric school' run by a powerful master figure concerned with imparting to the pupils a higher order of knowledge and awareness—something akin to Gurdjieff's Château du Prieuré at Fontainebleau, or the anthroposophists who studied under Steiner. To adopt such a view, as did Philip Mairet, would be erroneous. True, the group life did involve a process of initiation in the sense of introducing people to new spheres of knowledge and new ways of comprehending the world. But this initiation was, in fact, an initiative directed towards wider social change rather than the mere introduction of higher realms of consciousness to the students. He was concerned that those around him should develop a sound basis for the changes in human behaviour and social relationships which he saw as an indispensable condition for bringing about the changes on the larger scale of social life which he deemed necessary. From this perspective the contrast with Gurdjieff, who had little

or no direct social concern, is particularly strong; whilst Steiner's concern with social questions appears to have been more theoretical than practical, especially when compared with the range and variety of public movements, organisations and initiatives with which Mitrinović was associated throughout his life.

It might also be argued that he was deeply concerned with the personal relationships between the individuals around him and between them and him, in a way that Steiner and Gurdjieff were not. This is not to deny that for a number of those around him he remained the 'master,' the fount of all wisdom, the hallowed source of all true knowledge. But many of those who managed to stay the course, who succeeded in surviving the pace and intensity of the public and private group activities of the pre-war years, did begin to grasp what he was driving at. According to one such survivor:

> DM foreswore the position of being the sole initiator and involved us in a process of mutual initiation. It was an initiation, which we were working out as we practised it, towards that most difficult human accomplishment: how to be a more normal human being, neither superior nor inferior but equal to other individuals in society—and particularly how to reconcile this equality with the acceptance of natural differences of quality, mind, character, and abilities . . .

They began to realise that the flow of influence was not all one way, even if they rarely felt adequately equipped to contradict and question him openly. "All silence is resistance" was one of his favourite aphorisms. He was particularly sensitive to the reactions of others, sensing resistance to himself or what he was proposing. If he sought to develop some particular idea or suggest a specific course of action which commanded less than total affirmation from those present, he would more often than not take this as valid criticism and change his approach or drop the notion completely.

> It wasn't a situation in which he was the person with total wisdom . . . He was learning and working things out with us in a very definite sense. Now, he may have been more adept at the working out than we were, but we felt it as a co-working out . . .
>
> I have known him throw out a notion into some small group of people, and because those people didn't react and accept it, that notion was done away with. We were a sort of sounding board. Unless we cooperated—and not just superficially, it was no use just saying "Oh yes, I agree"—he would see through that and so would the people round about you . . .[34]

It was as if Mitrinović was the conductor and they the musicians. Like members of an orchestra, they showed their dissent or disagreement by not playing their part with full commitment rather than by refusing to play at all. But in addition to being the conductor, he was also the composer who wrote the score. As with any great artist, the players would not object to a note or a harmony while the composition was in progress. They would wait until they saw the significance of the whole composition before commenting, knowing that a creative genius can achieve the most marvellous results by the most extraordinary means. In other words, one might not understand all that was going on, one might be unable to comprehend the paradoxes and contradictions in his character and behaviour, but people stayed the course because they had sufficient belief in the person at the centre and commitment to the ultimate goal. They were prepared to trust that whatever happened, it was for a purpose and that it had its place in the overall design.

> Everyone was aware and felt that ultimately, whatever happened, DM was for you. There wasn't a single person in the room there who didn't feel absolutely that in the end, whatever your problems, he would move heaven and earth to see you through. That was never doubted by anyone. Those who left him left him because the heat was too great. They didn't leave him because they doubted his good will towards them. Then, in addition to that, he was someone who you knew was far more in control of every single action than anyone, certainly, that I have ever met. He knew exactly what he was doing. As he himself once said, "I don't do anything unless there are three different ideas on hand at the same time."[35]

They felt they were pioneers, forging a path towards a new society created by new individuals. The path demanded changes in the institutional structures of society but also required the creation of new, 'universal' individuals: people with a real community of feeling for whom 'we' and 'ours' was as significant as 'I' and 'mine' but who also retained their individuality, who were able to be equal with everyone and yet recognise and acknowledge the manifold differences between people. They wanted 'heaven on earth' with humanity fulfilling its potential as God-like creators of this new reality. They had the model for such a new age, they were training to become the new individuals it required, and they had an exemplar before them in the shape of their guide and 'co-equal' Mitrinović.

In practical terms they failed. The war came, the group was dispersed, and that stage of the initiative came to an end as they must have known it would some day. But if people never aspire to reach their dreams, that

is all they will ever remain—distant images beyond the bounds of reality. The only way to translate one's 'utopian visions' into reality is to try, and to be brave enough to risk failure. Even if they did fail to reach their goal, they did not lose. Those who were involved caught a glimpse of the 'world-as-it-might-be.' For them, "something happened which was new in the realm of human experience."[36]

Chapter 8

THE FINAL YEARS

Many of the young people who had gathered around Mitrinović during the 1930s were drafted into service at the outbreak of war. Depressed by world events, he was particularly troubled by developments in his own country of Yugoslavia, and deeply affected by the loss of several of the young men who had been close to him. John Harker was killed when the ship which was taking him to his army posting was torpedoed. Orion Playfair lost his life in a plane crash, whilst Christopher Mayne died early in 1939. He was left with the company of the older women who had been associated with him since the 1920s, particularly Valerie Cooper, Gordon Fraser and Cecil Eastgate.

In the inter-war years Mitrinović had been in the habit of occasionally retiring to places like Ditchling and Worthing for periods of rest and recuperation. As an alien he was no longer allowed to visit these restricted areas during the war, so most of his time was spent in and around his old haunts of Bloomsbury. He had lodgings at 38 Bloomsbury Street whilst the group maintained a house at 2 Gower Street as a meeting place throughout the war. It was during this period that Mitrinović had to resort to selling paintings he had collected over the years in order to raise funds. Despite the problems with his health, the limitations on his movements as an alien, and the dangers from the bombing raids on London (his Italian landlord maintained that "So long as Mr. Mitrinović is in the house, we will not be bombed."), Mitrinović continued to read, to talk with those of his colleagues who were in London. During 1940–1941 he delivered a weekly Sunday morning lecture at 115 Gower Street on various aspects of psychology and philosophy.

He was particularly affected by the American bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. When the news of the bombing was received, he and a small group of friends who were with him went out for a meal in a Japanese

restaurant near St Giles Church in Soho—a small yet symbolic gesture in the direction of human solidarity and fellowship.[1]

After the war the remaining members of the pre-war group gathered together. Depleted in numbers with their leader in poor health, they decided that it was pointless to embark on any new political or economic initiative. It was felt, however, that action on the cultural front would be possible and worthwhile. It was decided to form a lecture society, the Renaissance Club, which first met towards the end of 1945 and continued in existence until the summer of 1965. Occasionally referred to as the Anti-Barbarus Renaissance Club of the New Atlantis, it was described by one of its founders in a letter to a friend:

> The purpose of the Renaissance Club is, as its title implies, to make more widespread the realisation that in the present crisis of human life nothing less than Rebirth is adequate. We are faced with such an unprecedented situation—science having brought to us the choice between almost unbounded wealth and leisure, if we had the courage to accept it, or racial suicide if we cannot change the whole basis of our life. And also having before us the fact that our human world could now be one world which could be planned economically and politically so as to make life worth living for the individual person, but that so far our world leaders do not care at all for the individual, but for the nation, class, party, or sect which they happen to represent.
>
> What is lacking is not technique or cleverness in any form whatever, but human wisdom and the knowledge of human motives and of meaning and art of life . . .
>
> It is to appreciate the knowledge and wisdom of the past and present in one whole picture, and to combat the present democratic barbarism which denies all human values and puts in their place the values of money, sensationalism and mere quantity, size and speed, that the Anti-Barbarus Renaissance Club exists.[2]

During the twenty years of the Club's existence, over 200 lectures were delivered under its auspices by various speakers covering a vast range of topics and subjects. Some speakers were included as old associates of Mitrinović, like C. B. Purdom, David Davies, Dr. Morris Robb, and Dr. Belden. Amongst the others were Dr. Arnold Groeneveld, the Dutch psychiatrist who had done valuable work during the war in helping Jews escape Nazi persecution; Dr. J. H. Fleure, the geographer who had worked with Sir Patrick Geddes; Dr. Fitzgibbon Young, the chief British authority on Comenius; Dr. E. V. Rieu, the translator of the Gospels and of Homer; Dr. Ifor Evans (later Lord Evans) who became Provost of University College, London; the Egyptologist Dr. Margaret Murray; Frederick Soddy; Canon Raven, Master of Christ's College and later Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge

University; the art historian Dr. Sudhin Ghose; Sir John Pratt, former Consul-General and authority on China; the pioneer educationalist George Lyward; Campbell Stewart, who was later to become Vice-Chancellor of Keele University; Archbishop Anthony Bloom of the Russian Orthodox Church; Canon Carpenter, who was later to become Dean of Westminster Abbey; the author Naomi Mitchison; Dr. Karl König, the founder of the Camphill movement for the treatment of handicapped children; and Martin Buber, who had been connected with the Blutbund.

Mitrinović played no active, public part in the Renaissance Club initiative, mainly for reasons of health. However, some of his associates made attempts to arouse public interest in the kind of new age thinking that had informed the New Britain movement. Thus, in the summer of 1948 a symposium was held at the Swedenborg Hall in London under the title of "British Renaissance and National Senate." Organised by members of the New Europe Group under the name of British Renaissance Initiative, the aim of the symposium was to discuss the contemporary relevance of such themes as monetary reform, workers' control in industry, devolution and federation. Later that summer, on August 6th, the Swedenborg Hall was the venue for another British Renaissance Initiative—a meeting commemorating the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, which was addressed by Professor Soddy. In his opening remarks the chairman, Charles Purdom, observed that "Hiroshima was one of the most shameful acts in History. The use of the atomic bomb is an act of materialism; a denial of spiritual values and a denial of human brotherhood." Also in 1948 a New Europe Group delegation led by Professor Soddy attended the Congress of the European Union of Federalists at Rome. The last public event to take place under the name of the New Europe Group was also the last public appearance of Mitrinović on February 17, 1950, when he delivered a statement at a lunch-time press conference under the rather abstruse title of "Proposals towards a world system of foreign policies, severely impartial proposals and integrally inclusive."

Throughout the war years and immediately afterwards Mitrinović had continued working on his ideas for settling world problems. His guiding principle was to look at these problems constructively and imaginatively as a whole rather than merely as a collection of unrelated problems; each to be solved independently from all the others. He maintained that the only lasting way to win a war was for the victor to take over the chief virtue of the vanquished. This implied that Britain, the arch-exponent of acting from expedience and 'muddling through,' should start to plan and act from rationally thought out principles. As for Germany, it should cease to be

a centralised state with a government in Berlin. He proposed that Berlin should be figuratively turned into a lake, whilst Germany should be transformed into a federation consisting of the different elements that had once been states themselves. To ensure that Germany remained a federation it should be occupied not by the great powers, who would only fight over her, but by the small neighbouring countries who had been ravaged and occupied by her. He further proposed that the great powers—the USSR, Britain, France and the USA—should pay for the occupation. He proposed that the two greatest powers USA and USSR should become 'World Wings' or protecting powers in conjunction with one another, each having a major sphere of influence. Europe should become three federations which he called 'Europa-Noricum' consisting of Britain, Scandinavia and the Benelux countries, and which would look towards USA: 'Europa Latina' consisting of France, Italy, Spain and Portugal, which would be oriented towards the two federations of Africa and South America; and 'Europa-Scythia,' including the Balkan peninsula and extending to the Baltic, which would be protected by USSR. He envisaged many different links between various aspects of these powers, and federations so as to weave the whole planet into an organically diversified unity.

One of his ideas in this respect was the possibility that the world of block nation states should be superseded by three different kinds of federations of which the component units would have different borders. These would be respectively economic, cultural and political. Many of the problems of central Europe concerned regions which administratively belonged to one country, but which economically fitted better with another and were culturally and linguistically related to a third. In many such cases throughout the world the different regions could be administratively devolved and be more closely related to different neighbours in different respects.

The statement which Mitrinović gave to the press at Simpson's Restaurant in the Strand was the only public account he gave of his suggestions for a World Organic Order. It followed the lines of his previous thinking and culminated in a proposal for two world initiatives 'a triune Eastern Alliance of the Pacific' consisting of Japan, China and India, and 'a triune Western Alliance of the Atlantic' consisting of America, Russia and Europe. He also proposed that Britain and the British Commonwealth should give the initiative and act as intermediator for this Western Alliance.

Mitrinović spent most of the time after the war reworking and reformulating ideas and insights which he had been developing and trying to communicate to others during his lifetime. These had been expressed and worked out in many different contexts, in different movements and among different sets

of people. His prime method of communicating his ideas had always been through personal dialogue. Consequently he had always expressed his thoughts in ways which suited the context in which he was speaking. During the post-war period he attempted to bring these different threads and formulations together in a way which was intended to be more generally intelligible and accessible.

The most comprehensive and relatively straightforward summary and formulation of these different aspects of his life work and thought was one which he called 'The Four Onlys.' They consisted of four major notions which he insisted were equally valid and necessary components of any approach to a proper understanding of the world—and as a basis for acting upon the world. They were: 'Only the World-whole'; 'only the individual'; 'only the senate radius'; and 'only the Triune Revelation.' It so happened that these four 'onlys' were not only in rational sequence, but also expressed the sequence in which he had worked more particularly on each of them during his lifetime. His whole world view can therefore be conveniently summarised by taking them one by one.

The World-Whole

This 'only' affirmed that only from the gestalt, the whole, can the various constituent elements and parts of the world be properly understood. One cannot understand the role of the various sub-units of humanity except by considering them in the context of, and from the point of view of, the world as a whole and humanity as a single family. "The problem of races, nations, trade unions etc. cannot be dealt with effectively so long as they are treated as separate problems about separate entities." Rather, they should be considered "as functions of the whole human organism. Only in relation to the whole can their function be understood."[3] This notion was first dealt with by Mitrinović in *The New Age,* when he put forward the notion of the world as a developing organism, and considered the idea of a functional world order as the only one which would make possible the solution of international and all other problems, without recourse to violence.

The Individual

Apart from the world-whole only individuals are ultimate ends in themselves. Only individual human beings can comprehend the pattern of

the world as a whole, and the conscious organisation of humanity as an organic whole can be brought about only on the basis of the free will of individuals. Moreover, the pattern for the organic restructuring of the world in macrocosm lay within the microcosm of the individual organism:

> The whole is the concern of each and every individual. Individuals only can comprehend the whole, because the gestalt of the whole is contained in the individual. The content of every individual is the whole human race. Man has no canon by which to judge the whole except his own nature. The form which unites and relates the functioning organs of the whole world, and the form which unites and relates the functioning organs of the single man, are the same. . . . .[4]

Although Mitrinović in his early years had been working politically for the liberation of his country, and whilst in *The New Age* he had been writing about races and nations, he saw that he personally could deal only with individuals, not with states. Only through individuals could the world be changed. A new social and international order could be brought about and maintained only by individuals who had radically changed their ways of thinking and acting. Particularly during the period of The New Britain Movement he had used the phrase "Self-change for world-change," and it was probably in awareness of this need that he had earlier formed the British branch of The International Society for Individual Psychology after having met Alfred Adler.

In the second "World Affairs" series which he wrote in the *New Britain* Weekly he emphasised throughout the primacy of the individual.

> The true wholeness is in personality only. In nations and inter-nations, classes, institutions, there is no centre. The God-centre and the worth and essence is of individuality only . . . Therefore nations should not be adored, nor classes, nor sexes, nor ages of man. No collective, no mass and block should be lawgiven and worthy of worship and true love. Individuals matter. Freedom matters greatly. It is freedom and self-accomplishment of human singles that matters.[5]

The Senate Radius

According to Mitrinović the principle which related the individual parts to each other and to the whole was that of function. Social order must be a conscious organic order in which all individuals and groupings of individuals are recognised as functioning parts of the whole. There must therefore be radical devolution and many different kinds of federation. The

balance between these functioning parts of the world organism must be maintained by free mutual agreement and accommodation. There was therefore, as in the human organism, need for an integrating function which might bring about and hold the balance between all the various functions in society and throughout the world. This was the function Mitrinović called Senate. He illustrated it by the symbolism of the circle. In this the circumference could be taken to represent the world, and the centre to represent the individual. The individual cannot directly identify himself or herself with the world as a whole, just as the centre and the circumference are apart from one another. They need the intermediation of a radius. There exist an indefinitely large number of radii, which can be taken to represent all the various possible groupings in the world: nations, races, professions, religions and so on. But these are all partial groupings, purusing their own interest. A different kind of radius is necessary which can be visualised as a spiral radius starting from the centre and going out spirally towards the circumference so that it cuts through every other radius and finishes up on the circumference opposite the place where it started from the centre. This Mitrinović called the Senate radius. It symbolised the notion that Senate would not be a special élite of persons above the ordinary groupings of life, but consist of those within each grouping who took upon themselves the function of relating their different groupings to one another and keeping the balance of the whole, performing the necessary intermediating function in all walks and levels of life between the individual and humanity as a whole.

The function of Senate was to be one of reconciliation between conflicting groups and interests, but it was not one of trying to solve or avoid all conflicts. Mitrinović recognised that there are necessary conflicts of principle and values between the different functions of an organism. If these cease the organism dies. However, he maintained that many of the conflicts in the world were dysfunctional ones arising from an imbalance or wrong relationship between the different world elements. These cannot be dealt with in the context in which they arise, but need to be seen within the wider context of the whole organism. This approach Mitrinović called 'Third Force.' The first and second forces each provoke one another as their opposites. Third Force is that force which, because it looks to the needs of the organism as a whole, does not provoke its contradiction. So the role of Senate was not to be one of passive neutrality, a mere 'patching up' of differences that leaves both sides disgruntled and frustrated so that the problem recurs. Those who act as Senate are themselves in the conflicting groups, but they are those persons who are able to maintain an attitude of 'creative neutrality'

or 'aggressive impartiality' because they feel as strongly about the integrity of the whole as they do about the interests of the group in which they are involved.

The Three Revelations

Those who are going to try to hold the balance in society and in a world order must have some criterion by which to judge and on which to base their actions at any time. As indicated above, Mitrinović considered that the organism was the only model which could provide such a criterion. Every organism differs from every other in the detail of the relationships involved in it, but traditionally from the beginning of human thought the pattern of triunity has been that which has been the most basic portrayal of organic wholeness. Mitrinović maintained that this threefoldness was verifiable in actual life in the triunities of the three major systems in the human body, the metabolic, the nervous and the respiratory and circulatory systems; in psychology in the three functions of will, thought and emotion; and in the family of mother, father and child. This threefoldness operates not only in simultaneity, as in the human body, but also in succession. Father, mother and child exist simultaneously as family, but the family came into existence in succession.

In the past most expressions of this basic triunity had dealt only with the three aspects either in simultaneity, like the Vedanta philosophy, or in succession, like the Hegelian dialectic. Only the Athanasian Creed presented the three Persons of the Trinity both in simultaneity and in succession. In *The New Age* Mitrinović had treated the Athanasian Creed as the basic statement of the morphology of organism. But all these expressions of triunity had been either philosophical and abstract or, as with the Athanasian Creed, religious and mythological. Mitrinović was looking for a way of stating triunity both in simultaneity and in succession which was modern, critical and historically verifiable. This he found in the notion of three major world views which he formulated as Three Revelations. Each of these world views had been predominent during successive periods of history. Each was still adhered to by sections of humanity around the globe. Each was distinct yet complementary and equally valid—each focussing on a necessary aspect of the whole human truth.

According to Mitrinović the First Revelation was that perspective on the world characteristic of most of the pre-Christian religions. It was the view of the world as an organic unity within which humanity had its appointed

place, as did all other things including the Gods themselves—the whole permeated by the Divine. It was the view of the world held before the power of conceptual thought had been developed, when humans saw themselves not as independent and separate individuals but as part of a natural and divine order. The First Revelation was thus, for Mitrinović, the revelation of the Divine in the world; a view which found its philosophical expression in the Vedanta and of which Rudolf Steiner was the most significant exponent in the twentieth century.

The Second Revelation was the Christian revelation of the Divine in humanity. Solovyov's interpretation of Christianity was considered by Mitrinović to be the key expression of this revelation. According to Solovyov's interpretation Christianity affirmed that the spirit of the whole, God, was incarnated in one man, Jesus Christ, who was thus both man and God, and who embodied the whole potentiality of humanity. The second revelation, then, was the revelation of the Divine in a single Person, Jesus Christ; and the duty of humanity was to follow the example and way of Christ for "no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me."

If the First Revelation was of the permeation of the Divine throughout the whole cosmic and natural order, and the Second Revelation was of the Divine in a single person, the Third Revelation was of the Divine within every person. According to the First Revelation there are deities, but no single God except for the Divine Whole. The view of the Second Revelation was radically opposed to this conception. It asserted that there was a centre to the universe—God incarnated in Jesus Christ from whom all values were derived. The essence of the Third Revelation was that there are many centres, each being of ultimate value in itself. According to Mitrinović the outstanding prophet of this Third Revelation was Erich Gutkind who, as we have seen, asserted that the responsibility for the future of humanity lay with humanity itself and, in particular, those individuals who attained a new level of human consciousness beyond the limits of the narrow individual self. Mitrinović referred to such philosophers as Nietzsche, Otto Weininger and Max Stirner as major exponents of this Third Revelation, each of whom affirmed the sovereignty of the individual and the power of human beings to shape their own future without reliance on or reference to external or supra-mundane forces or deities.

According to Mitrinović each of these revelations was equally valid as a way of approaching reality. It was possible to view phenomena from the perspective of the world as a whole, from the standpoint of the individual, and from a position which emphasised the inter-relatedness of individuals

and phenomena. There was also a fourth point of view, that which accepted the validity of all three perspectives at the same time.

The third revelation can, in fact, be considered as the synthesis of the first two. If the thesis of the first revelation was the world as a single whole, the antithesis embodied in the second was the significance of the individual person. Their synthesis was embodied in the third revelation which pointed to the creation of a truly world community by free, self-conscious individuals—the creation of a 'community of singles.'

This idea of the three revelations serves several different purposes at the same time. Since each one represents a radically different approach to life and thought and since each of these approaches is held by a very large proportion of the world's population, an equal appreciation of all three revelations is necessary to anyone who acts as senate. They serve also as an introduction to a totally different way of thinking from the formal logic which is based on conventional laws of thought and which informs most of our present day intellectual thinking. This thinking denies contradiction, but in life we are faced with contradiction the whole time. It is very seldom, if ever true, that one side is wholly right and the other wholly wrong. In theory there is always a synthesis possible between the thesis and the antithesis, and equally this synthesis is never final, but is always the thesis of a new sequence. The synthesis is never on the level of the original contradiction, but always in a broader context.

In each of these triunities there is a fourth principle, which involves the simultaneous affirmation of all three; in the examples we have chosen it is the endocrine system which preserves the balance of the whole body; the ego as central to will, thought and emotion; and the family of mother, father and child. It is this affirmation of all three simultaneously which is the new element in thinking necessary for the senator. It gives a flexibility by which one is not rigidly committed to any partial point of view.

Clearly the attitude necessary for senate action and for appreciation of the Three Revelations requires a totally new way of thinking. Mitrinović gave this the name Anthropo-philosophy. He maintained that all the ideas and notions necessary for the human future had already been thought of and expressed. Philosophy, therefore, should no longer be merely a matter of abstract speculation, but should become human wisdom and should be applied towards the fulfilment of human needs, both of the individual and of the whole world. In earlier times humanity felt that there existed a divine truth in the skies. As religion lost its power the mantle of truth fell on science. In both cases it was thought that there existed a single objective truth independent of humanity. Increasingly, however, it is being realised

that truth depends on the point of view of the observer, and that even the 'eternal' truths of mathematics are founded on man-made fictions. The notion of a reality which transcends mankind, whether it be God or matter no longer serves any human purpose. As Mitrinović wrote in *The New Atlantis* quarterly,

> The time has arrived for the West to lose this fear, the infantile and immature fear of the Divine . . . For our materialism is unworthy superstitution and is child of fear of the Best, of the Truest, of Divinity and Perfection. It is due to us that we should lose the Fear of God and that we should stop our glorification of matter. For we, humanity are the Measurers also, and essentially. We are not only measurable objects.[6]

Man (Anthropos) was thus to be taken as the centre and starting point for all thought and knowledge. Not only should our future science be based on the morphology of the human organism, but we must give up the illusion of an objective truth and a reality beyond human experience. This was not to say that truth is purely individual and subjective. Mitrinović believed that we had reached a stage in our human development when we must learn to share our subjective experience, and that from this sharing of our different truths we would gradually, by a process of approximation, go towards a common human truth. The criterion of this truth should be that it makes human life richer and more meaningful.

It is clear from Mitrinović's treatment of the three revelations and other aspects of his thought that he viewed human history as passing through a number of developmental stages. He occasionally likened these to the different phases through which the individual human being passed in the course of life. Thus, ancient Indian thought maintained that each life went through two major phases—pravritti and nivritti, meaning going forth and going down respectively. C. G. Jung adopted a similar perspective, portraying the first half of life as essentially extroverted and the latter half as fundamentally introverted. The imagery that comes most readily to mind is of the life of the individual as a tapestry. During the first half of life the many threads of different colours are spun as the individual 'goes forth' into the world, embarking on new ventures and pursuing different projects. At a certain point in life, however, the decision needs to be made that the time of spinning new threads has drawn to a close, the time is ripe for the task of weaving the different threads into a coherent and meaningful pattern—the phase of introversion or 'going down.'

From this kind of perspective it can be seen that the transformation from spinning new threads to weaving the existing ones into a consistent pattern is a fundamental turning point in the life of the individual. Mitrinović believed

that humanity as a whole had reached such a turning point. According to him,

> There will be no more great geniuses, no more great prophets, philosophers, artists. The primordial sources have been worked out to the full. There can be no more original notions in philosophy, no new revelations in religion, no fresh inspiration in art. This is not a sign of decadence, but the sign of a new aeon, a new level of existence. There is no longer need of new influxes from a few great original creative men: there is need of a creativity which is possible to the many.[7]

At this critical turning point the individual has to face the whole question of the meaning of his life. Similarly humanity has to face the equally critical question of the meaning of human life on the planet Earth. Up to now human beings have been very largely engaged in the struggle for survival, or in struggles with one another for possessions and power. But technology has made it possible to produce plenty for all, and our power to destroy one another has made it imperative that we should order our world as a whole. Mitrinović believed, however, that material plenty would not be realised and that the violence of war would not be ended until humanity conceived a common vision of the future significance of human life. How did he envisage this future?

The need of humanity was to begin to unite all the threads of life into a meaningful whole, based on the growing realisation of the interdependence of all people and things in the world and in life. The first necessary step towards this was to be a critical re-assessment of the whole human past. This was not to be a mere passive contemplation, a kind of historical or archaeological research, but an active effort to relive and re-appropriate the past, with all the glory of human attainments and all the shame of human crimes and folly. In the works of great artists and philosophers, of sages and religious teachers, we could find the significance which humanity has attributed to itself through the ages. We would also be faced with evil and with the failure of humanity to live up to its own highest valuation. Mitrinović, however, maintained that past failure and wickedness could be redeemed. Just as a work of art is never complete until the last brush stroke or the last notes have been added, which can make or mar the whole, so the whole of human history could in the end be turned into a glorious attainment or a ghastly failure. Maurice Maeterlinck, who had been associated with the original Blutbund initiative, expressed a similar notion. "Our past" he wrote, "depends entirely upon our present, and is constantly changing with it. Our past is contained in our memory . . . Even though our past

contains crimes that are now beyond the reach of our best endeavours . . . these crimes fade out of our life the moment we feel that no temptation, no power on earth, could ever induce us to commit the like again."[8] This possibility and need to redeem and change the past by re-living and re-appropriating it, Mitrinović called 'Eukronia.' As an example of this he often quoted Rudolf Eucken, who, when he dealt with the major problems of philosophy, always started by giving the history of the problem up to date, and then the re-assessment which he considered necessary to bring the problem forward into the future.

Mitrinović believed, as he wrote in *New Britain,* that "It is the very goal and meaning of human evolution that our race should become an individuated Collective, a functionally articulated organism, of interiorised, individuated, illuminated, self-shining persons."[9] This meant that all possible relationships should be conceived and worked out, not only in active life but also in the realm of thought and art. Amongst his notions was the idea of expressing one work of art in a different art form, like painting a piece of music, writing a portrait. As early as 1913, in *Bosanska Vila,* he had written, "We require only a philosophy that sings its own system, a plasticity that is a symphony, a portrait that is a novel; we need great music that is a performed religion, a poetry that is metaphysics, a dancing that is a philosophical thesis and acting that is a social revolution."[10] Another of his ideas was the writing of a new kind of encyclopaedia in which the essay under each topic would be written from many different points of view. Thus, a tree might be described from the point of view of a botanist, a woodworker, a painter, a poet, and so on. The tree would thus be described in all its possible relationships to human beings and to the rest of nature. There was a need to discover new relationships between aspects of life previously considered separate and incompatible. It was on the basis of such efforts that new values, new meaning and purpose for life would emerge. It was to this work of discovering and creating new relationships between, for example, religion, philosophy, science and the arts, and the attempt to apply the resulting insights to enrich human life that Mitrinović gave the name 'Creative Critique.'

This work was not by any means meant as a leisure occupation for an élite or for gifted or clever persons only. He believed that it was necessary for all those engaged in philosophy, the sciences and the arts to convey to ordinary persons their own subjective and imaginative experience of their work and the pleasure and excitement which they derived from it, so that the human inheritance could be appreciated by all, and that everyone could

take part in the work of discovering, creating and fulfilling the meaning of humanity on the planet.

> The essence and mission of world-statesmanship, of world-guidance in our time consists in realising . . . the necessity and legitimacy of comfort, leisure, safety, power of self-attainment, power of learning the knowledge of facts and principles of existence for all. For all of us. For human inheritance is human and to be shared universally. Our task is common. Each individual must be enabled to share creatively in the glory of the common human work.[11]

The bulk of Mitrinović's insights and ideas about the world, the past, present and future of humanity, as he developed and reworked them after the war was recorded in note form by a small number of dedicated associates (particularly Winifred Gordon Fraser) who had linked their lives to his and who remained with him until his death in 1953 at the age of 66. Throughout his life in Britain he had needed regular periods of convalescence at nursing homes in places such as Harrogate, Bath, Cheltenham and Worthing. He suffered a serious heart failure in 1936 from which he never fully recovered. Then, in the winter of 1947 when there was a failure in the gas and electricity supply in London, he took Jack Murphy and his wife to a matinée performance at the theatre. They had to walk back to his lodgings in Bloomsbury Street through the snow. He contracted double pneumonia, which aggravated his heart condition, and was confined to bed for a number of weeks.

In 1948 he moved from 38 Bloomsbury Street into a flat in Museum Mansions a short distance away. Later that year he was staying at a nursing home in Richmond, Surrey when he discovered a small mews cottage for sale to the rear of Norfolk Lodge, a large house near the top of Richmond Hill. The wife of one of his young associates bought the cottage and he moved in at the end of 1948. In 1950 the lease for the ground floor of Norfolk Lodge was obtained and Mitrinović's books were transferred there. As in his other homes, three rooms were set aside to symbolise the three key dimensions of life, with the books allocated accordingly: science and philosophy, the arts, and religion.

By this time he was very ill and could only walk with difficulty. Yet he seemed consumed with a desire to somehow finish 'all that he had to say.' He continued trying to communicate with those around him, dictating notes, continually questioning his companions to ensure that they had grasped the essence of what he was trying to convey. Eventually his condition deteriorated to such an extent that he was confined to bed. He directed that a number of symbolic objects be arranged around his room—such items

as a copy of Lao Tse, a book of Serbian folk tales and a Christian cross, all of personal significance to him.

He once confessed that he had only one regret about death, that thinking was not possible in this state. He wanted to be conscious at the end, he viewed death as a serious event which one should try to experience to its fullest. Philip Mairet recalled an occasion when a group of them had been speculating on the possibility of life after death. Mitrinović remarked with some conviction: "Do not doubt, the decisive instant of thanatolysis, the moment of liberation from this here-below—this is a moment of the highest, purest *bliss*."[12] As someone who was regarded by so many of those who met him as possessing 'extra-normal' powers of perception and insight, Mitrinović had often been asked for his views on death and the likelihood of life after death. He would refer the questionner to the perspectives provided by the Three Revelations: the belief in reincarnation embodied in Eastern religions, the faith in everlasting life proclaimed by Christians, and the extinction of life once the heart and brain had ceased to function that scientific knowledge affirmed. There was no single answer, no easy solace.

David Davies recalled a typically cryptic remark made to him by Mitrinović in the 1930s when the *New Britain* weekly was about to be launched: "There is, David, only one thing really important and that is to learn how to die so that you will be sure of resurrection."[13] Dimitrije Mitrinović died on August 28, 1953. During the last week he was only intermittently conscious and refused to receive any visitors apart from those who were administering to his needs—Dr. Ralph Twentyman, Dr. Karl Köenig, Dr. Morris Robb, and the women who were his nurses.

He was buried in Highgate Cemetary next to his brother. He left no instructions for his friends and followers, no details about how they were to dispose of his books and paintings. He also left considerable financial debts—but it was no longer his concern.

A few months after his death a commemoration meeting was held in London. Friends and associates gathered together to remember and thereby honour the man who had played such a significant part in their lives. Reading through the record of that meeting, the theme that emerges is the tremendous impact Mitrinović—the person—made on those with whom he came into contact. In particular it was his awesome ability to 'read' another person, to 'see' within them as if he had known them for a lifetime. Thus, the Rev'd. Dr. Belden recalled that

> It was quite an experience to meet a man who knows his own mind thoroughly and to discover, at the same time, that he knows you before you have opened your mouth almost . . .

In similar vein Dr. Morris Robb, who had been associated with Mitrinović since the days of the Adler Society, observed that however long people knew Mitrinović

> they were always guessing because they could not reach his elevation, his breadth, his depth; but always he knew them and this remarkable ability to know a person was something that I have never seen to that degree anywhere else . . .

Evidently Goethe once said of himself that there was no vice or crime of which he could not detect a similar tendency within himself. For Otto Weininger this was one of the hallmarks of 'genius.' For Weininger the genius was one who was so aware of their own inner experience that they were conscious of containing within themselves a far greater range of conflicting human qualities and dimensions than the average person. As a consequence the genius was one who could understand the nature—the virtues and the vices— of a far wider diversity of different types of people, because they were aware of possessing the same range of characteristics within themselves. From Weininger's perspective, "the genius is the man who contains in himself the greatest number of others in the most active way . . ."[14] For Weininger the archetypal genius was Christ, who was actively conscious of containing within himself the whole of humanity; for "the great man contains the whole universe within himself; genius is the living microcosm."[15]

However, to the extent that each and every one of us possess the ability to feel some kinship, some degree of identification, with those around us, then we can be said to possess some of the quality of genius in Weininger's sense, however latent such genius might be. It was this quality and capacity which was perhaps the distinguishing feature of Mitrinović's character. His almost uncanny ability to 'see' a person as if they were transparent, and the breadth and depth of his character to which Morris Robb referred, were part and parcel of the same highly developed level of self-awareness, and therefore awareness of others. As someone who was particularly conscious of the different elements within his own nature, he was acutely aware of the different aspects of human nature within and around him. Not only would it appear that Mitrinović was aware of these different elements within himself, he was able to consciously choose which aspect he would express at any one time. Therein lay his ability to get on with such a wide range of people. As one of his long-time associates tried to express it,

> . . . he seemed to include so many nationalities and aspects of human beings in himself that he could be comprehended by different people—so that if you were English you saw 'Englishness' in him, if Serbian you saw Serbian . . . He

> was not a foreigner, he was a total human being. The nearest to a total human being that I have ever met.[16]

In exploring the life of Mitrinović it was this aspect of the man that I found most difficult to comprehend, leaving me frustrated at times with my inability to grasp his 'essential core.' Often he appeared to me like a chameleon, changing his image to fit the context in which he found himself. "Where, or rather who, was the 'real' Mitrinović?" I would ask those who knew him. Their answers only served to fill out and illustrate the paradoxical nature of the man, seemingly full of contradictions. He once remarked that he never did anything unless he had three different ideas on hand at the same time, but he could be totally spontaneous on occasions and really let his emotions flow. Yet there was always the feeling amongst those who knew him best that he possessed almost complete self-control—that he was always aware of what he was doing. So, with Mitrinović, as with us all, the 'real' person was revealed not so much in what he felt or said, but in his actions and relationships with other people; and amongst those who knew him what remained was the sense that whatever happened he was 'for' them, in the sense that he acknowledged and respected them as unique individuals in their own right and as such they had his loyalty. No matter how they might suffer under the onslaught of his rage or his criticism, no matter how they might disagree with him, they knew that in the final analysis they could turn to him and call upon him and he would be ready for them. Thus, Jack Murphy recalled that Mitrinović

> was one of the best men that I have ever met to disagree with. He understood the meaning of tolerance. He did not regard tolerance as, you know, just dismissing the other fellow and saying "Let him have his say, it is a lot of rubbish anyhow." What he meant, really, by tolerance was, "You hold to your view, you have a right to it. Be yourself. You are a person. Think it out and go ahead, and I am going to go with you." It was that "going with you" when you knew quite well you were drifting which was so wonderfully binding. Here was real humanism . . . He was one of the best-living socialists, in terms of personal life, I have ever met. Socialism to him did not just mean a theory of state organisation. It meant personal cooperation with his fellow-men and even when we were differing most profoundly with regard to theoretical ideas on this, that and the other, that bond was getting tighter and tighter between us until I say quite frankly when Mitrinović died . . . I felt I had lost a brother, one of my own family.[17]

In this tribute Jack Murphy, in his own way, went to the heart of Mitrinović's philosophy and practice. Whilst so much of his writing and

talking was concerned with adumbrating the world as a single developing organism within which he located the various schemes for restructuring the economic and political systems of society—through guild socialism, monetary reform, federation and devolution—at the core was the concern with the individual in relationship with others: the creation of a truly human family or household unconfined by ties of blood and kin, reconstructing the cells of a regenerated social order. It was Mitrinović's insight, which he shared with those other 'utopians' of the Blutbund Gustav Landauer and Martin Buber, that a new cooperative order cannot be imposed from above, but must grow organically from the grass-roots upwards—sustained and strengthened by the daily collaboration and comradeship of individuals. He realised, along with others before him and since, that the creation of a society free from domination and exploitation cannot be achieved unless the values of freedom and fellowship are embodied in the actual process of creation. Such values cannot be imposed, neither can they be created by mere talk: they must be lived in the daily round of one's life.

Landauer depicted the state as "a condition, a certain relationship between human beings, a mode of human behaviour; we destroy it by contracting other relationships, by behaving differently."[18] In other words, so long as people confront each other as alien and separate individuals, failing to actively acknowledge their common humanity, they make the coercive order of the state necessary. Such an imposed domination can be overcome only to the extent that we form new kinds of relationships that render the coercive power of the state unnecessary. Landauer used the term "People" to depict this new relationship, arguing that socialism would only become a reality to the extent that people came together as a 'People,' "growing together into an organism with countless organs and members."[19] From this perspective we are always helping to destroy the state, making space for a new social order, to the extent that we actively enter into cooperative caring relationships with our fellows.

In a way, the bulk of Mitrinović's life and work can be read as an exploration of the ways and means of creating such truly human relationships between people—a human household within which differences are acknowledged and respected, difficulties and disagreements honestly faced, but underpinned in the final analysis by a fundamental commitment of each to the other as people, as individual members of the wider human family. Like others within the libertarian tradition, Mitrinović looked to "the renewal of society from within, by a regeneration of its cell tissue,"[20] recognising that revolutions are rarely acts of social creation, but rather of deliverance, making free the space for the full flourishing of the new social forms developing within

the womb of the old order. Yet many of those liberterians and socialists who have realised that genuine change can come only from below have failed to move much beyond the depiction of the new age yet to be achieved and vague moral injunctions to individuals to change themselves in preparation for 'heaven on earth.'[21] Others have become preoccupied with living the liberated life for themselves, without confronting the fact that such 'advance posts' of a free cooperative society will remain isolated prefigurative experiments unless there are also structural changes in the political and economic systems. This was clearly realised by Mitrinović. Whilst at different periods in his life his prime focus of concern shifted, he never lost sight of the fact that the new realm of existence for which he worked could never be realised without the transcendence of such obstacles as the state leviathan and the private ownership of the means of production. The programme of the New Britain movement—with its emphasis on workers' control in the sphere of production, the utmost geographical and functional devolution and decentralisation of decision–making power, the radical overhaul of the financial and monetary system—addressed problems that are as pressing today as they were in the 1930s, indeed more so.

In the last quarter of the twentieth century we find the individual reduced to a state of passivity and helplessness before the technically aggrandised machinery of the corporate state in the West and the massive impersonal bureaucracies of the state 'socialist' countries. In the West we see the maintenance of permanent inequality in the guise of equal opportunity, whilst in the Eastern block the human needs of individual freedom and creativity are ignored and stifled in defence of ideological orthodoxy and in favour of industrial and technological development. The working out of the opposition between the two great historical movements of liberal capitalism and Marxist socialism has resulted in them approaching a point of convergence: societies characterised by hierarchical control, powerless and atomised individuals living under centralised states engaged in global imperialism and the destruction of nature—each threatening to bring about the final annihilation of humanity through their participation in the criminal nuclear arms race. The need for a 'third way,' 'above and between' these two historical forces is greater than ever before. Bakunin once observed that "freedom without Socialism is privilege and injustice . . . Socialism without freedom is slavery and brutality,"[22] suggesting the need for a synthesis that could hold in some kind of dynamic tension the liberal values of individual freedom, autonomy and pluralism and the socialist values of economic equality, cooperation and mutual aid. For many in Britain in the 1930s the New Britain movement represented such a third way. The ideas and insights that

informed that movement still have relevance today, as increasing numbers of people search for new means of social transformation which do not fall into the trap of concentrating on the attainment of central state power at the cost of developing the necessary base for a socialist commonwealth through the creation in the 'here-and-now' of new social formations that embody the values of individual freedom and community.[23]

Moreover, the relevance of the proposals raised by the New Europe Group for a federation of European peoples in a new cultural order begins to take on a renewed relevance in the 1980s as it becomes increasingly apparent that a new transcontinental spirit is abroad in Europe. Over the last few years the revolt against the military and strategic situation that threatens us with nuclear annihilation has grown. In response to this threat an Appeal for European Nuclear Disarmament was launched in April 1980. It urged Europeans "to act as if a united, neutral and pacific Europe already exists. We must learn to be loyal, not to 'East,' or 'West,' but to each other." According to one leading figure in this movement, E. P. Thompson, the search is on for "a third way" beyond the hegemony of the two superpowers. Thompson points to a new process taking place in Europe, "a détente of peoples rather than states—a movement of peoples which sometimes dislodges states from their blocs and brings them into a new diplomacy of conciliation,"[24] and has called for a reunification of European political culture informed by "a new internationalist code of honour conducted by citizens."[25] The language is different, but it is not difficult to discern echoes of the pleas made by Mitrinović in his articles in *The New Age* in 1920 when he called for 'new Europeans' to create "an all inclusive European culture" and make Europe "consciously and self-consciously one."[26]

It should not be imagined that I am claiming that the specific proposals of Mitrinović about the re-ordering of the world, the kinds of alliances and federations to be established, should be taken uncritically and transposed into contemporary thinking and practice. Times have changed and new situations require new approaches. What does remain, however, is the general thrust of his work which should act as a stimulus and example to all who are concerned about the future of humanity: the creative intellectual energy to think about the world as a single whole; the courage to face up to the awesome conflicts and tensions that exist within the world, and the 'utopian mentality' to suggest ways of transcending them in the direction of a new harmonious world order; the refusal to entrust our fate to the power politics of states but to locate the responsibility for change with the individual people and groups that together make up the nations of the world.

Moreover, his depiction of the world as a single developing organism no longer appears so strange as it perhaps did a generation ago. The development of the science of ecology has brought into focus the ways in which human beings constitute an integral part of not only human society but of a society that embraces all living things. Ecology has brought to many of us the awareness that we are part of a global system in which the integrity of the whole and of the parts that constitute the whole are mutually dependent. Indeed, the environmental scientists James Lovelock and Sydney Epton have depicted the planet as a giant system which seems "to exhibit the behaviour of a single organism, even a living creature."[27]

One contemporary commentator, Theodore Roszack, has gone so far as to posit an organic linkage between humanity and the planet, "a single organic network, a pattern of life within which it is our special role to be the planet's risky experiment in self-conscious intelligence."[28] Roszack maintains that it is not by mere chance that the search for an authentic personal identity which is currently manifested throughout the industrialised world has grown at the same time as the ecological study of the interaction between culture and nature. He argues that the need of the person and of the planet are the same insofar as they are both threatened by "the bigness of things." The same institutional leviathans that inhibit the autonomous growth of individuals also endanger the life of the planet. Thus, he observes that,

> in the very heartland of urban-industrial society, a generation appears that instinctively yearns for a quality of life wholly incompatible with the giganticism of our economic and technological structures. And the cry of personal pain which that generation utters is the planet's own cry for rescue, her protest against the bigness for alternatives to that person-and-planet-crushing colossalism. We search for ways to disintegrate the bigness—to disintegrate it *creatively* into humanly scaled, organically balanced communities and systems that free us from the deadly industrial compulsions of the past.[29]

Roszack locates himself in the tradition of Bubar, Landauer and the French Personalists. He makes no mention of Mitrinović, but the linkage is clear.[30]

Of course, for many people Mitrinović's depiction of the world and humanity as a developing organism will seem totally untenable: the notion of the world as "one great mind in process of becoming self-conscious,"[31] seemingly nothing more than mythology, the outpourings of a man with a "home-made messiah complex," to use Janko Lavrin's description.[32] However, one thing would seem to be clear: unless we do succeed in developing an approach to the injustices and dangers of the world which

combines a respect for the integrity of the individual with an holistic awareness of the inter-relationship between all things, then a question mark must be raised about the very survival of humanity. The exploitation of the working classes in the industrialised world is mirrored in the relationship between the developed and under-developed world, and is reflected everywhere in the way we treat the natural resources of our globe—whilst the threat of nuclear holocaust continues to hang over us all. When we cast round for ways out of this state of virtual barbarism, what do we find? On the whole the answers and remedies we get from the established 'respectable' and conventional authorities and technological élites are programmes of lesser evils, evils which can hardly be distinguished from each other. There is a crying need in the world for some wider, deeper vision. Without the kind of vision displayed by people like Mitrinović we shall lose any sense of how we might live or how we ought to live. Karl Mannheim observed that with the relinquishment of utopias, people would lose the will to shape history and thereby their ability to control it.[33] That other great German sociologist, Max Weber, affirmed that "all historical experience confirms the truth that man would not have attained the possible unless time and again he had reached for the impossible."[34] To be 'utopian' is to be out of step with taken for granted views of the world, to be utopian is to believe in the human power to transform the given in the direction of a potential reality—a 'heaven on earth,' a true commonwealth. Whatever sense one makes of the particulars of Mitrinović's thought—however inappropriate to the modern age some of his images might seem—the lesson we should take from his life is to dare to dream about how the world might be reconstructed, and the courage to work towards that vision in true fellowship with those around us.

NOTES

Introduction

1. "New Britain Manifestos. The Social State," *New Britain Quarterly,* vol 1, no. 2, Jan-March 1933, p. 53. Emphasis in original.
2. Commemoration meeting, New Europe Group, January 29, 1954.
3. David Davies, Commemoration meeting 1954.

Chapter 1

1. Much of the detail concerning Mitrinović's early life is taken from Predrag Palavestra, *The Dogma and Utopia of Dimitrije Mitrinović*, Belgrade: Slovo Ljubve, 1977. For this chapter I have drawn upon a private translation of Palavestra's first chapter, "Conspirator, Prophet or Preacher," translated by D. Shillan and revised by Dr. E. B. Goy (Archives of New Atlantis Foundation, Ditchling, England). The references use the pagination of this translation.

.2 According to Singleton, "The Serbs inherited one of the richest oral traditions in Europe." F. Singleton, *Twentieth Century Yugoslavia,* London: MacMillan, 1976, p. 50.

3. This form of protest was to be adopted in 1908 at the time of the Hapsburg's formal annexation of Bosnia and Hercegovina. A special mass was held in the Sarajevo Eastern Orthodox Cathedral to celebrate the annexation. It was recorded that, "At the end of the mass, the Eastern Orthodox Metropolitan Letica in his gold and silver vestments, with both hands raised, asked all the worshippers to kneel down and pray for divine blessings for the Emperor Franz Josef and the Hapsburg dynasty. All went down except a group of boys from the high school. They stood firmly upright among their kneeling elders." Vladimir Dedijer, *The Road to Sarajevo,* London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1966, p. 208.
4. Quoted, ibid., p. 178.
5. Quoted by Palavestra, op. cit., p. 19.
6. B. Zečević, quoted by Dedijer, op. cit., p. 179.
7. B. Zečević, ibid., p. 180.

8. Quoted from Mitrinović's article in first issue. Cited by Palavestra, op. cit., p. 18.

9. Ibid., p. 19.

10. Ibid., p. 20.

11. One of their early contributors was reminded that "love poetry is excluded from *Vila*." Quoted by Nenad Petrović, *Dimitrije Mitrinović*, Ontario: Avala, 1967, p. 3 (translated).

12. Dedijer, op. cit., p. 231.

13. Petrović, op. cit., p. 4.

14. Ibid., p. 6.

15. Ibid., p. 9.

16. Quoted in Dedijer, op. cit., p. 208.

17. Quoted in Petrović, op. cit., pp. 9-10.

18. Dedijer, op. cit., p. 213.

19. Ibid., p. 217.

20. Idem

21. Idem

22. *Vihor,* vol. 1, 1914, pp. 81-3, translated from V. Novak, *Antologija Jugoslovenske Misli I Narodnog Jedinstva,* Belgrade: 1930. In a letter to the author (April 4, 1977), David Shillan commented that Mitrinović's use of "Serbo-Croat" as a noun designating a people and not just a language was rare for this period, reflecting Mitrinović's insistence that they were essentially one people.

23. Quoted in Dedijer, op. cit., p. 208.

24. Quoted in P. Palavestra, "Dimitrije Mitrinović and the literature of the 'Young Bosnia'," *Renaissance Bulletin,* no. 13, Spring 1967, pp. 4-5.

25. Mestrović died in the U.S.A. in 1962.

26. Quoted in Petrović, op. cit., p. 5.

27. Ibid., p. 11.

28. Palevestra (1967), op. cit., p. 10.

29. The quotations from "Aesthetic Contemplations" are taken from an English translation of the original articles, archives of the New Atlantis Foundation, Ditchling, England. No pagination.

30. Cf. Marx in *Theses on Feuerbach,* "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in different ways; the point is to change it."

31. Quoted in D. R. Davies, *In Search of Myself,* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1961, p. 140.

32. Quoted in Palavestra, op. cit., pp. 31-2.

33. In a message to a meeting in commemoration of Mitrinović, January 29, 1954, organised by the New Europe Group (New Atlantis Foundation Archives).

34. Quoted in Palavestra, op. cit., p. 34.

35. *Bosanska Vila,* July 20, 1908. Quoted by Dedijer, op. cit., p. 231.

36. Commemoration meeting, New Europe Group, January 29, 1954.

Chapter 2

1. W. Grohmann, *Kandinsky: Life and Work,* London: Thames and Hudson, 1959, p. 37.

2. Quoted in introduction by Klaus Lankheit in W. Kandinsky and F. Marc, eds., *The Blaue Reiter Almanac,* London: Thames and Hudson, 1974, p. 33.

3. *The Diaries of Paul Klee,* edited and introduced by Felix Klee, London: Peter Owen, 1965, p. 280.

4. Sir Michael Sadler, *Modern Art and Revolution,* London: Hogarth Press, 1932, p. 19.

5. W. Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art,* New York: George Wittenborn, 1947, p. 24.

6. Ibid., p. 11.

7. Ibid., p. 75.

8. Ibid., p. 74.

9. Ibid., p. 27.

10. Ibid., pp. 31-32.

11. See S. Ringbom, *The Sounding Cosmos,* Abo: Abo Akademi, 1970.

12. Kandinsky, op. cit., p. 27.

13. Ibid., p. 74.

14. V. Solovyov, *God, Man and the Church: The Spiritual Foundations of Life* (transl. by D. Attwater), Cambridge: James Clark, 1974, p. 190.

15. Ringbom, op. cit., pp. 63-4.

16. H. Le Roy Finch, introduction to *The Body of God: the Collected Papers of Eric Gutkind,* edited by L. B. Gutkind and H. Le Roy Finch, New York: Horizon Press, 1969, p. 14.

17. Ibid., p. 217.

18. Ibid., p. 188.

19. Letter to Kandinsky, July 19th. 1914.

20. LeRoy Finch, op. cit., p. 12.

21. Letter from Mitrinović to Gutkind, June 27th 1914.

22. Lewis Leary, "Walden goes wandering: the transit of good intention," *The New England Quarterly,* pp. 3-30, vol. 32, March 1959, p. 4.

23. Ibid., p. 5.

24. Ibid., p. 12.

25. The similarities between van Eeden and his friend Upton Sinclair were striking. Both were successful authors; both had lived in international communities; both had lost substantial sums of money through financing cooperative projects; both pursued unconventional dietary habits; and both were involved in scandalous divorce suits in their respective countries. In February 1911 van Eeden wrote to Sinclair, "The other day I was pleased to see a Dutch paper mention you as 'the American van Eeden.'" Ibid., p. 27.

26. Ibid., p. 26.

27. Both essays were republished in translation in the 1930s by Mitrinović.

28. "Volker," *The World Conquest, Our New Atlantic Religion of Steel,* London: Nova Atlantis, nd., p. 19. Gutkind's use of the term "electric" is reminiscent of H. P. Blavatsky who represented electricity as "the life of the universe." (H. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine,* vol. 1, Los Angeles, 1949, p. 139). His reference to "the secret but real rulers of the world" also resembles Blavatsky's thesis that there exists a fraternity of High Initiates or Masters of Wisdom who intervene at crucial stages in the history of the world.

29. F. van Eeden, *World-Senate, Unite in Heroic Love! Testament to the Kingly of Spirit,* London: Nova Atlantis, nd., p. 5.

30. Ibid., pp. 9-10.

31. *The Autobiography of Upton Sinclair,* London: W. H. Allen, 1963, p. 196.

32. Idem

33. Ibid, pp. 197-8. Rathenau helped found the German Democratic Party (DDP) after the war and advocated his Die Neue Wirtschaft 'The New Economy': a combination of employee participation and state control of industry. He was murdered by right wing extremists in 1922 after the Treaty of Rapallo.

34. Quoted in H. Borel, ec., *Brieven van Frederick van Eeden aan Henri Borel,* Den Haag: Brussel, 1933, p. 133.

35. Letter of van Eeden, undated. Copy in New Atlantis Archives.

36. Letter from Gutkind to Mitrinović, July 30 1914 (in New Atlantis archives).

Chapter 3

1. Palavestra (1977), op. cit., p. 4. Much of the information in this chapter is based on a private translation of the final chapter of Palavestra's book. Translated by D. Shillan and Dr. E. B. Goy, in the archives of the New Atlantis Foundation. The references use the pagination of this translation.

2. "Who should possess Trieste?," *The Outlook,* September 26, 1914.

3. Palavestra, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

4. S. P. Tucić, ed., *The Slav Nations,* London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1916, p. 181.

5. Ibid., p. 183.

6. *Yorkshire Post,* October 6, 1915.

7. Quoted in Paul Selver, *Orage and the New Age Circle,* London: Allen and Unwin, 1957, p. 59.

8. Paul Selver, "Partial truth about the Slavs," *The New Age,* January 28, 1915, pp. 350-1.

9. Selver (1957), op. cit., pp. 57-9.

10. New Atlantis Foundation archives.

11. This was obviously a misunderstanding on van Eeden's part. See Chapter two above.

12. H. Borel, op. cit., p. 134.

13. Ibid., p. 133.

14. Ibid., p. 136, van Eeden to Borel, September 15, 1914.

15. Ibid., p. 138, Theodor Däubler, 1876–1934, was a German poet associated with the expressionist movement.

16. Ibid., p. 143, van Eeden to Borel, September 24, 1914.

17. Ibid., p. 144, September 27, 1914.

18. Ibid., p. 154. The "three days" refers to a gathering of Blutbund members at Potsdam in June 1914.

19. Ibid., p. 166.

20. Quoted in "Gustav Landauer," *Anarchy,* no. 54, August 1965, p. 248.

21. February 12, 1916.

22. The meeting with Schuré arranged for February 25, 1916 was cancelled as Schuré was suffering from influenza.

23. Palavestra, op. cit., p. 16.

24. Ibid., p. 17.

25. Stephen Graham, *Part of the Wonderful Scene,* London: Collins, 1964, pp. 121-2.

26. Idem.

27. According to Mairet, Mitrinović's lessons could be enjoyable "if you were responsive to his singular method, which was to expand the study of every word into a dissertation upon the significance of the Slav spirit in world destiny." P. Mairet, *Autobiographical and Other Papers,* Manchester: Carcanet, 1981, p. 91.

28. Ibid., p. 94.

29. Ibid., p. 85.

30. Ibid., p. 86.

31. Ibid., pp. 103-4.

32. Ibid., p. 108.

33. Ibid., p. 126.

34. Ibid., p. 129.

35. Graham, op. cit., p. 251.

36. The exact date of his resignation from the diplomatic corps is not clear, but it was probably during the summer of 1920. Certainly there is evidence that he was involved in work related to his position up to and throughout 1919. In that year he worked on a huge Latin-English edition of Roger Boscović's *A Theory of Natural Philosophy* which was eventually published in 1922 with an introduction by J. M. Child of Manchester University. In November 1919 he gave the address at a dinner in London in honour of Dr. Niko Županić, the curator of the Royal Ethnological Museum in Belgrade who had helped with the preparation of *The South Slav Monuments.*

37. Mairet, op. cit., p. 130.

38. Postcard to Helen Soden, Woodbine Cottage, Ditchling, August 17, probably 1919.

Chapter 4

1. H. MacDiarmid, *The Company I've Kept,* London: Hutchinson, 1966, p. 271.
2. W. Martin, *The New Age Under Orage,* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967, p. 1.
3. P. Mairet, *A. R. Orage,* New York: University Books, 1966, pp. vi-vii.
4. Willa Muir, *Belonging: A Memoir,* London: Hogarth Press, 1968, pp. 40-1.
5. E. Muir, *An Autobiography,* London: Hogarth Press, 1954, p. 175.
6. Quoted in P. H. Butter, *Edwin Muir: Man and Poet,* London: Oliver and Boyd, 1966, p. 74.
7. Ramiro de Maetzu, quoted by MacDiarmid, op. cit., p. 75.
8. Letter to *New Statesman,* December 26, 1959.
9. G. D. H. Cole, *The Second International,* London: MacMillan, 1963, p. 244.
10. Quoted by Philip Mairet, *A. R. Orage: A Memoir,* London: J. M. Dent, 1936, p. 73.
11. Orage had been involved in Theosophical circles during his time in Leeds.
12. Commemoration meeting, January 29, 1954.
13. Selver, op. cit., p. 59.
14. MacDiarmid, op. cit., p. 273.
15. E. Muir, *The Story and the Fable: an Autobiography,* London: Harrap, 1940, p. 206.
16. Mairet (1966), op. cit., p. xi.
17. Ibid., p. xii.
18. Willa Muir, op. cit., p. 40.
19. Martin, op. cit., pp. 274-5.
20. Mairet (1966), op. cit., p. xv.
21. From Edward Carpenter, "Non-governmental Society," in his collection of essays, *Towards Industrial Freedom,* 1917. Reprinted in *Freedom,* Anarchist Review, vol. 42, no. 4, February 27, 1981, p. 13.
22. W. James, *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy,* London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919, p. 25.
23. *The New Age,* August 26, 1920, p. 255.
24. Ibid., September 9, 1920, p. 279.
25. Ibid., November 25, 1920, p. 40.
26. Ibid., September 2, 1920, p. 268.
27. Ibid., November 18, 1920, pp. 27-8.
28. Ibid., March 31, 1921, p. 255.
29. Ibid., April 28, 1921, p. 204.
30. Ibid., April 21, 1921, p. 293.
31. Ibid., March 17, 1921, p. 232.
32. Ibid., June 9, 1921, p. 63.
33. Ibid., October 28, 1920, p. 364.
34. Idem.

35. Ibid., September 9, 1920, p. 280.
36. Ibid., August 26, 1920, p. 255.
37. This is one of the main themes of V. S. Naipaul's *India: A Wounded Civilization,* London: André Deutsch, 1977. See especially pp. 102-3.
38. *The New Age,* November 18, 1920, p. 28.
39. Ibid., December 9, 1920, p. 64.
40. Ibid., September 30, 1920, p. 316.
41. Ibid., October 14, 1920, p. 342.
42. Ibid., October 28, 1920, p. 364.
43. Ibid., November 4, 1920, pp. 3-4.
44. Idem.
45. Ibid., October 7, 1920, pp. 327-8.
46. Idem.
47. Ibid., November 18, 1920, p. 27.
48. Ibid., December 23, 1920, p. 89.
49. Ibid., February 17, 1921, pp. 138-9.
50. Ibid., September 30, 1920, p. 315.
51. Ibid., October 14, 1920, p. 342.
52. Ibid., September 9, 1920, p. 280.
53. Ibid., September 30, 1920, p. 315.
54. Ibid., December 9, 1920, p. 63.
55. Ibid., October 21, 1920, p. 352.
56. Ibid., September 30, 1920, p. 315.
57. Ibid., February 17, 1921, p. 184.
58. Ibid., June 9, 1921, p. 62.
59. Ibid., October 7, 1920, p. 328.
60. Ibid., May 26, 1921, p. 40.
61. Ibid., September 2, 1920, p. 268.
62. Idem.
63. Ibid., January 20, 1921, p. 136.
64. *A Solovyov Anthology,* arranged by S. L. Frank, translated by Natalie Duddington, London: S. C. M. 1950, p. 162.
65. *The New Age,* July 7, 1921, p. 111.

Chapter 5

1. Mairet (1966), op. cit., p. xiii.
2. Quoted in C. S. Nott, *Teachings of Gurdjieff: The Journal of a Pupil,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961, p. 27.
3. Idem.
4. Ibid., pp. 27-8.

5. Maurice Nicoll, a Harley Street consultant and contemporary of Orage, was allocated to dish-washing for the first three months of his stay at the Château and was forbidden to read any books. Gurdjieff maintained that the growth of the individual required the development of all the centres within a person. Hence the rationale for directing intellectuals to manual labour. Residents were also expected to do tasks they disliked without objecting to them, so that they might learn to operate without their efficiency being impaired by emotions. See B. Pogson, *Maurice Nicoll, A Portrait,* London: Vincent Stuart, 1961, pp. 80-1.

6. Personal recollections of Valerie Cooper in archives of New Atlantis Foundation.

7. Personal communication to author from member of New Atlantis Foundation.

8. H. & R. Ansbacher, eds., *The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler,* London: Allen and Unwin, 1958, p. 134.

9. Ibid., p. 135.

10. A. Adler, "The meaning of life," *The Lancet,* January 31, 1931, p. 6.

11. Quoted in V. MacDermot, *The Social Vision of Alfred Adler,* Ditchling: New Atlantis Foundation, 1981, p. 14.

12. D. Mitrinović, "Marx and Nietzsche as the historic background of Adler," *Purpose,* vol. I, No. 4, Oct.-Dec. 1929, p. 157.

13. Ibid., pp. 9-10.

14. Ibid., p. 12.

15. See Phyllis Bottome, *Alfred Adler,* London: Faber and Faber, 1939, p. 288.

16. Author of *The Science of Social Organisation,* Madras: Theosophical Society, 1910.

17. Quoted in Bottome, op. cit., pp. 288-9.

18. Ibid., p. 290.

19. Idem.

20. Watson Thomson, *Turning into Tomorrow,* New York: Philosophical Library, 1966, p. 7.

21. Letter to Mitrinović from W. T. Symons, Sept. 14th, 1926. (New Atlantis Foundation archives).

22. M. Reckitt, *As It Happened,* London: J. M. Dent, 1941, p. 190.

23. Minutes of Chandos Group meeting, October 12, 1926 (New Atlantis Foundation archives).

24. V. A. Demant et al, *Coal: A Challenge to the National Conscience,* London: Hogarth Press, 1927, p. 26.

25. Ibid., p. 24.

26. Ibid., p. 11.

27. Ibid., pp. 8-9.

28. Ibid., p. 10.

29. Archives of New Atlantis Foundation.

30. Archives of New Atlantis Foundation.

31. Archives of New Atlantis Foundation.

32. Quoted in Bottome, op. cit., p. 73.

33. Adler had taken up the post of Visiting Professor of Medical Psychology at Long Island College of Medicine.

34. Emphasis added. Presumably a reference to the rise of the Nazis in Germany (New Atlantis Foundation archives).

Chapter 6

1. Mairet (1966), op. cit., p. xxvi.
2. Mairet (1981), op. cit., p. 133.
3. It has been suggested by an associate of Mitrinović's that a further explanation for the range and short life of the projects might lie in the fact that he was continually searching for the right formula to get something going that would 'take off' of its own accord, without requiring constant impulsion from him—thus leaving him free to concentrate his energies on developing the notion of senate. See Chapter 7 below.
4. They were both living at Ditchling at this time.
5. Leaflet of "Eleventh Hour Flying Clubs," New Atlantis Foundation archives.
6. J. V. Delahaye et al, *Politics: A Discussion of Realities,* London: C. W. Daniel, 1929.
7. Ibid., p. 25.
8. Ibid., p. 32.
9. Ibid., p. 55.
10. Ibid., pp. 32-3.
11. Ibid., p. 166.
12. Ibid., p. 74.
13. Ibid., p. 76.
14. Ibid., p. 180.
15. Ibid., p. 179.
16. Ibid., p. 160.
17. Ibid., p. 163.
18. Idem.
19. NEG leaflet, n.d., New Atlantis Foundation archives.
20. Letter from Sir Charles Trevelyan to W. G. Fraser, November 17, 1931. New Atlantis Foundation archives.
21. Geddes died on April 17, 1932. His position as President of the NEG was taken by Arthur Kitson.
22. Thomson, op. cit., pp. 7-8.
23. Note in files of NEG, New Atlantis Foundation archives.
24. Taken from notes in files of NEG, source unknown, in New Atlantis Foundation archives.
25. Davies, op. cit., p. 115.
26. *New Britain Quarterly,* vol. 1, No. 1, October 1932, p. 23.
27. Davies, op. cit., p. 127.

28. Quoted by Davies, ibid.
29. Quoted in Arthur Peacock, *Yours Fraternally,* London: Pendulum, 1945, p. 84.
30. The New Atlantis, vol. 1, no. 1, October 1933.
31. Davies, op. cit., pp. 124-8.
32. NEG leaflet, undated, New Atlantis Foundation archives.
33. *New Britain: Quarterly Organ for National Renaissance,* vol. 1, no. 2, Jan-March 1933, pp. 52-3.
34. C. B. Purdom, *Life Over Again,* London: J. M. Dent, 1951, p. 153.
35. Quoted in Davies, op. cit., p. 131.
36. *New Britain Weekly,* vol. 1, no. 1, May 24, 1933, p. 7.
37. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 3, June 7, 1933, p. 74.
38. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 2, May 31, 1933, p. 39.
39. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 4, June 14, 1933, p. 106.
40. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 9, July 19, 1933, p. 266.
41. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 4, June 14, 1933, p. 105.
42. Idem.
43. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 9, July 19, 1933, p. 265.
44. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 10, July 26, 1933, p. 298.
45. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 5, June 21, 1933, p. 153.
46. Purdom, op. cit., p. 154.
47. *New Britain Weekly,* vol. 1, no. 5, June 21, 1933, p. 144.
48. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 7, July 5, 1933, p. 208.
49. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 8, July 12, 1933, p. 240.
50. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 9, July 19, 1933, p. 272.
51. Idem.
52. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 10, July 26, 1933, p. 304.
53. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 13, Aug. 16, 1933, p. 400.
54. Purdom, op. cit., p. 156.
55. *New Britain Weekly,* vol. 1, no. 10, July 26, 1933, p. 315.
56. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 7, July 5, 1933, p. 218.
57. An associate and patron of Mitrinović.
58. "Ourselves Announced," *New Britain Quarterly,* vol. 1, no. 1, October 1932, pp. 2-3.
59. *New Britain Weekly,* vol. 1, no. 26, Nov. 15, 1933, p. 816.
60. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 24, Nov. 1, 1933, p. 737.
61. Ibid., vol. 1, no. 26, Nov. 15, 1933, p. 816.
62. *New Britain Weekly,* vol. 1, no. 10, July 26, 1933, p. 298.
63. Ibid., vol. 2, no. 28, Nov. 29, 1933, p. 64.
64. "The position as a result of the London Conference, Feb. 25, 1934," *New Britain Alliance,* mimeo, New Atlantis Foundation archives.
65. Letter in New Britain files, New Atlantis Foundation archives. 'Sammy' Lohan was one of the young members of the central group around Mitrinović.

66. Purdom, op. cit., p. 156.
67. *New Britain Weekly,* vol. 2, no. 47, April 11, 1934, p. 652.
68. Davies, op. cit., p. 135.
69. *New Britain Weekly,* vol. 2, no. 47, April 11, 1934, p. 652.
70. Idem.
71. Ibid., vol. 2, no. 47, April 11, 1934, p. 655.
72. Idem.
73. *New Britain Weekly,* vol. 2, no. 47, April 11, 1934, p. 656.
74. Ibid., vol. 2, no. 48, April 18, 1934, p. 672.
75. Davies, op. cit., p. 135.
76. *New Britain Weekly,* vol. 3, no. 59, July 4, 1934, p. 177.
77. Letter from Southend group, July 27, 1934. New Britain files in New Atlantis Foundation archives.
78. Letter from G. A. Judson to Southend group, July 19, 1934. New Britain files in New Atlantis Foundation archives.
79. Letter from G. A. Judson to 'central group,' July 19, 1934. New Britain files in New Atlantis Foundation archives.
80. New Britain files, New Atlantis Foundation archives.
81. Davies, op. cit., p. 136.
82. In February 1935 a new weekly was started, *The Eleventh Hour,* which continued in publication until July 1935, but by then New Britain as a movement had just about finished.
83. *New Britain,* vol. 1, no. 1, (new series), Autumn 1934.
84. Report in *The Trade Unionist,* September 1936.
85. Document (n.d.) in House of Industry League files, New Atlantis Foundation archives.
86. Peacock, op. cit., p. 87.
87. Ibid., pp. 87-88.
88. Ibid., p. 85.

Chapter 7

1. Otto Weininger, *Sex and Character,* London: Heinemann, n.d., p. 175.
2. Alan Watts, *In My Own Way,* London: Jonathan Cape, 1972, p. 110.
3. Personal communication with author.
4. Peacock, op. cit., pp. 88-9.
5. Watts, op. cit., p. 123.
6. Thomson, op. cit., p. 9.
7. Unpublished manuscript, archives of New Atlantis Foundation.
8. Davies, op. cit., pp. 141-2.
9. Ibid., pp. 142-3.
10. Telegram to commemorative meeting, January 29, 1953. A telegram from Eddie Gray to the same meeting described Mitrinović as "kind and always had a smile for everyone."

11. Watts, op. cit., p. 109.
12. Personal communication to author.
13. Peacock, op. cit., p. 88.
14. Quoted in Davies, op. cit., p. 131.
15. Mitrinović once remarked that a psychoanalyst would say he was someone with a neurosis about constitutions.
16. Notes of one of Mitrinović's talks. New Atlantis Foundation archives.
17. Mitrinović once remarked that Groddeck was the only European of his generation who could be understood by a Chinaman! According to Edwin Muir Mitrinović used to say of Bertrand Russell, "When he die, the angels they find nothing to eat on his bones." Edwin Muir, op. cit., p. 245.
18. See Chapter 6 above.
19. The idea of an Atlantic Alliance had first been raised in the pages *New Britain* in 1933. By the spring of 1939 the New Europe Group was calling for an Atlantic Alliance of Britain, the British Commonwealth, the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union.
20. Letter to Ben Tillett, joint President of New Europe Group, in archives of New Atlantis Foundation.
21. Personal communication to author.
22. Personal communication to author.
23. Watts, op. cit., p. 109.
24. Personal communication to author.
25. Personal communication to author.
26. Purdom, op. cit., p. 267.
27. Thomson, op. cit., p. 14.
28. Davies, op. cit., p. 144.
29. Idem.
30. Ibid., p. 118.
31. D. T. Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism,* London: Rider, 1969, p. 69.
32. Idem.
33. Ibid., p. 68.
34. Personal communication to author.
35. Personal communication to author.
36. Personal communication to author.

Chapter 8

1. Mitrinović observed to one of his companions that "living nature has been wounded."
2. Letter dated April 21st 1946, New Atlantis Foundation archives.
3. Notes of W. G. Fraser, 1946. New Atlantis Foundation archives.

4. Idem.
5. *New Britain,* July 26, 1933.
6. *The New Atlantis,* no. 1, October 1933.
7. Notes of W. G. Fraser, 1946. New Atlantis Foundation archives.
8. M. Maeterlinck, *The Buried Temple,* London: Allen & Unwin, 1924, pp. 202-6.
9. *New Britain,* May 31, 1933.
10. *Bosanska Vila,* vol. 28, 1913, p. 224.
11. *New Britain,* May 24, 1933.
12. Mairet, 1981, op. cit., p. 157. Emphasis in the original.
13. Commemoration meeting, January 29, 1954. In *The New Atlantis* of October 1933 he wrote in an editorial "To face individual death with spirituality and positive joy is greatness and health for the individual, and the sooner, and the more deeply and entirely any individual digests and absorbs in victory the idea and the ideal experience of the Universality of Awareness and of the non-existence of the separate self–hood, the sooner and the more worth and true is their second birth and their infinite awakening."
14. Weininger, op. cit., p. 107.
15. Ibid., p. 169.
16. Personal communication to author.
17. Commemoration meeting, January 29, 1954.
18. Quoted in M. Buber, *Paths in Utopia,* Boston: Beacon Press, 1958, p. 47.
19. Ibid., p. 46.
20. Ibid., p. 99.
21. As the French personalist Emmanuel Mourier wrote, ". . . there is always a risk of mystification in the affirmation of spiritual values alone, unaccompanied by any precise statement of means and conditions for acting upon them." E. Mourier, *Personalism,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952, p. 102.
22. M. Bakunin, *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin,* ed. G. P. Maximoff, New York: Free Press, 1953, p. 269.
23. See, for example, S. Rowbotham et al, *Beyond the Fragments,* London: Merlin Press, 1979.
24. E. P. Thompson, *Beyond the Cold War,* London: Merlin Press, 1982, p. 29.
25. Ibid., p. 31.
26. *The New Age,* Sept. 2, 1920, p. 268.
27. J. Lovelock and S. Epton, "The quest for Gaia," *New Scientist,* vol. 65, no. 935, 1975, p. 304.
28. T. Roszack, *Person/Planet: The Creative Disintegration of Industrial Society,* London: Victor Gollancz, 1979, p. 55.
29. Idem. Emphasis in original.
30. In 1921 Mitrinović had written, "The purpose of the earth and of Man is one . . . The Earth is the body and the cosmic instrument of the species of man." *The New Age,* July 7, 1921.
31. *The New Age,* August 26, 1920, p. 255.

32. Quoted in Butter, op. cit., p. 74.

33. K. Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia,* London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Trubner, 1936.

34. M. Weber, "Science as a vocation," in H. G. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967, p. 128.

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INDEX