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S A L A Z A R S A Y S

MISERY AND FEAR

(The characteristics of the present time)

*SPEECH DELIVERED BY H. E. DR.
OLIVEIRA SALAZAR, PRESIDENT OF
THE COUNCIL (PRIME MINISTER),
TO THE DEPUTIES IN THE LIBRARY
OF THE PARLIAMENT BUILDING
ON NOVEMBER 25, 1947.*

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MISERY AND FEAR

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Confining myself, to avoid boring you, to what in my view will help us most to understand the political situation, national and international, of the day, I have decided to draw up a short statement and to present it to you before the session of the Legislative Assembly formally opens. It seemed to me that away from the rostrum of the chamber and its exigencies we should be at greater ease in considering events and pondering the decisions which it may be necessary to make.

I

The characteristics of the present time, not only in Europe but also in the world at large, are misery and fear. These two realities mould the thoughts and activities of the peoples and of governments, engage the attention of parliaments, lead by the hand millions of wanderers, refugees, slaves, and starvelings. They dominate life — indeed, they constitute the real life of today. I do not know — my mind is groping in the dark

— whether it is worth my while to separate these two so as to trace them to different causes. Possibly not, for at bottom everything today may be attributed to the war — on the one hand to its errors, on the other to the immense consumption of wealth which it caused.

I am well aware that it is easier to criticise the past than to make decisions for the future. In a few years, however, the question whether the war policy of the Anglo-Saxon powers was mistaken will cease to be discussed. Most people will be inclined to the view that all the errors stemmed from two — the thesis of unconditional surrender and the priority given to the European theatre of operations. (I will add in parenthesis that I understand perfectly why the western countries which were occupied and devastated would dissent from this diagnosis.)

The result has been the crushing of Germany to such a degree that she is no longer a productive power, a defensive force or a factor in the European equilibrium. A yet worse result has been the inevitable advance of Russia into the heart of Europe with Russian occupation of key positions. Impelled by the logic of first principles, things have come to such a pass, that the international action which has developed in the last two years and a half, — plans, material aid, relaxation of regimes and of the restrictions imposed in the hope of checking subversion, chaos, and despair over the «abomination of desolation» — has revealed itself as futile, so that there

is now little difference between the vanquished and some of the victors. Now, if those factors which are dependent on geography or are rooted in the blood of the German nation, could be revived, they might well be able to stop or retard the political-military trends indicated above, or even to turn them to their own advantage. Here is the key to the basic problem of Europe and one of the great problems of the world.

II

Europe is suffering from misery and fear. Fear of what? Fear of Russia, fear of Communism. And Europe appears to be right. Historically, the German represents the forefront of Europe facing the Slav invader. The struggle for continental ascendancy has not caused her to lose this character nor has it diminished the importance of her mission. On her part Russia, whether Czarist or Soviet, is naturally inclined to regard this problem in the reverse. Having missed her chance in 1918, she is not likely to release her present grip. She has two objectives, first, to reduce, as far as possible, German power, material and moral; second, to insert as many buffers as possible between herself and the Germany of the future. Russia's wartime policy toward noble Finland; the annexation of the Baltic States; the enlargement of Poland in the west; the network of

agreements with neighbouring states, agreements whereby governmental directives are ordered to a common end and the economic existences of these countries are coordinated; the military and economic pressure exerted on more remote states — such a polity does not recognize a European solidarity based on the equality of nations, but subordinates all such solidarity to a conception of self-defence or domination. All this is not yet war, nor the presage of war. Nevertheless it is evident that the two European systems cannot get together and adjust their difficulties peacefully unless Russia voluntarily desists from expanding her territory and from increasing her power at the expense of other European nations. We have no doubt that she will sell her renunciation dearly.

In such circumstances, Europe is condemned to live for years on the alert and in constant dread. She is weakened, impoverished, demoralised. She cannot think of resisting alone, even if she became united under pressure of circumstances.

As I have already noted on several occasions, the results of the last War and the decisive North American intervention supported by the whole of the Western Hemisphere transferred the centre of the political gravity of the world to the West. This centre therefore cannot be European but at most Euro-American. The same reasons which drew the United States into the last two

conflagrations and eventually raised them to the summit of prestige and power, consolidated and attached them, as well as the rest of the American continent, to Europe. Thus it came about that by dint of the facts themselves, and independently of the will of those who happen to be in power, there are only two alternatives for the United States (and the same applies to the British Commonwealth): to divide the world with Russia, which is impossible as well as contrary to the interests and principles of both nations, or to fight her in Europe, to save themselves.

The ineluctability of this position does not mean, in my view, the ineluctability of war; far from it, complete understanding of the situation is necessary if we want to avoid war. Nevertheless there are many who ask themselves, in the face of the present situation, whether Western Europe will not be obliged to choose, in the next century, between becoming Russian and becoming American.

III

I admire the breadth of spirit, the generosity, the promptness, with which America is coming to the aid of Europe, whether by relieving the distress of individuals or by providing for European economy the means of recuperation. I admire them all the more as I do not con-

sider that this aid is conditioned by political or other exigencies capable of implementing its efficacy.

The increasing influence which the American nation will gain by this action and by its leadership in world affairs is indisputable; but whether this action represents a trend toward world dominion, political and economic, or corresponds to a deviation or deformation of the European spirit, the outcome does not depend on the deliberate purpose of the United States (and a purpose, at that, which would certainly be alien to that country's present preoccupations) but on the amount of resistance which Europe herself can eventually muster against the reduction of her collective being: on the moral and material reserves which she still possesses and commands and whereby she may yet re-assert herself in the world. Even if the worst were to happen, and I doubt if it will, namely if Russia were to succeed in moulding, by her spirit and her institutions, the nations which are her nearest neighbours, and establish a joint policy hostile to collaboration with the other European nations, I believe, or at least I like to believe, that Western Europe possesses adequate resources to enable her to re-establish and reconquer her rightful place.

I think that the crisis in some countries is not merely a passing one but that it has merely scratched the surface, and that at the roots of national existence there are reserves of energy which can be roused once that the crust of despondency, of lack of discipline, and of

horror of work which asphyxiates those people has been broken. England, France, Germany, Italy, the two nations of the Hispanic Peninsula, to mention only the largest groups, and without forgetting the precise contribution of the rest, possess the moral assets necessary to recuperation, provided that they do not sell their souls nor allow their fundamental qualities to be abased.

We must, however, turn to material conditions.

By a happy coincidence or dispensation of Providence, the destinies of the whole of Africa are solidly linked to those of Western Europe. England, France, Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Spain bear the responsibility, through economic and political regimes however diversified, for the effective direction of work, progress, and well-being of the African Continent, if we accept Egypt and Abyssinia (but not South Africa which is a member of the British Commonwealth.) A concerted policy of defence and economic development would place at the disposal of the West productive wealth which would vastly increase its vital possibilities and its contribution to world trade. Africa, indeed, provides all the necessary economic foundation for a desirable world policy.

I need hardly say that in expressing these views I speak sincerely and not as a mere opportunist. Nevertheless I do not wish to conceal that I regard a merely passive attitude in the face of these problems as entirely inefficacious. Laments over past disasters are no less negative and sterile than are acrimonious and more

or less insulting sallies against Russia, or despondency in the face of difficulties and the gesture of hands outstretched to receive mere alms. Moreover, such attitudes are both impossible and unreasonable as normal modes of life. Something decisive and constructive is needed if Europe is not to abdicate from her historic role. Although relatively much weakened, Europe is still capable of sharing the greatest responsibilities with the American Continent, which is her offspring and which is fortunately linked to her by a sense of solidarity.

IV

Although the strategic and political positions resulting from the war are in themselves fraught with great dangers and difficulties, a survey of the general mental attitude and of the trends of political thought in some states does not leave me over-pessimistic concerning the future outlook. That is to say I do not foresee a catastrophe. The Soviet leaders have shown themselves to be hard and tenacious, but also prudent. They hold valuable assets which will enable them to obtain by negotiation great concessions from the powers with whom they are associated. This is the line which they will pursue, preferring to exhaust the possibilities of indirect action through the prestige of their regime to the taking of risks. This leads me to say a few words

about the other great fear which is tormenting the nations, the fear of Communism.

What has called this fear into being?

It has crystallized, in the main, round the idea, and the fact, that in Communism men have to deal with an organization which, while it integrates itself into the play of forces within the nation, receives its summary doctrine and its effective orientation from abroad. To my mind, however, this does not seem a full explanation.

All across the ages, and even in our own day, many a movement, inside this country or that, has been inspired from abroad, and, supported by some external power, has asserted itself, unfortunately against the will and the true interests of the harboring nation. History is full of such trespasses. Thus in the face of Communism what we must understand above all is not the fact that it is protected or supported from without, but the essence of its doctrine and the true intentions of the inspiring power.

This last remark raises once more the problem already discussed: the problem of Russia's position in Europe and in the world, of her relations with other states and of the practical benefits which she would derive from accepting voluntarily those principles and concepts by which the international community should live and prosper. Some of these concepts have their roots in morality, others have been acquired through and fixed by experience. This means that independently of the

carrying out of the Communist programme one problem will remain: that of understanding the structure of the community of nations led by Communism, or, in other words, of knowing what amount of independence each of these countries enjoys in the management of its own internal and external affairs. One thing appears to me certain: the power which has reserved for itself a quasi-suzerain position can exert all the necessary pressures to secure preferential treatment for its own interests. This was already the dream of Hitler and of some of his satellites. I do not believe that Europe as a whole will submit to such a state of things.

It has been suggested that outside her own frontiers Russia may detach herself from Communism, in the sense not of a form of government but of an ideology, if by doing so she would advance her own interests. Communism however will not of its own accord become disinterested. It is conceivable that the party bearing the communist label may pretend to such disinterestedness to increase its prestige while in fact it would remain engaged in acquiring positions of vantage. But Communism, being the integral doctrine which it is, will tend to model men, society, public and private institutions, to the concepts which it affirms. It follows that Communism will either contradict itself and will be annulled by the play of rival political forces, or it is obliged to stir up its revolution by all means at its disposal.

Let no one believe that this revolution limits itself

to correcting those wrongs, abuses, errors, absurdities, and injustices of which the present organisation of society displays so many, and which we too must combat unflaggingly. Nor does this revolution aim at the mere transfer of power from one class to another, or at legalizing the transfer of property from one set of individuals to another. The objective of the Communist revolution is to create a new type of humanity, a different civilisation (if I may use this expression). Whether it succeeds or not is not very important, for even a frustrated revolution will achieve chaos.

What are the methods of defence that may be mobilized to check the grave dangers of infiltration from without and subversion from within represented by Communism?

If I mistake not, Communism enjoys freedom of expression and organization everywhere in Europe — and indeed in the whole world — except in Portugal, Spain, and Switzerland (though the last-named country bans it for reasons different from the other two). All it has to do is pretend that it is simply one of the political trends at work within the nation — and such pretension costs nothing. In many countries it has parliamentary representation and in several it forms part of the government.

This state of affairs can only signify either of two things. Either Communism is being regarded as a programme just as legitimate, just as capable of advancing

national interests, as that of any other party. Or it is being hoped that Communism may be rendered harmless under a regime of complete political liberty. We all have heard it said that the great remedies for the disease of Communism are: democracy and socialism in Europe, liberty and prosperity in America.

Today I do not propose to discuss these assertions, both of which in my opinion are open to the gravest doubts. Their examination would take me too far afield, and it would be embarrassing to cite the particular instances which seem to refute them. All I want to say now is that countries which start from such premises find it very difficult to pursue a consistent line of action. Some of those that have tried this path now find themselves back at the point where they started. Others that had been afraid of using authority later found themselves obliged to have recourse to violence, and may indeed consider themselves fortunate if they were not, as is usually the case, destroyed by it. Above all, there is no confidence anywhere in the medicine since the peoples everywhere live in restless fear. The world is afraid of Communism, and the Soviets make use of that fear for their own ends.

V

These are, however crudely sketched, the mainsprings of the major anxieties that beset the world today. But these major anxieties are not the only ones.

It often happens that the ideas of the conquered survive the war whose award has gone against them. More than that; certain errors or excuses which served as a reason or pretext for the struggle, emerge from it with an enhanced prestige.

I recall the leading question asked by Mussolini: «Is a nation without access to the great ocean really independent?» I remember how his mind kept on backsliding toward the idea of war by way, first, of half-truths and then of complete falsehoods. I call to mind the Nazi insistence on the «encirclement of Germany» and on the German need for access to other lands, as if Germany — Great or Greater — had not been carved out by history and geography to be a nation in the midst of other nations. Everybody may recall the excesses of nationalism as it was then preached against the elementary and ineluctable fact of international solidarity, as well as the scientific pretensions of this nationalism which based itself on geography, race, conditions of economic independence — next door to Switzerland, a country whose very existence, from this point of view, might seem absurd. Do not let us forget that this was how the principle of the revision of the map of Europe and the demand

for the adjustment and transfer of populations originated. There was a slow seepage of fashionable ideas about free access to colonial raw materials and the redistribution and internationalization of colonies, ideas which undermined the foundations of nations, ignored the efforts and sacrifices of centuries, or simply weakened authority—and for whose benefit? All this appeared to carry weight when it was first proclaimed, and some of these ideas sounded very different indeed from the facts into which they were later translated.

The revival of nationalism that followed the war is natural; so is the rise of peoples to political independence. Even some of the excesses that have been committed are comprehensible, seeing that they were born of enthusiasm. Yet when one reflects on the events of the past years and on much that is thought and continues to be said in the world today there are reasons aplenty for asking whether the errors were not after all a pack of playing cards which have merely changed hands.

VI

The problems and concepts which I have endeavoured to sketch are not, as we have seen, school theses nor subjects for academic discussions. They unfold and multiply in the life of today in the form of worry, anxiety, despondency, and international agitation with its touch

of hallucination. At the present moment there seems to be no unity of thought whatsoever on what the ages have so solidly built, and even those, who like ourselves, have laid out a course and have adhered to it, are not immune to the influence of such serious perturbations.

Evidently our action on both the international and the internal plane is determined by the conditions which I have outlined or at least implied. A great distance separates us from others in our judgment of the contemporary scene, yet we do not obstruct the making of peace or the idea of international collaboration, and we claim to be in our modest way, a constructive and useful factor everywhere and for the benefit of all. For this reason we did not mind running here, there, and everywhere, attending reunions, conferences, conventions promoted by very numerous and very busy organizations. For the same reason we submitted, in due course, our request for admission to the United Nations, although we were aware of the difficulties which confronted us. In the Security Council, Russia made use of the veto and thereby stalled the recommendation sponsored by over two-thirds of the votes. The Soviets stayed inside their own logic though they exceeded their right.

Having done our duty, and in view of what then happened, we did not renew our petition, but neither did we declare that we would desist from so doing. Meanwhile the General Assembly once more broached the matter of previous applications for membership and

made the recommendations which were in keeping with the Charter. Evidently the Soviet action — which was for that matter, irrelevant from the legal point of view, caused world opinion to rebel against the abuses, the domineering and the chicanery perpetrated by a single power. In the meantime I was pleased to note that enemy nations of the late war received better treatment than the neutrals. The latter are for peace as a matter of course, and according to the Gospel there is more rejoicing in Heaven over the conversion of one sinner than over the perseverance of thousands of the just.

It is not worth while to discuss the arguments launched against us by the Soviet orators, nor to forecast their possible future career. I believe that for some time to come they will go on opposing the entry into the United Nations of certain countries which, in the judgment of the Assembly, are justified to join. But this is something we need not worry about. We may have been shut out, but it is the others who were defeated.

VII

Another point. The events of the war and of the post-war period in the Far East — the disturbances in Indonesia, the liberation of China, the independence of India and Pakistan — have all had their repercussions in our Dominions in those areas and have caused the Government some anxiety, in spite of the devotion and

fidelity of the populations in question. In the meantime, Timor is returning to normal administrative conditions and is making satisfactory progress toward an economic recovery made possible by the financial grants placed at the disposal of the local government to repair the damage caused by the occupation and devastation of the enemy. It is to be hoped that a careful administration will seize the opportunity to reconstruct the economy of Timor and to promote the advantages inherent in her geographical position, the wealth of her soil and sub-soil and the qualities of her people.

On the fringe of China, a haven of rest and refuge for her people, Macao has not always enjoyed, since the war, the tranquillity which she deserves for having accomplished her mission as the standard-bearer of Europe in the Orient.

China has freed herself, and very rightly, by her sacrifices and her contribution to victory, from all the restrictions imposed for many years now on the full exercise of her sovereignty. As a signatory to the treaties which had established them, Portugal took great pleasure in giving her consent to the abolition of certain institutions and privileges which could not but damage the prestige and wound the susceptibilities of the Chinese nation on its own soil. Owing to incomplete information or to exacerbated feelings, certain Chinese newspapers drew, at the time, inferences which did not fit the facts and which showed lack of appreciation of our posi-

tion. But the excellent relations which prevail between China and Portugal, their ancient friendship and their mutual helpfulness were not disturbed as a result of these incidents.

On the other hand, Portuguese India has been a cause of more worry. The fall of the Indian Empire and the erection of two vast dominions which for the time being remain incorporated in the British Commonwealth, but may become independent nations tomorrow, belong doubtless with the great events of our day. We may well understand that repercussions should occur beyond the frontiers, in countries which are not under British rule.

On the flank of Greater India are Goa, Damão and Diu. From this small province hundreds of thousands of people have emigrated in the course of time. Retaining their Portuguese nationality, or until quite recently acquiring British nationality, they earned their living in Greater India protected by English liberty, just as Indians have done in our African possessions or Portuguese from Portugal have done in Brazil. On the other hand, we own Mormugão which, as the finest port on the West Coast, offers or can offer, convenient and economical facilities to large regions of Hindustan. All this exchange of population and service is usual in international life and no great difficulty need be experienced in finding solutions conforming to the interests of both parties.

It doubtless does great honour to Portuguese culture and to her civilising genius in the Orient that the Portuguese are appreciated in India. They shed lustre on Goa and can serve in the local administration, even attaining to high positions. It is simply unthinkable that this same superiority should now be turned against us.

If Goa is geographically India, from the social, religious and cultural points of view she is Europe. The Westerners, Indo-Portuguese and Indians who live there are, politically speaking, Portuguese citizens, that is to say, they are members of a civilized community which makes no distinction between them, which has existed for centuries, and which they serve not only in the land of their birth but also in Portugal itself and in the whole of the Portuguese Empire.

It is natural that the gale which has swept India should have stirred up the people of Goa as well and should have upset some of the Goanese who work in India and who were worried — without any reason for that matter — about the prospects of their livelihood, or who imagined that under certain conditions a bigger future might open up to them. It is comprehensible that part of the press should be carried away by the zeal of neophytes, but we cannot but be taken aback at the affirmations flung about by some responsible people who because of their responsibility ought to know better how far they may go. There is no greater danger for India — an India whose independence we

who have been linked with her for over four centuries hail with vivid emotion — there is no greater danger for her than the invocation of a vague racialism, and the attempt to found a state on the very errors which she herself fought.

If this new set of circumstances, or the wishes of the population which desires to increase its responsibilities, justify changes in the statute book or in the administrative system, such problems concern only Portuguese India and ourselves. As they are already being studied, a proper solution will be found. On the other hand we must have confidence in the patriotism of our people whose religious, cultural and civic heritage can only be safeguarded by fidelity and loyalty to the State which, working through the ties of blood, integrated into Europe a portion of India, and made it part of the Portuguese Empire.

VIII

I should like to add a few words on the subject of our internal policy. In order to be brief and to avoid repetition, I shall limit myself to three points.

First. It is a long time since the political atmosphere has been as calm and as free from misapprehensions as it is now. Nevertheless, there are people who, identifying political activity with the stirring up of unrest, and confusing sterile discussions with the serious study of

problems, have difficulty in adjusting themselves to the rhythm of our work and to the ethics of our regime. But the events abroad have borne out some of our affirmations so strikingly; political instability has so greatly aggravated the difficulties of governments and the vital needs of peoples; the remedies which have imposed or foreshadowed themselves approximate so closely the solutions emerging from our own experiment that the opposition has some difficulty in finding targets to hit. It is difficult for party politics to find a leg to stand on even though the tendency to fragmentation has been lessened under the precarious consolidation of «movements» and «forces».

What happened to our opponents is exactly what we had foreseen would happen: the events have outstripped liberalism and their vague social aspirations. We have left them behind. They had looked to Communist support for the novelty, the dynamism, which they themselves lacked; but such undesirable support was bound to compromise them in the end.

The position thus is now what it was in the beginning. The choice is between a national solution open to all men of goodwill and sane patriotism, and nothing. And to those who are surprised at the results which we have attained we would say that we have done little beyond girding ourselves with a few great human truths, and seeking to understand the interests and the soul of the nation.

Nevertheless, and this is my second point — a seditious movement was discovered a few months ago. I shall say nothing about it, for the culprits have been delivered over to the tribunals whose verdict we must respect. Still, I do not violate any rule or obligation when I express regret over seeing among the incriminated men who held high positions under the Government, and officers whom we were accustomed to see fighting on our own side. This case has roused comments which tend to reflect on the dignity of the Government itself, of that Government which should set the example in observing the Constitution.

I owe my place neither to consecration nor to election. The source of my powers is simply the will of him who entrusted me with my mission, confirmed by what I have been able to do for the benefit of the country. I want to be judicious as to my capacity for service, lest others should judge me more leniently than I would judge myself, but all and sundry owe me the justice of regarding me as the slave of principles, unconditionally prepared to obey the decisions of a higher authority. In other words, the dignity of the Government is sufficient guaranty of the freedom of the Head of the State, whom, during so many years of the friendliest and most loyal collaboration, I found always exclusively preoccupied with finding the best solutions of our problems and with maintaining our standards of Government at their highest.

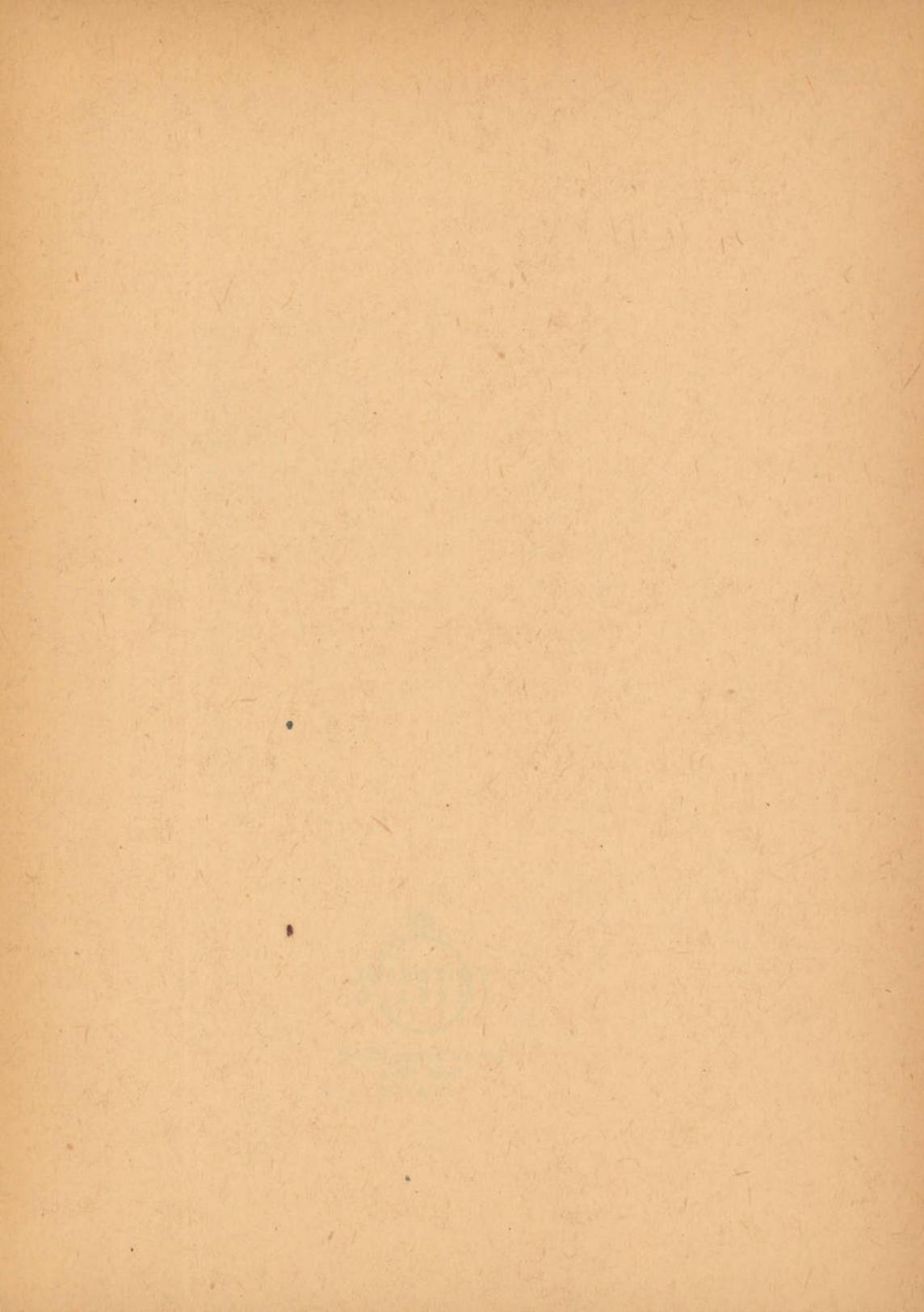
And now for the last point. I do not think that the next legislative session will be overburdened with Government proposals, since the Government is already engrossed in executing certain important reforms which have already been approved. We shall thus concentrate our efforts on defining the principles that are to govern the solution of the housing problem. It may therefore be desirable to postpone discussions of the proposals already before the Corporative Chamber relative to the status of tenants until the broader lines have been laid down for the ordering of pertinent facts.

Be that as it may, the prevailing impression that business between the Government and the Chamber has not been transacted in a satisfactory manner during the last two sessions suggests to me that it may be convenient to appoint someone who, being in close contact with both bodies, could furnish urgently required information and interpret the point of view of the Government on any question of major political importance. Such an appointment would provide further help, and I like to think reliable help, in the forming of that legislative conscience according to which a deputy should always desire to vote. I ventured to suggest a name, and if it meets with the approval of the deputies, they could work very well together.

I believe the task demands that the *leader*, let us call him by that name, should receive full support on all sides; but I regard this matter as being more closely

linked with the functioning of the Chamber than with the relations of the latter to the Government, and for this reason I consider it preferable that the choice should be made without intervention on my part.

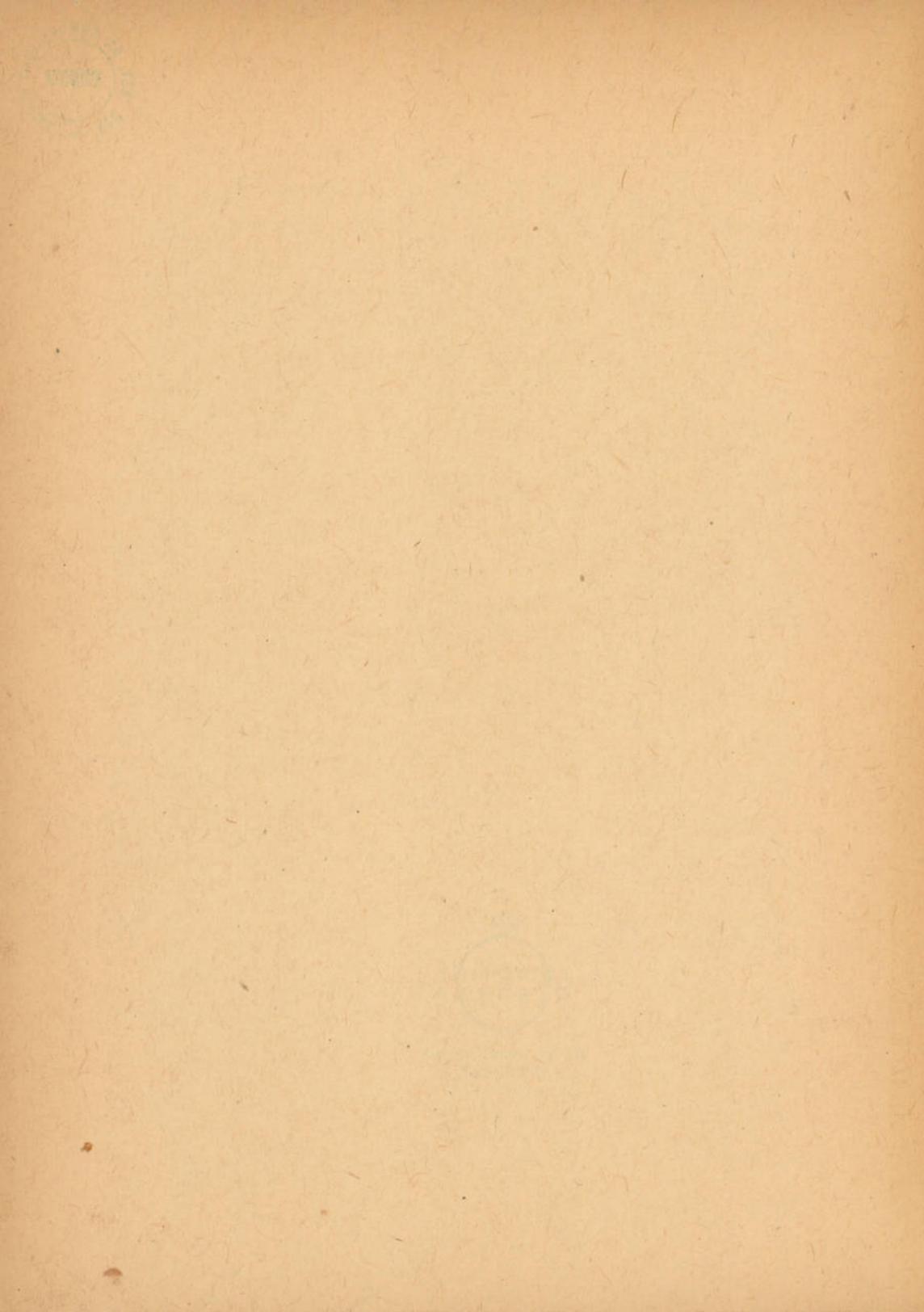
It only remains for me to thank you for your attendance and to apologize for taking up so much of your time. I shall be happy if my address, despite the haste with which it had to be prepared, is not found wanting in clarity, and if I have not allowed incidental and secondary questions to overshadow the main issues with which I proposed to deal.





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