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However, that hurdle may be passed, the main decisions before the allies are two: whether to enforce a particular form of Government on the German people (united or divided), and whether to take an actual part in that Government.

To the peoples of the United Nations, fascism in all its forms is a thing evil in itself and the cause of tragedy to the world. Its elimination is desirable from every point of view. But what is fascism? To judge by current writing in much of the western world, it differs from democracy both in degree and in kind. Backing away from that impasse, and even when accepting a definition of the main characteristics of fascism, it is still not easy to divide the fascist from the non-fascist states. Perhaps there is a new conclusion to be drawn from Woodrow Wilson's determination to make the world safe for democracy. Perhaps it may be found that the positive imposition of a form of government is neither easy nor wise; that the results rather than the machinery are the only practicable test. Ill-treatment of other nationals in Germany, wholesale massacres like that of 1934, interference in the affairs of other states, and disregard of treaty obligations would be proper causes of firm protests, or, if necessary, action.

It must be admitted that it would be better to stop fascism at its source rather than to guard against its effects. But control of the domestic government of other states has seldom, if ever, been fruitful. It is, of course, not difficult to dictate to a defeated state the forms of government which it may or may not have: the problem is to maintain a régime so established. Actual participation in the government of another country is an ungrateful task, and as likely to weaken as to strengthen that government in the long run.

A feasible policy would appear to be: the removal from office of Hitler and all other high officials of the present Government; to encourage (but not to force) the establishment of a reasonably liberal régime; to abstain from actual participation in civil government except in so far as that was required by the authorities carrying out military occupation and control; and to accept the principle that a German government (or governments) must not act in such a way as to compromise directly the interests of other states.

Reduction of Armaments

The most obvious safeguard against future German aggression is the reduction and control of her armaments. Complete abolition of all military strength would be unnecessary, and indeed undesirable, since it might well lead to internal disorder. It is to be hoped that in the forthcoming treaty there will be no complicating element introduced such as that passage which introduced the chapter on armaments in the Treaty of Versailles, and which was interpreted as at least a half-promise of general reduction of armaments. The attitude in this case can be a simple one. Germany has abused her sovereign rights by using her armaments for an aggressive war that has thrown the world into a state of suffering. Therefore she must in future not be allowed to possess the instruments of war in sufficient quantity to take such action again.