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AN AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONALIST PARTS COMPANY WITH THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: H. DUNCAN HALL AND THE FREUDIAN RESPONSE TO GLOBAL IRRATIONALISM*

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The most senior Australian in the League of Nations secretariat, H. Duncan Hall became an established advocate of institutional internationalism as a mitigator of conflict. From 1933, however, the advent of totalitarian movements and his exposure to Freudianism through his association with Dr Robert Waelder led him to the conviction that psychoanalysis provided the key to the irrationality of the times. He endeavoured to use his League position, including his influence in Australia, to convince opinion leaders of the profound dangers of national mass psychosis to the survival of the international order. Frustrated in the League, he then sought to convey the same message in the United States. Although largely unsuccessful in his efforts, and unable to establish an academic vehicle for the study of the issue in America, he was able to help bring to Australia the first practitioners of Freudian psychoanalysis trained in Europe.

H. Duncan Hall began work at the League of Nations in September 1927, becoming in the 1930s the most senior Australian in its Secretariat. Despite his brilliant Sydney degree, his influential book *The British Commonwealth of Nations* written while at Oxford, and his innovative teaching in international relations in Sydney, his Fabian associations had obstructed his prospects for academic advancement. His role at the first meeting of the Institute of Pacific Relations in Honolulu in 1925, followed by a brief stint as a professor at Syracuse University

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beginning in 1926, had deepened his interest in internationalism; from 1927 he had energetically immersed himself in the work of the League.[1]

In his first role as an official at the League in the Social Questions Section of the Secretariat, Duncan Hall contributed in no small measure to that strengthening of international controls on the manufacture and export of dangerous drugs that characterized the emerging global regime embodied in the 1931 convention.[2] Implicit in the conception of such a regime was the idea of the efficacy of rational institutional devices, incorporating demanding transparency measures and backed by international opinion, as a means to control even national actors. However, with the rise in the 1930s to prominence and state power of irrationalist movements, and the reluctance of status quo powers to use those remedies available under the authority of the League to check those movements, Duncan Hall progressively lost confidence in institutional design as a means to provide the foundations for world peace.

In 1935 Duncan Hall assumed the role of principal official in the Secretariat dealing with relations with the British dominions; he had become an established Australian presence at the League, his home a meeting place for his compatriots on their journeys to variously participate in the Geneva experiment. With career advancement came an intensified search into complementary or even alternative perspectives that would provide the basis for an adequate response to what he felt to be an impending international crisis. This essay considers his turn from the liberal institutionalism of the League to the insights provided by the psychoanalytic approach. He came to hold the view that human history was the outcome of the interplay of fundamental and pre-rational drives which, though they might be channelled in such a way as to impel conduct that accorded with standards of reasonableness, were not themselves directly amenable to rational control. Freud's later teaching was ambivalent on the prospects for the human condition, but the inclination of many of his followers was to suggest that knowledge of the role of the fundamental drives might lead to their successful management. With Duncan Hall's thinking, and also his vocation, developing along these lines, the events of the late 1930s seemed to vindicate the position he had taken.

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1 James Cotton, *The Australian School of International Relations* (New York and London, 2013), 95–128; Cotton , "Early International Relations Teaching and Teachers in Australia: Institutional and Disciplinary Origins", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 67/1 (2013), 71–97.

2 William B. McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century: An International History* (London, 2000); Bertil A. Renborg, *International Drug Control: A Study of International Administration by and through the League of Nations* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1947).

Though necessary as part of a comprehensive explanation of his conduct, this profound intellectual transition must also be seen, as will become apparent, within an individual context. The evidence suggests that Duncan Hall's engagement with Freudian ideas was also deeply personal. Before considering these personal factors, the impact of his turn to the insights provided by psychoanalytical theory upon his professional role as a servant of the League will be reviewed.

THE CRISIS OF THE LEAGUE

Embarking on a League mission to all the dominions in October 1935, Duncan Hall, accompanied by his family, arrived in Australia from South Africa on 3 January 1936. He was to remain in Australia until May—travelling extensively—before proceeding to New Zealand and then to Canada. His official role was to discharge two functions, to propagandize for the League and its works, and also to assess the state of Australian opinion, at the highest level as well as among the public,[3] on the League and its affairs. Accordingly, he addressed more than twenty public meetings, gave numerous press interviews, and held discussions with leading figures in Canberra (including Treasurer R. G. Casey, and Secretary of External Affairs William Hodgson) as well as enjoying a sojourn with his relatives.

Duncan Hall certainly discharged his official roles with singular dedication. But his presence in Australia was to serve a third, more personal, purpose. An indication of that purpose may be gleaned from a report carried in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of his remarks at a meeting organized by the League of Nations Union (LNU) at the Carlton Hotel in Sydney:

> We stand at the present time ... face to face with the greatest crisis in the history of the world. We are living in a time of conflict between two conceptions of human development. On the one hand is the conception of war and violence as a regenerative agent in human society, a conception which has behind it some moral force and the support of many material factors. On the other hand, there is the conception of the collective peace system. One conception gives vent to the destructive and aggressive elements in human nature; the other emphasises the factor of integration and constructiveness.[4]

His warning on the struggle between these conceptions was in relation to the war then raging in Ethiopia; if it was not checked by world opinion, then, he asserted

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3 Prime Minister Lyons to Avenol, 29 Oct. 1935: League of Nations [LoN] Archives, Geneva, Secretariat 50, 19973, Fold 1719.

4 *Sydney Morning Herald* 10 Jan. 1936, 10. On the Australian LNU see Nicholas Brown, "Enacting the International: R. G. Watt and the League of Nations Union", in D. Deacon *et al.*, eds., *Transnational Ties* (Canberra, 2006), 75–95.

in apocalyptic language, it would be "the beginning of a long series of disastrous wars".

Duncan Hall's preoccupation with the psychoanalytic approach had led him to utterances and activities considerably beyond his League instructions. And he was well aware of the dangers of assuming this task. As he recalled in 1962,

> By the summer of 1935, I was convinced that war with Germany was becoming highly probable. In October, I set out on a long League mission round the British Commonwealth in which I received and made a great many opportunities to convey this warning ... with full awareness of taking my life as an official in my hands as I did so.[5]

Eventually, in March 1939, after he was effectively gagged and his post declared redundant, Duncan Hall abandoned the organization in quest of a new calling, though, as he said in a letter of the time to a friend still in Geneva, "My heart was always and will always be very much in the League."[6] As will be shown, the crisis of the League was also, for Duncan Hall, a personal crisis.

The immediate context of Duncan Hall's remarks in Sydney in early 1936 was the situation in East Africa, where the League had attempted to check Italian aggression against Ethiopia with trade and financial sanctions. In 1935, Franco-British cooperation had given the sanctions regime the appearance of solidity, with the British dominions (but not Eire) following the lead of London, albeit with varying degrees of enthusiasm. However, the Anglo-French Hoare–Laval plan to partition Ethiopia and thus effectively to turn the country into an Italian dependency exposed the lack of resolve of the two major powers, who were more concerned with maintaining Italy's role in the system of Locarno security guarantees, given the rise of the Nazi regime in Germany.[7]

The Hoare–Laval proposal collapsed with the resignation of Hoare as British foreign secretary, after a public-opinion outcry, on 18 December 1935, while Duncan Hall was on board ship bound for Australia. However, League sanctions were still in effect against Italy, and Duncan Hall, having just extensively sampled opinion in South Africa, had been impressed with the extent to which League actions enjoyed widespread support even in a country known for its generally inward-looking domestic political culture. His public addresses in South Africa, given extensive newspaper coverage, as well as his pioneering radio broadcast, had represented the League decision to back sanctions as a more hopeful stage

5 "Remarks on the Role of Mrs. Laura Puffer Morgan" (*c.* 1962), Papers of Sigmund Freud, Library of Congress, MSS39990, Box 113, "Interviews and Recollections", Fold 33.

6 Hall to V. Stencek, 2 May 1939, LoN Archives, personnel file, Sec Box 787, 1594.

7 R. A. C. Parker, *Chamberlain and Appeasement: British Policy and the Coming of the Second World War* (Basingstoke, 1993), 55.

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in the emergence of a rule-governed international order.[8] Despite the adverse currents, many partisans of the League still hoped that collective security would check aggression.

In Australia, Duncan Hall was concerned to support the case for League collective security; he also sought to propagate personal views on the fundamental causes of and remedies for the disorder of the era. One of his many speaking engagements in 1936 was an address to a group of New South Wales (NSW) teachers. At this time the management of the NSW Department of Education was especially receptive to the ideals and programmes of the League, the League of Nations Union being permitted to conduct activities in schools where some 100,000 pupils enjoyed junior membership status. Moreover, Duncan Hall had cultivated the friendship of the minister for education, David Henry Drummond, an enthusiastic member of the League of Nations Union. He began by assuring his audience that their work "has received favourable notice in Geneva". For reasons that will become clearer below, Duncan Hall began by arguing that the key to the proper understanding of the educator's task was "social psychology". Expressing a view akin to that of Zimmern, Murray, Cecil and other champions of the League ideal, Duncan Hall suggested that it was the task of teachers "to increase the moral and rational control in the individual in such a way that he is no longer a helpless prey to the emotional forces which exist in his own personality".[9]

Yet rather than paint an optimistic picture of the progress that had been made in the wider acceptance of the role of education as a vehicle for world peace, Duncan Hall dwelt on the darker potential of current advances in technology. The advent of the air age was shrinking distance and thus making all threats to peace common; the extensive exposure to the radio brought the power of mob oratory to hitherto dispersed populations. The dangers of the latter could see whole peoples mobilized "to indulge in anti-social excesses which as normal individual[s] in possession of their faculties they would have shrunk back from"; in the process, "the influences of aggression" would be "turned outward against the surrounding wall of enemies". It was accordingly the role of educators "to strengthen the capacity of the coming generation to pass safely through this most perilous crisis—undoubtedly the most perilous which has yet faced humanity". Duncan Hall then sketched three possible approaches to the educational task. It is highly significant that he rejected both a "purely nationalist" and a "utopian pacificist" approach in favour of what he termed a "realist" view, which "recognises that the full significance of the biological development of man in his emergence from a purely

8 Wireless address, Johannesburg, 22 Nov. 1935, LoN Archives, Sec 50, File 18709, Ser. 1719.

9 "Education for Peace", March 1936, H. Duncan Hall Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 5547 Box 64.

animal state lies in the steadily increasing development of his rational and moral side and the increasing control thus made possible over his instinctual forces". His critique of the second approach was an indication of the extent of his disillusion with the pacifist ethos still dominant amongst the supporters of Geneva:

> History is a history both of peace and of war, of constructive and destructive elements. A nation which is educated in such a way that it is led to ignore the existence of the dangers of the[se] forces will inevitably go down before the very forces, the existence of which it denies. Perhaps it is sufficient to point out that all the general rules of religion, morality and law are based upon the recognition that every person has in him anti-social and destructive forces which are likely, if let loose, to break down the established order of society. Education no less than religion, morality and law must recognise frankly this fundamental verity.[10]

Again, the understanding of these sentiments is crucially dependent upon context. It should be recalled that Lord Cecil's "peace ballot", completed in June 1935, indicated an overwhelming support amongst the British populace for the League and for global disarmament, even as the conflict in Ethiopia became more serious.[11] A similar ballot was conducted in NSW schools later in that year by the LNU in imitation of the British original, with a similar result. In rejecting a "pacificistic" approach Duncan Hall would have been personally aware that he was rejecting ideas that were very much the focus of the League's many efforts to introduce an internationalist spirit into education through the programmes of the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation and such publications as *Bulletin of League of Nations Teaching*, and thus were current in Australian LNU thinking.[12]

As Duncan Hall's mission in Australia continued, the dark shadows in Europe lengthened. On 7 March 1936 Hitler had ordered the military reoccupation of the Rhineland, which precipitated the collapse of the Locarno treaty system that had heretofore guaranteed Western Europe's borders. Italy occupied Addis Ababa in May; by the end of June Britain had condemned sanctions as no longer justified and the League had then had them withdrawn. The dictators had severally triumphed.

With this sequence of events unfolding, Duncan Hall travelled to Canberra. His diary shows that he addressed a group of parliamentarians on 9 March;

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[10] "Education for Peace", Hall Papers, Box 64.

[11] Martin Ceadel, *Semi-detached Idealists: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1854–1945* (Oxford, 2000), 311–20; Helen McCarthy, *The British People and the League of Nations* (Manchester, 2011), 28–35.

[12] Gwenda Lloyd and John Merlo, *International Affairs in Schools* (Australian League of Nations Union, Victorian Branch) (Melbourne, 1934), 10.

he gave a similar presentation in Wellington, New Zealand, in May. His diary notes cryptically record that the main themes of his remarks were in relation to "pathological map", "collective psychosis" and the "danger of war"; the response of his audience was "no dissent; much support".[13] He also took summary notes of the main conversations he held with government ministers and officials. Of the veteran Senator Pearce, then minister for external affairs, he recorded that he "didn't seem to grasp fully" the critical dangers confronting the system of collective security. R. G. Casey, by contrast, "was impressed by picture of the real gravity of the Ab[yssinia] crisis: its relation to forces of agg[ression] in Germ[any] & J[apan]". The determination of the League to address aggression was, he felt, in need of explanation: "He & Lyons Pearce McL[achlan] Had all been g[rea]tly impressed with & surprised by the extent of L[eague]'s action." Senator Alexander McLachlan, post-master general, was "critical of the unrealistic pacificistic attitude" that was prevalent and looked to Duncan Hall to assist in its refutation, particularly through his radio broadcasts. McLachlan nevertheless contended that the government was far from clear on the likely road ahead.[14]

Returning in April, he held a meeting with Minister for Trade and Customs T. W. White, who, echoing McLachlan's earlier sentiments, agreed with his general approach: "Sd. my line was very wise and useful in the country. Melbourne pacifists espec[ially] [W. Macmahon] Ball were unbalanced. Rather mixed up in various extremist activities."[15]

Duncan Hall's papers contain a text, "War in Europe—War in Asia—War still unresolved in Africa. War in the Mediterranean", marked September 1936, which indicates his thinking around that time. Posing the question "Why this bitter end to the hope of perpetual peace?" Duncan Hall held that trust had been placed in mere declarations of the rule of law without attention to the fact that it was not possible to keep in check those "powerful destructive forces"—which are as much inherent in man as are constructive impulses—without "the presence of physical force to back up the law". Moreover, those nations committed to peace had neglected the fostering of morale, and had also focused on questions of justice without recognizing that justice was consequent on, and not a condition of, order and the rule of law. Clearly by 1936 Duncan Hall had already rejected that policy of appeasement that was the common position of most of the political elite in the empire–Commonwealth, at least until late 1938. Nor were these shortcomings the fault of the Covenant, which "recognises that there must be force behind the law". Duncan Hall saw only one way out of the impasse: peace could be preserved only if a sufficient number of nations put all their forces, moral and material,

[13] Commonwealth Mission Diary 1935–6, Hall Papers, Box 61.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

behind the supremacy of the rule of law. And this strategy required, above all, resolute leadership.[16]

Yet at this stage in his career Duncan Hall was still devoting persistent professional efforts to the further propagation of information about the League's perspective and work. In September 1936, for example, he was endeavouring to arrange radio broadcasts to Australia over the League's Radio Nations of parts of the proceedings of the International Peace Conference convening in Brussels, with regular summaries to be provided by Ray Watt, a delegate from the Australian LNU (and a personal friend of Duncan Hall's from their common university days).[17]

Moreover, Duncan Hall had not relinquished all hope in the League as a mechanism conducive to peace. Writing to Secretary General Joseph Avenol in late 1936 to report on the state of public opinion in Britain and the dominions, Duncan Hall stated, "I come back with a stronger conviction than ever that the situation can still be saved by bold leadership and a realistic policy of collective security. Peace can only be had, or war fought with success by the British Commonwealth on a policy of collective security."[18] In a detailed report that accompanied this letter, Duncan Hall outlined the sources of division and indecision present in each of the dominions, remarking that belief in the virtues of the collective security system was strongest-held in South Africa and New Zealand. In Australia opinion was more divided, the opposition Labor Party in particular "so deeply immersed in the internal class struggle that the leaders shrink from all international commitments". The Australian government now appeared, by contrast, to support "automatic economic and financial sanctions", a view Duncan Hall found encouraging given that this opinion had been articulated by Attorney-General Robert Menzies, who, in London early in 1935, had expressed in his hearing a definite preference for "a sanctionless League". Nonetheless, resolute British leadership and especially the knowledge that the British Commonwealth was acting in defence of "a super-national appeal based on the highest and clearest moral conception—that of the maintenance of a general rule of law"—would most likely elicit the solidarity of the dominions, even if war was the result.[19]

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16 "War in Europe—War in Asia—War Still Unresolved in Africa. War in the Mediterranean", Hall Papers, Box 40.

17 "Note on Conversation Regarding Broadcasts from Brussels to Australia via Radio Nations", 1 Sept. 1936, LoN Archives, 9G/25222/218.

18 Hall to Avenol, 17 Nov. 1936, Hall Papers, Box 70.

19 "The Dominions and the Future of the Collective System", Sept. 1936, Hall Papers, Box 70; see also "Report on Some Aspects of the Foreign Relations of the British Dominions", 26 April 1937, Box70.

The extent to which the leadership of the League was determined to neuter its activities may be judged from the obstacles placed in the way of the first of Duncan Hall's official roles during his next (and last) mission to the dominions, which began in September 1938. He was instructed not to give any official address or broadcast on current issues, apart from in connection with the screening of a new League film, *The Struggle for Life*, devoted to the work of the organization in the area of public health, which he took with him on the mission. It is clear from his subsequent report that he found these restrictions immensely frustrating since he could not rebut those criticisms damaging to the League's reputation that were increasingly expressed. As he wrote in early 1939, "the mission was rendered difficult by the general feeling that the League and the Secretariat were in process of disintegration, and by the limitation imposed by the Secretariat in the matter of publicity".[20] In effect he could no longer function as a prominent spokesman for the League and its ideals:

> The inability of the Secretariat representative [i.e. H. Duncan Hall] to speak in public or give interviews told its own tale. This contrasted with the scores of columns of newspaper space which was gained for the League in the press of three of the Dominions [South Africa, Australia, New Zealand] during the former mission [of 1935–6]—not to mention a dozen national broadcasts and a few provincial ones, and over a hundred meetings of various kinds addressed.[21]

Nevertheless, in Australia as in New Zealand, he reported, the general sentiment was held that the only alternative to a global collective security system was "anarchy". A matter of particular personal concern was the perception, especially in Australia, that the standard of League radio broadcasts had declined due to their increasing avoidance of controversy. Having spent much of his time and energy developing personal networks with broadcasting officials in Australia and New Zealand, in which countries the radio presence of the League had become continuous and unique, he was anxious to maintain the League's influence through this medium, especially, as he noted, that "these regular nation-wide relays ... are the only regular relays that Radio Nations have ever been able to build up with any country".[22]

Yet if Duncan Hall had come to see the League project in a different light from that perceived by the Secretary General, there were those still in the organization who understood the true value of his services. In a memorandum written to Avenol in March 1939, when the organization, facing a drastic financial shortage,

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[20] "Report on Mission in Canada, New Zealand and Australia 1938–9", 9 April 1939, Hall Papers, Box 40, 1.

[21] Ibid., 9.

[22] Ibid, 11.

was reviewing many posts, F. P. Walters (then the most senior British member of the Secretariat) had offered a glowing encomium on his contribution. Noting his earlier and "signal services" in the Opium Section, he then observed that the duties of Duncan Hall's subsequent post had confronted him with a professional dilemma:

> Hall's transfer to the Information Section coincided almost exactly with the outbreak of the Ethiopian war, and since he has always been passionately attached to the integral theory of the Covenant, the events which followed Italian victory in 1936 have inevitably cast a certain shadow on his work, so far as that has been concerned with the policy of the Governments of those Members of the League with whom he was specially in liaison, namely the British Dominion Members. If in this respect he has not always been wise, and has been criticised by the official representatives, in particular, of his own country, it should be remembered, first, that his activities have helped to maintain the League idea amongst opposition circles in those countries; secondly, that the idea of free expression of opinions is very completely adopted in them all, and while the members or supporters of a Government in power naturally always prefer to be left alone and not criticised, the fact that they inform us, for instance, of their objections to what Hall is doing does not mean that in their mind there is any strong personal resentment or distrust in regard to him.[23]

Duncan Hall's enthusiasm for the League was not in doubt.

PSYCHOLOGY AND THE INTELLECTUAL CONTEXT

Duncan Hall's fears that the League's collective security arrangements might be unable to avert European and world war were shared by many of the organization's erstwhile partisans—notably including Alfred Zimmern[24]—especially from 1936 onwards.

As has been shown, Duncan Hall's uncertainties regarding the capabilities of the League, and his view that the decline in the collective security system was manifest by 1936, sent him in quest of alternative analyses of and prescriptions for world order.[25] This quest seems to have begun as early as 1932. A 1930s family photograph (probably from 1932) shows Duncan Hall in his sailing dinghy on

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[23] Walters to Avenol, 9 March 1939, LoN Archives, Sec Box 787, Fold 1594.

[24] Alfred Zimmern, *The League of Nations and the Rule of Law 1918–1935* (London, 1936), 8.

[25] The tension between the League's ambitious internationalist agenda for economic and social improvement and its increasingly precarious control of global security issues is a major theme in much recent work on the League: e.g. Susan Pedersen, "The Meaning of the Mandates System: An Argument," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 32/4 (2006), 560–82; Patricia Clavin, *Securing the World Economy: The Reinvention of the League of Nations 1920–1946* (Oxford, 2013); Sandrine Kott and Joëlle Droux, eds., *Globalizing Social Rights: The International Labour Organization and Beyond* (New York and London, 2013).

Lake Geneva; sitting next to his wife Bertha in the stern is Albert Einstein.[26] For a long period a confirmed and vocal pacifist, in 1932 Einstein was persuaded, in a project initiated by the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation[27] (an affiliate of the League—Einstein had been briefly a founding member of its originating group, the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation) to engage in an exchange on the topic of war and conflict with Sigmund Freud, their essays published in 1933 under the title *Why War?*. Attracted by the message of this work, Duncan Hall remained in touch with Einstein, visiting him in Princeton in November 1938.[28] They discussed Freud, whose works Einstein had reread and found to be evidence of the workings of an "immense mind" despite his continuing doubts regarding their scientific status. At this time Duncan Hall was seeking endorsement for a "scientific" study of the current international crisis. Einstein maintained that Europe had died "a spiritual death" and that this was a problem also for the United States, given that its spiritual resources were of European provenance; nevertheless, there still might be merit in a new scientific approach in America to the whole question. In the previous year, 1937, Duncan Hall had visited Vienna to conduct an interview with Freud himself. Anna Freud was also present, and the conversation, as Duncan Hall recorded it, focused upon the coming cataclysm, on the avoidance of which Freud offered remarks at once ironic and pessimistic. According to his 1962 recollections,

> I sought the talk because of my conviction of the approach of war; when, of course, no one could say. But perhaps something could still be done about it, if only statesmen could be given more insight into the demoniacal human forces that were being released in the world. The idea was not thought through, but Freud listened patiently to it. Then he interrupted and seemed to change the subject. "You've been in America?" "Yes" "And you saw Niagara. You must have noticed how sleek and smooth the waters are in the gorge above the cataract. It might be some consolation to those who are being carried down the stream to know that the cataract is just ahead." His daughter Anna, sensing no doubt some discomfort in me, interrupted: "But surely, Father, if they did know, they might make a desperate effort to reach the shore." He smiled and said: "I suppose so." I have often thought since of that conversation. I knew then that Niagara was ahead. I have never since ... had again any such feeling of inevitability.[29]

This is the background to Duncan Hall's reference in Australia in early 1936 to the "aggressive elements" let loose in Europe, and the danger they posed to the world.

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[26] Courtesy of the Hall family.

[27] Daniel Laqua, "Transnational Intellectual Cooperation, the League of Nations, and the Problem of Order," *Journal of Global History*, 6/2 (2011), 223–47.

[28] United States Diary, Hall Papers, Box 40.

[29] "Remarks on the Role of Mrs. Laura Puffer Morgan", underlining in original; there is a similar passage in the autobiographical sketch, Hall Papers, Box 59.

In short, he had become convinced that the explanation was to be sought in the application of Freudian insights to the analysis of mass movements. It followed that the crisis of the League of Nations and its system of collective security could not be addressed by revisions to the Covenant, or by offering concessions to the aggressive states so that they would come to share the same positive evaluation of the international order, but only by political leaderships and public opinion in the democracies grasping the essential irrationality of the policies of those states and acting accordingly.[30]

How he came to this viewpoint, and the lengths to which he then went to propagate this idea, not least in Australia, will now be considered.

At this point Duncan Hall's career intersects with that of psychoanalyst Dr Robert Waelder. A person of wide learning, Waelder was a member of Freud's inner circle in his last years. According to Paul Roazen, he was a particularly faithful follower; in relation to one of his papers he attracted "Freud's highest possible compliment", that it was better than Freud's original. Later Waelder was equally close to Anna Freud.[31] In 1932 Waelder became co-editor of the most important Freudian scientific organ *Imago*, and in late 1932 or early 1933 met Duncan Hall through Leon Steinig, his colleague since 1930 in the Social Questions and Opium Traffic Section. According to Samuel Guttman, Waelder's literary executor and later an acquaintance of Duncan Hall's, Steinig and Waelder had been boyhood friends in Vienna.[32] It had been Steinig's visit to Einstein in Berlin in October 1931 that had begun the process by which the Feud–Einstein exchange had been sponsored by the League.[33]

The influence of Waelder's ideas on Duncan Hall was very considerable. In the summer of 1933, having just returned from Australia, he delivered a lecture to the Geneva International Summer School on the topic "World Organisation before and since the War"; his notes indicate that his expressed views were still somewhat conventional. His chief thesis was that the League was increasingly an organ of global administration, the sphere of which was ever-enlarging;[34] he had been arguing this position in his teaching in the 1920s. But in his autobiographical

30 Cecelia Lynch, *Beyond Appeasement: Interpreting Interwar Peace Movements in World Politics* (Ithaca, NY, 1999).

31 Paul Roazen, *Freud and His Followers* (London, 1976), 308; Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, *Anna Freud: A Biography*, 2nd edn (New Haven, 2008), 201; Samuel A. Guttman, 'Obituary Robert Waelder 1900–1967', *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 50 (1969), 269–73.

32 Samuel A. Guttman, "Robert Waelder and the Application of Psychoanalytic Principles to Social and Political Phenomena", *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 34/4 (1986), 835–62, 839.

33 David Rowe and Robert Schulmann, eds., *Einstein on Politics* (Princeton, 2007), 215–16; Ronald W. Clark, *Einstein: The Life and Times* (New York, 1971), 363–5.

34 "World Organisation before and since the War", Hall Papers, Box 42.

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notes it is clear that by this time he had perceived in Waelder's approach to the troubles of the time connections with other ideas that had been perennial concerns since the 1920s. In particular, he found an affinity between Waelder's account of the rising irrationality of the era and the argument found in an essay of Gilbert Murray from 1920, "Satanism and the World Order", that offered, in Duncan Hall's view, "insight into the enormous destructive forces that could be released if men decided the world-order was not for them and turned to Satan as their God".[35] This essay had made such an impression that Duncan Hall had used it in his teaching in Sydney and also in Syracuse.

Murray was then chair of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, and the most prominent of those British intellectuals (he was Australian-born) who were supporters of the League. Duncan Hall gives the following account of his meeting at that time with Murray:

> In 1933 I had an opportunity to visit Murray in Geneva. I had written to him in advance emphasising the deep impression his article of 1920 had made on me ... When we met I mentioned the 1920 ["Satanism"] paper and went on to speak of Robert Waelder's paper on the nature of "Collective Psychosis" and Murray agreed that this was a useful concept. (Waelder's pa[p]er was, in fact, written and published under Murray's auspices in 1934). But there was no real response from him ... As I talked with him I had the strange impression that he had lost all interest in his original concepts ... So far I had won no support on the use of collective psychosis as a means of helping statesmen to understand better the problems facing them.[36]

Waelder's 1934 paper "L'étiologie et l'évolution des psychoses collectives" had appeared in a League publication;[37] a German version was published in *Imago* the following year. It appears that despite Murray's initial lack of enthusiasm, between them Duncan Hall and Steinig had sufficiently interested him and his international intellectual cooperation network to give currency to Waelder's ideas. Hall's records state that the pair were engaged in joint study in these years when they both had a close interest in the Freudian view of mass movements. A family letter relates a trip to Britain with Steinig, visiting London and Oxford, where they called on Zimmern, W. G. S. Adams (warden of All Souls' College),

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35 Gilbert Murray, "Satanism and the World Order" (1919), in Murray, *Humanist Essays* (London, 1964), 188–204; Peter Wilson, "Retrieving Cosmos: Gilbert Murray's Thought on International Relations", in Christopher Stray, ed., *Gilbert Murray Reassessed* (Oxford, 2007), 239–60.

36 "Satanism and the Enigma of Gilbert Murray", draft autobiography, chap. 9, Hall Papers, Box 59; "Satanism" (file), Box 65.

37 Robert Waelder, "The Etiology and Course of Mass Psychoses" (1934), in Waelder, *Psychoanalysis: Observation, Theory, Application. Selected Papers of Robert Waelder*, ed. S. A. Guttman (New York, 1976), 393–409.

William Brown (director of the Institute of Experimental Psychology at Oxford) and others "to try out our own ideas & conclusions regarding the League & international affairs, especially the psychological aspect. We have both been studying together".[38] Duncan Hall had known Adams when studying at Oxford, between 1915 and 1920.

What did the pair find so compelling in Waelder's writings? In his 1934 paper Waelder suggested that mass psychosis derived from a "de-inhibition of the instinctual life, that is to say, primarily of the aggressive instincts", where the conscience of "normal individuals" was, as a consequence of their immersion in group dynamics through the exploitation of their feelings of frustration and anxiety, "diminished and replaced by the voice of the leader".[39] Of the fundamental human drives, eros was then kept for relations with community members, whereas aggression was shown to those outside the group. The ability of members of the group to test their ideas against reality was degraded, and accordingly such mass behaviour was "the most dangerous" possible source of war. Waelder's inspiration for this proposition had come from Freud, who had written in 1921 of the phenomenon of the "group mind" which came into existence when "the individual gives up his group ideal and substitutes for it the group ideal as embodied in the leader."[40] However, in his most considered treatise on social and political questions, *Civilisation and Its Discontents*, which emerged just as totalitarian movements were on the ascent, Freud had been cautious regarding the application to the behaviour of a group of an analytical concept framed with individual psychology as its focus.[41] Nevertheless, Waelder's ideas would not have been the subject of a publication in *Imago* without at least Freud's implicit approval.

So taken with Waelder's ideas was Duncan Hall that he sought to give them the widest propagation, particularly amongst the political elite. On his visit with Steinig to Britain in 1935 he extended a dinner invitation to Arnold Toynbee—then director of studies at the Royal Institute of International Affairs—in order to suggest that Waelder might be invited to address a seminar at Chatham House.[42] Their strategy was successful, Waelder addressing the institute on the topic of

38 Hall letter, 30 June 1935, Hall Papers, Box 4, part 1.

39 Waelder, "The Etiology and Course of Mass Psychoses", 396, 397.

40 Sigmund Freud, "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego" (1921), in Freud, *Civilization, Society and Religion* (Penguin Freud Library vol. 12) (London, 1991), 91–178, 161.

41 Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. David McLintock, Leo Bersani and Adam Phillips (London, 2002; first published 1931), 104; Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time* (London, 1988), 548.

42 Hall letter, 30 June 1935, Hall Papers, Box 4, part 1; Toynbee to Hall, 12 Feb. 1935, Hall to David Loch, 15 April 1935, Hall Papers, Box 1.

"The Psychological Aspects of International Affairs", though on the date that was made available Duncan Hall was already absent on his mission in South Africa.

At the meeting Professor Adams took the chair, Waelder meeting him beforehand at a dinner hosted by the Haldanes.[43] It is noteworthy that in his address, perhaps to avoid technical terms, Waelder did not use the concept of "mass psychosis" directly, though he did discuss aggression as a fundamental human drive and he also referred to the phenomenon of "mass" as one particularly applicable to the current age. Waelder's message delivered at St James's Square was cautious; just as in the individual the "domestication" of aggression is the source of conscience, and individuals vary to the extent that they have managed and diverted this drive, so it is possible to speak of nations that are "more highly domesticated" and for which the ideology of the League of Nations is likely to be motivating. However, the obligations of the Covenant will be a minor constraint on the less domesticated and thus "less peaceful"; in the event of aggression on the part of these nations, fear will constitute a far more effective restraint. For fear to enter the calculations of the aggressors, the provisions of the Covenant would have to be enforced, and in that case there would be a strong motive for doing so, though such collective action would not by any means be necessitated:

> in the first instance the execution of the clauses of the Covenant is for all Signatory powers a treaty obligation. Thus, a superego motive is at work; there is a moral obligation to take the necessary measures against the aggressor. How far this motive is effective in itself is a separate question. One would certainly hesitate to overestimate it.[44]

An advantage that the League nevertheless possessed derived from the fact that in the event that action under the terms of the Covenant entailed military measures, these could be motivated by "an appeal to lay aside inhibitions of instincts in the service of an ideal"; that is, "ad maiorem pacis gloriam". The potency of this ideal might indeed cause nations otherwise contemptuous of the obligations of the League to fear the consequences of contemplated malfeasance.[45]

Waelder's account of the discussion indicates that his views had attracted some interest, and positive agreement in the case of William Brown. Brown had already warned of the dangers of those ever-present "unconscious tendencies" of "self-assertion and aggression" in the masses which, if released by some "magician's wand", would ensure that any pacification between nations would remain superficial, this situation recommending the prudent maintenance of defensive

43 Waelder to Hall, undated (Dec. 1935), Hall Papers, Box 1.

44 Waelder, "The Psychological Aspects of International Affairs", Hall Papers, Box 1, 10–11; much of this text is reproduced in Waelder, *Psychoanalysis: Observation, Theory, Application*, 410–14.

45 Waelder, "The Psychological Aspects of International Affairs", 11.

forces until mankind had reached a higher cultural level.[46] Interestingly, Waelder apparently defended his use of analytic concepts applicable to individuals, notably aggression, as relevant also to group behaviour against criticism of C. A. W. Manning from the London School of Economics by expounding, as he wrote, "our ideas about individuals and groups".

In 1939, again under League auspices, Waelder published a lengthier treatise entitled *Psychological Aspects of War and Peace*. By this time, having like Freud and his family fled the *Anschluss*, he had taken up overseas residence in Boston. In this work he returned to the dynamics of groups, in which, he suggested (indicating a convergence of terminology with Duncan Hall), while some writers see "something satanic", others perceive "sacrifice" and "idealism". In reality, both are possible outcomes; groups possess "in a sense a greater capacity for good as well as for evil than the individual".[47]

In greater detail he described the process of "regression" whereby the needs of the mass and the directions of the leader supplant the role of the conscience, unleashing the potential for outwardly directed aggression since "in a mass situation the demands of the group take the place of the conscience".[48]

The formation of such masses is facilitated by the fact that too few human beings are governed by reason, but precisely because these groups require conflict with others if they are to persist, they are unstable and likely to collapse through failings or delusions of leadership. Once nations cease to behave as masses and constitute, rather, types of "association" bound by interests, ideals or identity, then a peace of mutual accommodation can be envisaged. However, forms of peace both more and less exacting could be conceived: the peace that would be realized in an oecumenical (that is, a global) community, or that peace that would be the product of a balance of fear, where the conditions of modern war have made its consequences prohibitively devastating.[49] The work concluded with an outline for a programme of historical and critical research that would explore these ideas and develop them further, an objective that Duncan Hall later was to pursue in the United States.

It is evident that by the end of 1933 Duncan Hall and Steinig had come to accept that these ideas provided the most comprehensive explanation for the events of the era. Prior to Munich, short of a complete revolutionizing of the international system, it was generally held there were three ways open to maintaining the security and stability of Europe. Confidence in the collective

[46] William Brown, *The Times*, 11 Dec. 1934.

[47] Robert Waelder, *Psychological Aspects of War and Peace* (League of Nations, Geneva Research Centre, Studies, X/2) (Geneva, 1939), 14.

[48] Waelder, "The Psychological Aspects of International Affairs", 33.

[49] Waelder, *Psychological Aspects of War and Peace,* 52–3.

security arrangements that were the product of the Covenant was one, reliance on the preponderance of the status quo powers was another, and a third sought security through negotiations—more or less comprehensive—regarding the alleged grievances of the non-status quo powers. While not mutually contradictory there were nevertheless tensions between these possible policies. The League was most closely associated with the first, which, indeed, was its chief rationale, though the fact of its concomitant commitment to disarmament admitted the reasonableness of aspects of the third. However, if it was admitted that the non-status quo powers were animated by mass movements as depicted by Waelder, then they would not ultimately be deterred from aggression by the existing collective security system; neither would they be prepared to tolerate the dominance of Europe by France and Britain. And any negotiations directed at addressing their grievances would be perceived as weakness as well as validation of their claims. In short, a cataclysm was approaching, collective security would be actively tested, and the challenge could only be met by Britain and France backing the provisions of the Covenant by military force. Such reasoning lay behind Duncan Hall's sense of mission, one he shared closely with Steinig.[50]

In these years there were others, mostly émigré scholars, who formed similar conclusions, though not necessarily from these precise premises. Franz Neumann, then in exile at the London School of Economics, though his analysis of the Nazi movement was principally class-focused, described it as "totalitarian" as early as 1933.[51] In his later book on Nazi Germany he emphasized the unmediated control of the population directly by the ruling groups. In the United States, Harold Lasswell's analysis of the Nazi strategy of mass mobilization exhibited a clear debt to Neumann and more particularly to Freud. It was Lasswell's view that Hitler and his circle had been adept at manipulating the aggression of their followers; by thus "projecting blame from the self upon the outside world, [their] inner emotional insecurities are reduced".[52] In general, the role of aggression was a significant element in contemporary analyses of the Nazi phenomenon, though an extensive survey published immediately after the war included no examples of the mass-psychosis hypothesis.[53]

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50 Steinig to Duncan Hall, 17 June 1936, Hall Papers, Box 1.

51 Franz Neumann, "The Decay of German Democracy", *Political Quarterly*, 4/4 (1933), 525–48; Benjamin L. Alpers, *Dictators, Democracy, & American Public Culture: Envisioning the Totalitarian Enemy, 1920s–1950s* (Chapel Hill, 2003).

52 Harold D. Lasswell, "The Psychology of Hitlerism", *Political Quarterly*, 4/3 (1933), 373–84, 380.

53 Paul Kecskemeti and Nathan Leites, "Some Psychological Hypotheses on Nazi Germany: I–IV", *Journal of Social Psychology*, 26/2 (1947), 141–83; 27/1 (1948), 91–117; 27/2 (1948), 241–70; 28/1 (1948), 141–64.

In psychological circles in Britain, the ideas of Waelder and Duncan Hall should have found a receptive audience,[54] not least because of the close link between the emergence of psychology as a distinct discipline and the rise of internationalism.[55] Edward Glover had been a persistent voice in support of the proposition that war had its origins in pre-rational aggressive impulses.[56] In addition, amongst many in the field of psychology there was profound unease regarding developments in Europe. As Mathew Thomson has suggested, it was characteristic of this period that

> a vision of psychological subjectivity tended to be framed, not just in relation to the prospect and then reality of war, but in relation to an ideological other, particularly that of Nazism ... Through psychology, the problems of war and political extremism were thus neatly coupled, both regarded as exploiting a potential for violence towards others that lay at the heart of human nature.[57]

Yet, as this study also shows, the response of most British psychologists was principally to focus upon issues of national morale or upon the likely impact of war on the domestic and military populations, rather than dwell on the incompatible and insatiable nature of totalitarian states in relation to world order.

There were, however, a few exceptions. In a collective volume authored by Labour Party intellectuals, John Bowlby, writing with E. F. M. Durbin in early 1939, analysed the connection between personal aggression and war in the formation of what they termed "national neuroses". Accepting the Freudian conception of "projection", Bowlby and Durbin argued that through its exercise "aggression is made respectable by manifestation through the corporate will of the group".[58] In developing this argument they sought to refute the prevailing views of the political left that favoured economic or ideological explanations for war.

However, as has already been noted, the only established figure in the field to take a sustained interest in Waelder and Duncan Hall was William Brown (though his published works made no specific reference to Waelder's essays). In 1936 Brown published a paper on "the Psychology of International Relations"

54 Richard Overy, *The Morbid Age: Britain between the Wars* (London, 2009), 136–74.

55 Glenda Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics, 1870–1919* (Basingstoke, 2006).

56 Edward Glover and Morris Ginsberg, "A Symposium on the Psychology of Peace and War", *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, 14/3 (1934), 274–93.

57 Mathew Thomson, *The Psychological Subjects: Identity, Culture, and Health in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Oxford, 2006), 217.

58 John Bowlby and E. Durbin, "Personal Aggressiveness and War", in E. Durbin and J. Bowlby, eds., *War and Democracy: Essays on the Causes and Prevention of War* (London, 1938), 3–150, 27.

in which the mass-psychosis hypothesis is discussed favourably.[59] Writing in 1939 Brown acknowledged the dangers of the emergence of a "group mind" in the thinking of which the leader in effect replaces the superegos of his followers, opening the way to the manifestation of their "primitive instinctive tendencies".[60]

Regarding Hitler, however, even after Munich Brown expressed some ambivalence. While accepting C. G. Jung's 1936 characterization of him as a latter-day archetypal "Wotan", and taking the somewhat disturbing position that Hitler had undertaken the necessary restoration of German self-respect (following the humiliation of Versailles), Brown was also a strong supporter of Neville Chamberlain and his personal missions to Germany. He thus still placed his hopes in the more conventional strategies of international diplomacy to provide effective restraints on war, whereas Bowlby and Durbin by this time regarded a stronger collective security system as the only long-term defence against international aggression while lamenting the failure of the League in that department. Nonetheless, they also still believed that war could be avoided.

It is noteworthy that the expression "mass psychosis" never became an item of frequent usage, though some journalistic examples can be found.[61]

DUNCAN HALL'S MISSION TO INFORM OFFICIAL AND PUBLIC OPINION

Convinced that the troubles of the time had deep psychological roots, the collaborators, Steinig, Waelder and Duncan Hall, sought every possible avenue to acquaint influential opinion with their insights. They had some part, working with Ernest Jones and Adrian Stephen, in focusing the attention of the British Medical Association on this phenomenon, the association's annual meeting in Belfast in 1937 urging a study of the deeper causes of war.[62]

With his role as the League's principal contact with the dominions, Duncan Hall also used his contacts with their leaders—some going back a decade or more—to advance his argument for the need to understand the inner dynamics of the dictatorships, if their inevitable challenge to the League and its values was to be met with adequate policies.

In July 1935, prior to his trip to the dominions, Duncan Hall met Robert Menzies (then Australian Attorney General and heir apparent to Prime Minister

59 William Brown, "The Psychology of International Relations", *The Lancet*, 1 Feb. 1936, 290–93.

60 William Brown, *War and Peace: Essays in Psychological Analysis* (London, 1939), 58.

61 "Hitler and His Subjects", *The Spectator*, 18 Sept. 1941, 8.

62 Adrian Stephen to Hall, 23 Aug. 1937; Hall to Stephen, 2 Nov. 1937, Hall Papers, Box 4, part 1; see also on the Belfast meeting, *The Times*, 21 July 1937.

Lyons) in London—they both attended the Empire Parliamentary Association luncheon in Westminster Hall at which Menzies delivered a triumphant speech. It is clear that by this time Duncan Hall was convinced that the current threats to the League, as well as the reluctance of some powers to come to its defence, could be traced to the fundamental differences between the two types of state in the League. During their meeting,

> I ... drew his attention to the psychological basis of this situation, to the suggestion that what we were really witnessing were differences of degrees of domestication. The more domesticated peoples had difficulty in arousing sufficient aggression in themselves in order to defend their civilisation from the aggression of less domesticated peoples.[63]

Duncan Hall found encouraging Menzies's agreement with the view that even if many countries abandoned the League, the British Commonwealth would remain since the organization not only gave "internal unity of action" in foreign policy to all its members but also espoused identical international standards. However, Menzies, like most of his colleagues, soon became a supporter of appeasement.

Duncan Hall's friendship with Menzies was much later to facilitate his historical researches, but at this time he seems to have found, in J. C. Smuts, the most receptive of the statesmen of the Commonwealth to his new ideas. Smuts was already aware of his existence; in his memorandum on the future governance of the empire prepared for the 1921 Imperial Conference, Smuts had referred with approval to the proposal Duncan Hall had propounded "in his interesting book".[64] On his mission to South Africa in 1935, Duncan Hall addressed a meeting of the League of Nations Union with Smuts in Pretoria, where he was reported as saying,

> The issue now to be decided is the issue of civilisation itself. War and civilisation cannot co-exist; we must choose between the two, and the choice, thank God, is being made at Geneva ... If the situation in Abyssinia is not dealt with summarily, it is the end of European civilisation.[65]

He also held three interviews with Smuts, who—despite being deputy prime minister—had little role in foreign affairs, though he was still a most influential figure, and one who up until that time had been associated with a policy of

63 "Note of Conversation with Menzies 1935", H. Duncan Hall Papers, Box1; R. M. Martin, *Robert Menzies A Life*, vol. 1 (Melbourne, 1996), 161–2.

64 J. C. Smuts, Memorandum 1921, in *Selections from the Smuts Papers*, vol. 5, ed. Jean van der Poel (Cambridge, 1973), Doc. 46, 71.

65 *The Star* (Johannesburg), 12 Nov. 1935.

appeasement.[66] His disciple, J. F. H. Hofmeyr, had been at Balliol, as a Rhodes Scholar, with Duncan Hall.

Having sent him in advance Waelder's 1934 essay, Duncan Hall recorded that Smuts was interested in but still cogitating on its argument. "I talked of some of the world events from a more psychological point of view and felt that he was really interested and impressed ... I developed the idea of the new menace of radio in creating a collective psychosis on a nationwide scale." At their final talk Duncan Hall, escorted by Hofmeyr, decided to expound Waelder's Freudian account of the challenges implicit in the times. Having persuaded Smuts that the key idea was eros rather than sex, Duncan Hall then offered remarks which were as much personal as international commentary:

> And so on into a description of analysis, the process, the results. "This is extraordinarily interesting," he said. Then came a string of questions. "How does this square with religion: won't that give you what analysis does: control and balance? Is there not a danger of losing your righteous indignation? Can you keep your high moral sense." I answered as best I could: Religion a great and vital conserving force for society. Was I religious: I thought I had the essence of the results of religion: Moral and indignant? Yes: what was the urge that made me live laborious days working at this thing? And enthusiasm for causes, and ideas and the future of man and imagination were not lessened. They were freer, calmer, better directed; but not less intense. This seemed to satisfy him. He said and repeated later twice or three times to Hofmeyr: "This is the modern Yogi: he disciplines himself ... He tries to make thought clearer by concentrating his forces."[67]

In this discussion having laid the foundations, Duncan Hall then introduced the hypothesis of "collective psychosis", before broaching a possible "political programme" that would see Smuts lend his weight to advancing the analysis that Duncan Hall was convinced was the only way forward. Though they were not to meet again, Duncan Hall noted that in his remarks on the international dangers of the irrational, "his speeches a few days later reproduced part of our talk".[68] Having spoken in the past for appeasement, his view at the end of 1935, as he recorded to Leo Amery in December, was, "The stand has been made now, and I think has been rightly made for fear of greater evils which might ultimately arise if Italy had got away with it ... my hope is that the League will survive its present trial in a strengthened form."[69]

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66 W. K. Hancock, *Smuts*, vol. 2, *The Fields of Force 1919–1950* (Cambridge, 1968), 271–4; J. C. Smuts, "The Present International Outlook", *International Affairs*, 14/1 (1935), 3–19.

67 "Notes on Talks with General Smuts at his farm" 12 Nov. 1935, Hall Papers, Box 1.

68 Ibid.; "Covenant or Chaos", *Cape Times*, 31 Nov. 1935, 17.

69 Smuts to Amery, 2 Dec. 1935, in *Selections from the Smuts Papers*, vol. 6, ed. Jean van der Poel (Cambridge, 1973), 30.

In his response to Waelder's letter giving his account of his Chatham House talk, Duncan Hall wrote, "I have found the greatest possible interest both in South Africa and in Australia, and on the part of General Smuts, in the psychological approach. It is perfectly clear from my experience that the time is ripe for a real campaign to educate public opinion on the fundamentals."[70]

Duncan Hall later arranged for Smuts to give a New Year's address over Radio Nations, which was broadcast in January 1938, when Smuts articulated a renewed plea to adhere to the Covenant. In his correspondence at that time he returned again to his preoccupation with the explanation of human conduct in terms of psychology and Waelder's "first really scientific" exposition of that position.[71]

As has been shown, Duncan Hall travelled on to Australia from South Africa. Though he apparently had less success, there too he sought to interest members of the government in his psychological analysis. At dinner with White, Casey, Hodgson and the British high commissioner Sir Geoffrey Whiskard, Duncan Hall recorded that White "didn't seem to get the hang of the psych[ological]. arg[umen]t". At his first talk with Casey he seems to have encountered a more sympathetic audience:

> Explained very briefly collective Psychosis to him ... Mentioned Waelders Lecture. He was deeply interested & impressed. Need an internat[ional] psychoanalyst he s[ai]d. i.e. he saw more of the implications of my references to psy[chology] than most men so far in Aus[tralia] & seemed willing to listen ... Explained irrationality etc.[72]

George Knowles, Commonwealth Solicitor General, was "impressed" and "receptive" to his views. His one attempt at a complete presentation of them was a mixed success: "the only full exposition of collective Psychosis was with Hodgson & wife & Mrs Smithy where opened out pretty fully. Ladies urged me on & showed great interest & agreement. H[odgson] more reserved but consid[erable] interest & no opposition shown. But should go cannily with him". On the remainder of his tour of the British dominions, Duncan Hall met officials and scholars of similar standing. In New Zealand these included Walter Nash—then finance minister—and Carl Berendsen; in Canada he held discussions with J. W. Dafoe, O. D. Skelton and former prime minister Arthur Meighen.

On his return journey to Geneva from his prolonged mission, Duncan Hall travelled by way of Britain. There he acquainted Churchill, then out of office, with the extent of his support amongst influential figures in the dominions, news that was received with obvious pleasure. The interview did not, however, produce that interest in Duncan Hall's psychological views that he had evidently hoped:

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70 Hall to Waelder, 5 Feb. 1936, Hall Papers, Box 4.

71 Hall to Smuts, 24 Feb. 1938, Hall Papers, Box 1.

72 Diary, Commonwealth mission 1936, Hall Papers, Box 61, underlining in original.

Then I turned to a more difficult task ... the need to make the public aware of the nature and part played by Hitler in creating a "collective psychosis" to strengthen his hold over the German people. I spoke boldly and insistently. Churchill listened in complete silence. But I felt that he was not only interested but was turning over in his mind whether this was a wise move from a political point of view, and had decided that it would only sidetrack the public from the main issue he was hammering at in his speeches, which the public understood. It was better not to distract them by introducing a new element.[73]

Later in the year Churchill began the Arms and the Covenant Movement, which was an attempt to focus attention on the need for rearmament while maintaining commitments to the principles of the League. As he was to argue in a speech of 5 November 1936, his group stood for "the plan of standing by the Covenant of the League of Nations and trying to gather together, under the authority of the Covenant, the largest possible number of well-armed, peace-seeking Powers in order to overawe, and if necessary to restrain, a potential aggressor, whoever he may be".[74]

Determined in his personal mission, Duncan Hall was unafraid to take his message to audiences unlikely to be sympathetic. In an address in August 1938 to the Federation of the League of Nations Societies, Duncan Hall rejected economic, ideological and biological explanations of the phenomenon of war as superficial. Quoting the British Medical Association—"nothing can happen in the world of man that does not happen first in the mind of man", a phrase (he noted) drawn from League veteran Salvador de Madariaga—he argued the case for psychological explanations. As his notes indicate, only these addressed the fundamental causes: "Precarious balance of destructive and constructive forces in human nature and growth of limited control mechanism over primitive instinctual forces. Importance of insecurity and frustration as factors in release of aggression." While there were periods of history where more positive forces were at work, currently a "turning outwards of forces of aggression—collective psychosis" was apparent.[75]

THE MOVE TO AMERICA

As has been noted, Duncan Hall left the employ of the League in April 1939. Negotiations on his future began while he was in the United States, en route

73 Autobiographical sketch, chap. 8, appendix, Hall Papers, Box 59.

74 Winston Churchill, *Arms and the Covenant* (London, 1938), 361.

75 "Some of the Deeper Causes of War", Address to the Federation of the League of Nations Societies, 1938, Hall Papers, Box 40; Salvador de Madariaga, *Disarmament* (London, 1929). See also "The Place of Morality in Politics: National and International", Society of Friends Geneva, Winter 1937–8, Hall Papers, Box 40.

back to Geneva. His post having been abolished and no position at a comparable level of seniority being offered, in his correspondence he cited "urgent personal reasons" for severing his employment without the usual period of notice.

One of Duncan Hall's first acts when he ceased to be an official of the League was to draft three articles on the international situation under the title "On the Edge". On the manuscripts, originally dated 3 April 1939, Duncan Hall noted that while he had offered these pieces to the *New Zealand Herald*, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Manitoba Free Press*, "none w[ould]d publish".[76] The context for these articles was the events of March which saw the final destruction of Czechoslovakia and the extension of the British security guarantee to Poland, a period in which professional and international insecurity coincided. The title of the first of the pieces was "War Is Probable"; here the argument centred on the character of the totalitarian states, which, being based upon a channelling of aggression towards external enemies, were bound to engage in conflict or implode. Yet there existed still much wishful thinking regarding the possibility of avoiding war, just as there were many still fixated upon what they took to be past injustices. Duncan Hall argued that no amount of compensation would assuage the appetites of the have-not powers since their policy was not directed to the achievement of any form of international settlement short of domination. Taking either approach would result in far greater injustice, including the possibility of the complete destruction of democratic life. Unexceptionable sentiments after the outbreak of war, these ideas were so starkly expressed that there is little wonder that mainstream organs of opinion found them too controversial.

He then assembled his family in Boston, using for a period the address of Robert Waelder and his family for his correspondence. In this period it is evident that he worked closely with Waelder, for whose ideas he held the highest regard. He then plunged as a participant into the American debate on war preparation, where British spokespersons—and he was generally thought to be British—were often regarded with great suspicion.[77] Subsequently he worked with the British Library of Information in New York, and also exchanged information with R. G. Casey at the newly established Australian mission in Washington.

Severance from the League of Nations caused Duncan Hall to modify but not abandon his determination to raise awareness of the Freudian analysis of the perilous international situation. This aspiration was often conceived in relation to a complementary inquiry on the lessons of the League and its shortcomings for the future. On the one hand he sought to establish an institute devoted to the scientific study of the ideas he had developed with Waelder, on the other he

[76] H. Duncan Hall, "On the Edge", 1939, Hall Papers, Box 70.

[77] Nicholas Cull, *Selling War: The British Propaganda Campaign against American "Neutrality"* (New York, 1995).

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took on a sustained programme of public speaking where his message was one of warning to the United States. Both projects were also, in part, intended as vehicles for personal survival; while Duncan Hall's severance payments from the League provided a modest income, he had still to support a family.

Duncan Hall pursued these activities with undiminished energy, his commitment to exposing what he understood to be the irrationalist and inherently aggressive mainsprings of European totalitarian movements receiving further impetus with the outbreak of hostilities in Europe. Through 1940 and 1941 he maintained a precariously funded round of speaking and publishing, while also seeking suitable scholarly sponsorship for his research. In his last objective he was singularly unsuccessful despite his many proposals to the major foundations,[78] though he did teach on the Harvard summer school in 1940. With the advent of the Pacific war he then accepted a position with the North American raw-materials acquisition programme run from the British Embassy in Washington.

During what was undoubtedly a frustrating and difficult period in his life and career, Duncan Hall nevertheless felt vindicated by the unfolding of events. In a paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Society of International Law in May 1940, he used apocalyptic language to describe the collapse of the interwar network of institutions and hopes. The vast apparatus of agreements for dispute resolution, from the Washington treaties to Locarno and beyond, amounted to nothing more than a useless "paper Maginot Line". However, even at this time he reserved some positive words for the League: the League was used because it was always a living organism, "not a mere paper treaty but a meeting ground of men", though in the end its machinery broke down.[79]

Yet neither the general conception of a League nor even some of the specific machinery created by the League was new. The problem lay not in the institutions of the League but in the misconceived approach taken by important states towards the functioning of those institutions. With the creation of a system of "collective security" the discharge of the duties that that system required of member states was seen as other people's business. As Duncan Hall remarked, Immanuel Kant had foreseen that what he described as "the wickedness of human nature" would constantly bedevil such schemes; he had therefore been of the view that though the artifice of a League of peace-loving states was firmly grounded in the requirements

78 H. Duncan Hall, "Study of the Psychological Bases of the War and Peace"; "Institute of Political Psychology", Hall Papers, Box 40.

79 H. Duncan Hall, "Pacific Settlement of International Disputes: Recent Trends", *Proceedings of the American Society of International Law at Its Annual Meeting*, 34 (1940), 115–24.

of reason it would always (quoting Kant's *Universal History*) be in "permanent danger of ... aggressive tendencies breaking through".[80]

THE PERSONAL DIMENSION

So far, the focus has been on the historical and intellectual factors impelling the major shift in Duncan Hall's convictions and ultimately career. What additional role can be ascribed to personal factors?

From Duncan Hall's correspondence it is clear that as part of his widening acquaintance with Freudianism, Duncan Hall himself underwent analysis, sometime in 1933–4, with Geneva analyst Henri Flournoy (analysed by Freud, and the son of one of Freud's earliest scientific supporters).[81] This experience evidently had a profound impact. In family letters of 1935 Duncan Hall recorded that on his visit to Britain to see Zimmern and others, his ability to interact with prominent personalities had been transformed. As he informed his parents in Sydney, "It was most pleasant to be able to talk easily & without embarrassment"; his new-found confidence he attributed to his transformed personal perspective: "I have never been able to talk like this before. I felt then how much my analysis had really meant to me."[82] In these experiences, Steinig was evidently not only his professional collaborator but his close confidant. Writing to Duncan Hall in 1936, Steinig remarked upon Duncan Hall's new personal bearing: "Your mastery of men and circumstances is certainly a new feature of your (psychologically speaking) adult life."[83]

Moreover, Duncan Hall also sought to extend the benefits of psychoanalysis to his family. According to his correspondence, in 1935 he paid Jenny Waelder—Robert Waelder's wife—for thirty-one sessions of psychoanalytic consultation for his eldest daughter, Margaret. Jenny Waelder, whose expertise lay in child psychology and who was later to make a considerable reputation in this field in the United States, thereafter appears from time to time in Duncan Hall's correspondence.[84]

At this time Freudian psychoanalysis had been proscribed in Nazi Germany, and many analysts who were considered Jewish according to state definition had become refugees. In Austria and also in Hungary the writing was on

[80] Ibid., 124, 118.

[81] Peter Kutter, ed., *Psychoanalysis International: A Guide to Psychoanalysis Throughout the World*, vol. 1, *Europe* (Stuttgart–Bad Cannstatt, 1992); Guttman, "Robert Waelder and the Application of Psychoanalytic Principles", 841.

[82] Letter of H. Duncan Hall, 30 June 1935, Hall Papers, Box 4, part 1.

[83] Steinig to Duncan Hall, 17 June 1936, Hall Papers, Box 1.

[84] Jenny Waelder to Hall, 29 Sept. 1935, Hall Papers, Box 4, part 1.

the wall for their colleagues, many of whom were seeking to escape from the impending catastrophe. Duncan Hall was so committed to the importance of the psychoanalytic contribution to human knowledge that he took personal steps to assist a number of those professionals who were making efforts to escape abroad.

In this endeavour he worked with Steinig. His papers include a letter from his colleague raising the cases of Austrian psychoanalysts Helen Pollak and Joseph Husek; their visa applications had been held up in the US consulate in Zurich, and Steinig suggested to Duncan Hall that he approach American officials during his imminent trip to North America to see if some means could be found to speed their departure.[85]

This work also had a significant impact upon the fortunes of Freudianism in Duncan Hall's native country. Clara Lazar Geroe, a Hungarian and a disciple of Ferenczi, was the first Freudian trained psychoanalyst to work in Melbourne and is considered to be the most important of the founders of the Melbourne Institute for Psychoanalysis. As she subsequently recorded the story, Duncan Hall was instrumental in facilitating her escape to Australia:

> In 1938/39 there was an International Psychoanalytic Congress in Paris and a group of the Hungarians went. We had already corresponded with Dr Ernest Jones who offered to put at our service his large number of acquaintances around the globe. Dr Jones confirmed ... that there was an interest in analysis in New Zealand, but mainly in child analysis. There were four or five of us who were friends and we thought we would like to emigrate together.
>
> Dr Jones gave me an introduction to Duncan Hall, the Colonial Secretary at the League of Nations, and he immediately contacted colleagues and government officials in Australia on our behalf ... Duncan Hall visited Australia and New Zealand in the spring of 1939 taking our applications with him.[86]

Lazar Geroe's original plan had been to travel to New Zealand but she was unsuccessful. Then Australia proved more welcoming, the historian of the psychoanalytic movement acknowledging Duncan Hall's personal role.[87]

Duncan Hall seems to have remained in touch with Lazar Geroe for some time. In 1942 she sent him the first annual report of the Melbourne Institute, which included the statement, "I wish to express ... my gratefulness to Mr. Duncan Hall, for his most valuable help to the cause of Psychoanalysis in Australia." Writing to her in November 1942 to thank her for sending the report, he expressed his gratification that "in the year before the war, I took the steps which in some

85 Steinig to Hall, 6 June 1938, Hall Papers, Box 40.

86 Clara Lazar Geroe, "A Reluctant Immigrant", *Meanjin*, 41/3 (1982), 354–5.

87 Stanley Gold, "The Early History", *Meanjin*, 41/3 (1982), 347–8; also see Joy Damousi, *Freud in the Antipodes: A Cultural History of Psychoanalysis in Australia* (Sydney, 2005), 179–204.

measure was [*sic*] the beginning of a train of events leading to this result", notably the establishment of the institute.[88]

From this evidence it is clear that Duncan Hall by the early 1940s felt a strong personal association with psychoanalysis. There is a coda to this story. Guttman records that not long after the arrival of Waelder, with Jenny and his two children, in the United States, the Waelder marriage broke up.[89] Subsequently Robert moved from Boston to Philadelphia. Duncan Hall's papers show that he was living with his family at several addresses in the Boston area from 1939 to 1942. His correspondence also shows that he separated from his wife Bertha at this time, though the sequence or cause is not clear, and in the years immediately following they were able to exchange a civil correspondence. In September 1943, Duncan Hall married Jenny Waelder.

The evidence suggests that Duncan Hall's relations with Robert in later years appear to have remained cordial. In his monumental *Commonwealth*, Waelder's work is cited approvingly at the point where the illusions so prevalent in the Empire–Commonwealth on the nature of the totalitarian regimes in the later 1930s are discussed.[90] However, Duncan Hall devoted no further attention to psychological factors in his later work beyond explaining the nature of the cooperation between the British and the Americans as, in part, the result of a shared and familial consciousness. The psychological research he might have conducted into the fundamentals of international relations was left to other hands and his collaboration with Waelder bore no direct fruit.[91] Nevertheless, his emphatic aversion to totalitarianism remained, providing the rationalization for his conviction that there was a strong need for continued British–American accord. And in this sense his debt to the psychological turn that his thinking took in 1933–4 was enduring. For it was his belief thereafter that the collaboration of like-minded and evolved nations—rather than the institutional design characteristic of the League of Nations experiment—was the surest vehicle for world order.

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88 "Report of Melbourne Institute for Psychoanalysis for 1941"; Hall to Lazar Geroe, 12 Nov. 1942, Hall Papers, Box 4.

89 Guttman, "Robert Waelder and the Application of Psychoanalytic Principles", 852.

90 H. Duncan Hall, *Commonwealth: A History of the British Commonwealth of Nations* (London, 1971), 419.

91 Waelder himself did write later on international relations, to some acclaim: Morton A. Kaplan, "A Psychoanalyst Looks at Politics: A Retrospective Tribute to Robert Waelder", *World Politics*, 20/4 (1968), 694–704. The emergence of modern realism owes a debt to the Freudian view of human nature: Robert Schuett, *Political Realism, Freud, and Human Nature in International Relations* (New York and London, 2010).