

The anatomy of treachery*

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Presidents come and go; they are remembered for a while, and then forgotten by the Society over which they once presided. For the President himself, however, his election is a memorable and moving experience, involving gratitude, often hard to verbalize gracefully, heart-searching and doubts. Further, how few presidential addresses, even if courtesy demands their appearance in print afterwards, prove to be less ephemeral than the may-fly which enjoys life for one glorious day only!

It is not since the very early days of this Society that a practising physician, a specialist in psychological medicine, has been accorded the great honour of being President of the British Psychological Society, an important society which is rapidly advancing along the path which, we hope, will end with a Royal Charter; and I am accordingly exceptionally grateful for the high distinction.

This society has always had a flourishing Medical Section, which [2]indicates, I think, that medical psychology—i.e. the application of scientific psychological principles to medical problems—is considered to be a legitimate (even if, at times, unruly) child of the parent science. I recently defined psychology as that science which deals with the nature, functions and phenomenology of the mind; but members of the general public appear to have the vaguest ideas as to what a psychologist is. They picture him, for the most part, as a man who has the mysterious power to cure your blushing or your stammering, or possibly as some bogus kind of “psychoanalyst” spending his time discussing their sex-lives with duchesses for enormous fees. The general public—and who is to say that it is altogether wrong?—expects a psychologist to know much more than the average person about what makes a man (or a group of men) “tick over”, and perhaps even to be able to predict how he is going to behave in a given set of circumstances. In that sense, it is customary to say of some one: “What a good psychologist he is!”, even though he may never have read a psychological article or book in the whole of his life. Using the word psychologist in that way, I should say that the great psychologists are to be found among creative novelists, journalists, dramatists, quacks, advertisers and political agitators rather than among our own members.

It is no secret, I imagine, that our Public Relations Committee is concerned, among other things, with the ways and means in which psychology in its various branches can be acceptably presented to the general public, although it realizes that no

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academic subject can in its own right be “popular”. Atomic physics could hardly be described as a popular science; yet, seeing that certain applications of that science affect the lives of all of us, scarcely a day passes without direct or oblique references to nucleonics appearing in the general press. But what do you or I know or understand about the scientific principles involved?

Allow me to take at random—really at random—the titles of some papers read to this society: “Some effects of individual and group factors upon the perception of an ambiguous stimulus by members of small groups”; “Visual discrimination in octopuses”; “Situational determinants of emotionality in the rat”; “Contemporary aspects of the study of visual perception”; “Some linguistic problems arising from the language of flavour”. It is studies such as these which are the right and proper concern of the professional psychologist; but is the general reader going to be interested unless or until he realizes that new psychological knowledge deriving from apparently dry-as-dust research may eventually affect the whole of our lives just as radically as the explosion of a hydrogen bomb or the opening of Calder Hall? I should be proud to be the author of a paper with such a title—indeed, the titles (at any rate) of some of my contributions to the field of psychological medicine have been just as intimidating—but for the fact that I believe that a Presidential Address can afford to be more popular, less learned, more rambling and inconclusive than an ordinary scientific paper, unless the President concerned has a truly original and important communication to make to the scientific world, which is certainly not the case today.

[3]It is for that reason that I propose to examine what may be thought to go on in the minds of those who are popularly regarded as traitors; for treachery in one form or another is becoming more and more important in the modern world, and our ideas of what might be said to constitute treachery are becoming increasingly obscure. Does treachery, as beauty is said to do, exist in the eye of the beholder or in the mind of the traitor? Is Nagy a traitor or is Kadar? Were the brave men who attempted to assassinate Hitler traitors or heroes? Are the victims of Senator McCarthy’s Committees traitors; if so, traitors to what? Are Burgess and McLean traitors—and so on, and so on?

I know of no formal enquiry into the psychology of treachery, which I have—perhaps somewhat fancifully—entitled the *Anatomy of Treachery*, conducted by a professional psychologist or a team of psychologists, although perhaps one does exist. But studies of that kind have been made by gifted journalists, notably Miss Rebecca West in this country and Margret Boveri in Germany. May I say from the start that many of my ideas on the subject together with the historical references derive from the first two volumes of the latter author’s *Der Verrat im XX. Jahrhundert* (Treachery in the Twentieth Century)—volumes three and four have not, so far as I know, appeared yet.

Miss Rebecca West called her book *The Meaning of Treason*. Treason is a word that I have not employed so far, for I wish to draw a distinction between it and treachery. All treason involves treachery; but not all treacherous acts are treasonable. I propose to regard treason as a legal or forensic concept, a crime in other words; whereas treachery, with which I am dealing this afternoon, has for me a moral connotation—it is, if you like, a “sin”. Thus, it had to be decided by a court of law that William Joyce was guilty of treason; and all the arguments for and against the verdict were legal ones—it will be remembered that they all turned on the question of dates, the use or

misuse of passports, birth certificates and naturalization papers; whereas it was open to anyone to decide for himself on moral and psychological grounds whether he was a traitor, i.e. guilty of the sin of treachery. According to the Oxford English Dictionary the legal definition of treason is “violation by a subject of his allegiance to his sovereign or to the State. It was defined 1350—51 by Act 25 Edw. III Stat. 5, c. 2, as compassing or imagining the king’s death, or that of his wife or eldest son, violating the wife of the king or of the heir apparent, or the king’s eldest daughter being unmarried, levying war in the king’s dominions, adhering to the king’s enemies in his dominions, or aiding them in or out of the realm, or killing the chancellor or the judges in the execution of their offices. In 1795 the offence was extended to actual or contemplated use of force to make the king change his counsels, or to intimidate either or both of the Houses of Parliament”.

Throughout the Middle Ages and right up to the breaking up of the feudal system, there would have been no need to differentiate between the crime of treason and the sin of treachery—they were one and the same [4]thing. The stability of society depended primarily on the idea of loyalty or allegiance, which, as often as not, involved the taking of an oath. The villain was bound in loyalty to his baron; the baron was frequently the liegeman of an overlord to whom he ceremonially swore fealty; this overlord owed allegiance, service and obedience to his reigning duke or king, who in his turn regarded himself as directly responsible to God alone, by whose grace he reigned. In the days when there was one Universal Church recognized by all, the Pope, as Christ’s vice-regent on earth, was often the interpreter of God’s will for the reigning monarch. This chain of allegiance was weakened at the top-end when rivalries and hostilities developed between Pope and Holy Roman Emperor; but it remained firm below that level until the feudal system collapsed. When the whole of Christendom appeared to be solidly united, as during The Crusades for example, there seemed to be no end to the load which the chain could bear.

The breaking of an oath of loyalty, then, would appear to threaten the whole structure of organized society and would accordingly engender sentiments of extreme horror and repugnance.

The organized society, with which every man could identify himself, was, in spite of the narrow regionalism inseparable from feudalism, wide enough to cover the whole of Christendom. Therefore, the breaking of an oath of allegiance or the denial of fealty were nothing more nor less than the sin of faithlessness, a sin against faith. In a sense, it was identical in men’s minds with the sin of heresy; and heresy awakened in the medieval mind the same kind of horror as did other kinds of treachery. One has to think only of the unspeakable cruelties encouraged and sanctioned by the Church in its attempt to exterminate the Albigensians and the bitterness of all religious wars throughout history. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the Moslems who threatened the unity of Europe on the Continent as well as in the Iberian Peninsula came to be known as Infidels; and they are still prayed for as such in the English Church liturgy—Jews, Turks and Infidels. Any failure to share or any attempt to breach the common faith—heresy, schism, even allegiance to a non-Christian religion or culture-pattern—constituted treachery.

With surprisingly small repercussions in England, the picture changed on the Continent with the French Revolution. Loyalty to the Church, the repository of faith,

as well as of The Faith (it was the Church that could dispense from oaths), became a crime against the Republic; and there was no longer a king to command allegiance. The State was (and is?) too abstract an idea to command man's loyalty with the same emotional intensity as a monarch who, as at one time would have been universally accorded, derived his authority from on High.

Is not the idea of the motherland, the fatherland, *la Patrie* a suitable substitute-repository of loyalty, something to which one can give faith and in whose name one can take an oath? It must be admitted, I think, that that idea, too, is shadowy in the extreme. The idea that a man makes for himself of his country must depend on circumstances of time, place, [5]intelligence and education. It would be clearly easy for an Englishman to take a private oath of loyalty to England, if England is pictured in his mind as a combination of Oxford University, the upper reaches of the Thames Valley, Stratford on Avon, the Lake District and the like, the whole picture being glossed with memories of Shakespeare's plays and the glories of the past. A man might well keep faith with and lay down his life for such a psychological construct. If, however, "England" conjures up the interior image of a Liverpool slum, noise, dirt and memories of unemployment, against a background of near-illiteracy, *la Patrie* is not likely to provide a nucleus of strong, positive sentiments. It must be remembered that even in the prosperous days of the early nineteen thirties, the privileged young men of the Union Society at Oxford passed a resolution which meant in effect that loyalty to king and country was not binding in all circumstances.

On the Continent of Europe for a century after the French Revolution, France and the adjacent countries were torn by factions; and each faction would have regarded the other as treacherous. A republican would have been a traitor to the monarchy; a restorationist would have been a traitor to the republic; a Napoleonist would have been a traitor both to the monarchy and the republic; and so on.

It must be admitted, I think, that an oath is the symbol which gives the most obvious meaning to treachery, i.e. the breach of that oath. Hitler realized this when he made every soldier take an oath of loyalty to himself as Führer. From that moment onwards, breach of that oath was not only treacherous but treasonable. It is my belief that the—almost atavistic—detestation of treachery enabled the Hitler régime to last as long as it did.

However, every solemn oath, to be binding on the conscience, requires to be taken in the name of something; and that "something" must be God if the oath is to be practically effective. What happens in an age or culture in which the idea of God has ceased to possess much reality?

Whence is derived the power of the modern state? There must be many answers to this question; but most people would hold that it derives from the people. Thus, a criminal case heard in an American court is known as "the *People* versus John Q. Smith" (or whoever it might be). In other words, loyalty is owed to a political majority or the political party in power (by no means necessarily the same thing in a one-party "people's democracy"), since they represent the power that can enforce conformity by means of pains and penalties.

It might be thought that questions of loyalty could be more easily solved by the individual conscience in the case of a British subject, seeing that oaths taken in the name of God are still uniquely valid and that we are still technically *subjects* of the Crown, not just citizens of the State. However, it must be borne in mind that a bitter civil war, terminating with the judicial execution of the reigning monarch, was fought over the issue: to whom or what is my primary loyalty due—to the Monarch or to the [6]People (symbolized by its elected representatives—Parliament)? Who were the traitors—Cromwell and his Ironsides or Charles the First and his Loyalists? That is a psychological question, not a legal one. If one were to put the question differently and ask which side was guilty of treason, the answer would be easy, if cynical: clearly the winning side would stigmatize the losing side as being guilty of treason, according to the law as they (the winning side) had the power to interpret it. The collective conscience must, I think, continue to be bewildered by historical events of that kind. I remember, as a small boy, playing “Cavaliers and Roundheads”, and even then wondering where my loyalties really lay.

Thus, a Senator McCarthy, officially acting as the Representative of the People’s Will, can, against the wishes of their superiors, examine two million American civil servants with a view to establishing their loyalty to the Constitution or, perhaps more accurately, to an abstraction which has come to be known as “the American way of life”.

Hans Naumann (quoted by Margret Boveri) wrote: “So long as the State, in the hierarchy of values and obligations can uphold its claim to be the ‘highest instance’ and the ‘supreme judge’, the ‘sovereign unit and totality’ or the ‘predominating source of unity and greatness’, there can be a clear-cut conception of treason which will be recognized as valid in every legal textbook. That situation obtained more or less throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth right up to the twenties or thirties”.

The situation was bedevilled in Germany and eventually for the rest of the world by the anomalies arising in the Weimar Republic. The new republic abolished not only the Kaiser and the ruling princes, the persons to whom oaths of allegiance were made, but it introduced a new national flag which was unacceptable to a good half of the population. When it came to taking an oath, it was not made to the President of the State but to the Constitution.

From then onwards it was perhaps an inevitable development that people should come to owe their primary loyalties—in public or in private—to ideologies rather than to persons or institutions.

Even Hitler’s attempt to restore the sense of absolute loyalty to the State and to himself as Head of the State in the interests of eventual world-conquest required to be based on an ideology which had to compete, to begin with, with the Communist ideology which transcended all other loyalties.

This dependence of loyalties on grandiose ideologies rather than on tradition or fixed conceptions of the moral law was also a natural outcome of doubt of what in fact was the Will of the People and of horror and bewilderment as to what might be or was actually done in its name. As there was no common basis for moral conduct, nobody

really knew what the other man was thinking; so nobody could trust his neighbour. It was the beginning of the age of the divided mind and of what Orwell called [7]“double talk”. Margret Boveri, to illustrate this, mentions the case of a man called Richard Sorge who not only led the double life of a leader writer for the Hitler Press and of a spy for the Soviet Army, but managed to achieve considerable inner peace of mind and absence of guilt-feelings by practising a kind of private Yoga.

At this stage, I ought perhaps to say that I do not propose to concern myself with the paid spy, agitator or enemy agent; for their psychology is not more interesting than that of the professional prostitute who disregards the moral law mainly for personal gain. For similar reasons, I will pass over the case of the person who under torture or in the course of brain-washing (so-called) betrays his friends or associates to the enemy. In these days of the debunking of the heroic virtues (which belong to the realm of the spirit), how many of us would survive the test?

Margret Boveri points out that another important contributory factor to the climate of treachery is the enormous increase in rootlessness: refugees, D.P.s, those without families. She adds in a footnote the interesting observation that, under the existing laws which make them outlaws and liable to blackmail, homosexuals belong to this group of homeless ones; and they certainly seem to contribute their quota to the ranks of traitors accordingly. Among the many interesting examples of persons, who, in one or another sense, might be classified among the “displaced”, Margret Boveri mentions Latimore, against whom proceedings were taken in America for many years, who was born in China and studied in England; Julian Wadleigh, another American, who admitted to stealing documents for the Soviet Union, was an Oxford student; the poet, Ezra Pound, was a typical expatriate. Noel Field was the child of a Swiss father and an English mother, born in London and educated in Switzerland. He studied in Harvard and married a German wife. There is no need to multiply examples. An unsatisfied desire to enjoy the experience of “belonging”, or the conviction that one should in fact “belong” to some thing entirely different to what one previously believed oneself to belong to are amongst the most important unconscious psychological motives for acts of treachery. This last factor, without being identical with it, shares much in common with the psychology of conversion.

The spread of ideologies which extend beyond national frontiers, and which compete for men’s loyalties, has already been mentioned. Both Pétain and de Gaulle (and de Gaulle would surely have been tried as a traitor had Germany won) would both have claimed to have acted patriotically for France. But what of the Voluntary French Legion whom Hitler recruited in Vichy France for service against Communist Russia? Surely they were traitors; but, if so, why not also those French who collaborated with the British and American armies? It would seem, then, that in modern world-wars, in which the distinctions between patriotism and international ideologies become blurred, the concept of treachery becomes equally fogged, existing as it must “in the eye of the beholder”, as I mentioned earlier.

[8]This fact enormously complicates the purely sociological approach to the study of treachery. When Laval was tried and condemned to death for treason, it was for a crime against France, a purely domestic affair. When Mr. and Mrs. Rosenberg were tried in America, the setting and issues were entirely different; and the conscience of the free world was engaged. At what point do plotting against and betrayal of “Big

Brother” become treachery? However, in the absence of universally recognized criteria of the rights and status of man, offences against which would be generally regarded as treason against humanity, we are no nearer a solution of our problem. An attempt was made in the Atlantic Charter and in the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials, when for the first time persons were arraigned for “crimes against humanity”. Unfortunately, the Atlantic Charter was regarded by the other half of the world as a purely Allied instrument; and the trials of war criminals came in for considerable criticism all over the world. It is certain that “crimes against humanity” have gone on unchecked and have multiplied and that those who have laid down their lives for the freedom of the spirit of man and have made an act of faith in the essential dignity of the human status have been stigmatized and executed as traitors. One has only to think of Hungary at the present moment.

In short, it is quite clear that there is a great difference between treachery taking place in accordance with purely national standards and in a national frame of reference, and acts of treachery which are carried out in the service of or in the struggle against an international ideology.

It is, perhaps, desirable at this stage to say a few words about collaboration, which was regarded as a form of treachery during and after World War II.

It is certain that public opinion has undergone a considerable change in the matter of collaboration with the enemy in its more innocent aspects. We are reminded, for example, that in the course of the Seven Years War the city of Frankfurt was occupied by the French and that Count Thorane, the military governor, the famous *Königsleutnant* of Goethe’s *Aus meinem Leben, Dichtung und Wahrheit*, was billeted on the Goethes, when Goethe was a boy of ten. Thorane met there all the most famous Frankfurt and Düsseldorf artists and writers; Frau Rath polished up her French with him; and the whole family received a free pass to the French theatre that was set up in Frankfurt. It was there that young Wolfgang learned by heart many of the Alexandrine speeches from Racine’s tragedies. There was genuine regret on all sides when the fortunes of war brought about Thorane’s departure.

Compare *Aus meinem Leben, Dichtung und Wahrheit* with Vercors’ moving story of the French resistance, *Silence de la Mer*. In this book, you will remember, we read of a French country family which had billeted on them a thoroughly decent, civilized, young German officer, who was only too prepared to be pleasant and friendly with the whole family. The family, however, decided to send him to Coventry as a firm gesture of [9]non-collaboration. The book in essence consists of a sympathetic description of all the emotions aroused on both sides. It is the heroism of the French family in resisting such subtle temptations that is held up for our admiration; and the book certainly succeeded in awakening it in me when I read it. On the other hand, it never occurred to me, when I read *Aus meinem Leben, Dichtung und Wahrheit* as a boy of sixteen, to regard the Goethe family as “treacherous collaborators”. It is likely, even, that, apart from imparting information valuable to the enemy, the crime of “collaboration” had not been invented. How could it have been before the invention of modern “total war”?

For Pétain, non-collaborators and members of the resistance movement were traitors. From our point of view, the position was reversed. To cross the Rhine: after the

German capitulation, the Allies claimed to be entering and occupying German territory as liberators rather than as conquerors; and we expected the German and Austrian peoples to co-operate (i.e. collaborate) with the occupying powers.

How very difficult it is, in the case of collaboration, to form any clear ideas as to what constitutes treachery!

A study of treachery in the twentieth century, especially in relation to collaboration, to be at all complete should consist of several volumes, each devoted to the problem as it occurs in various parts of the world. The new world, for instance, would require a volume to itself: we have a wealth of material deriving from North America; but how does it work out in South America, the sub-continent *par excellence* for political revolutions? For example, what kind of emotional reactions were aroused in the mind of an Argentinian when Peronistas charged anti-Peronistas with treachery and, after the revolution, anti-Peronistas had Peronistas in the dock?

Next, a volume should be devoted to treachery in France and in Italy, both before, during and after the various occupations which they experienced. The study of the problem in Italy would be singularly complicated seeing that at the beginning of World War II half the country was secretly anti-Fascist, i.e. in opposition to their own government and against the war. Italy was invaded and occupied by its own allies, the Germans, before the arrival of the British and Americans; and the picture was further complicated by bands of pro-ally resistance fighters, followed by pro-Mussolini partisans. Innumerable Private Angelos must have been taken out and shot for treachery—against whom or what they could have had no idea.

A volume, too, should certainly be devoted to the problem of treachery in all its aspects in the Third Reich and after. The second volume of Margret Boveri's study covers this ground very adequately.

England, as we have seen, has already thrown up its biographer of certain selected twentieth-century traitors; and people are still thinking and writing extensively about the strange case of Burgess and McLean.

One of my main contentions, in so far as I have a thesis, is that treachery [10] is a moral weakness—a sin, if you wish—which occurs especially in persons exhibiting instability in one direction or another.

To be more precise: in order to get a clearer idea of the meaning of treachery, we must consider firstly the psychology of sentiment-formation, secondly the possible psychopathology of those who react neurotically in the form of treachery, and thirdly the larger question of moral responsibility.

Margret Boveri begins her book with the following paragraph: "An almost deaf man came into protective custody in Norway in the year 1945. No one spoke to him. The three nurses in charge spilt his coffee and his soup intentionally. He wished to explain to them that he had murdered no one, stolen nothing and had not committed arson. They would not listen and refused to answer him. A year later, in the psychiatric clinic, he understood the situation rather better. He said: 'I came here in the hands of the police; I am a prisoner; I am a traitor to my country, you know'. When the ward-

sister asked him how he had got mixed up in that sort of thing, all he could say was: 'It doesn't matter'." It was the eighty-five year-old Norwegian poet, Knut Hamsun!

The extreme disgust aroused in the minds of "normal" people by treachery to one's country shows, I think, that powerful sentiments are involved. Treachery is essentially an offence against fidelity, from the moral-theological point of view, a sin against love or charity, also a sin against justice. That this is so is shown by the common use of language: a man who commits adultery is described as *unfaithful*; he has *betrayed* his wife; he is guilty of *infidelity*. A man who discloses confidential information *betrays* a secret. A sneak at school is detested. Even that minor form of disloyalty popularly known as "letting the side down" evokes disgust.

All this shows that a capacity for the formation of sentiments of loyalty is to be regarded as an absolute essential if an individual is to play his part in organized, civilized society. Reduced to psychoanalytic terms, it could be roughly said that social adjustment demands the ability to libidinize external love-objects positively. In ordinary everyday language, such as we all understand: if a person cannot, through loyal identification, learn how to value or love someone or something more than himself, he is liable to become a dangerous misfit.

I am in the habit of defining a psychopath as a person who, for constitutional reasons, is unable to elaborate those social sentiments which normally act as an automatic regulator of conduct. Again to employ ordinary English: a psychopath is a person who is unable to develop a conscience.

Clearly, then, if I am right in maintaining that treachery represents a breakdown in sentiment-formation, traitors are to be found plentifully in the ranks of psychopaths. The truth of this is confirmed by the study of the life-histories of many leading traitors. Such histories are to be found in Margret Boveri's work, already mentioned.

[11] Fortunately, the majority of us are capable of forming firm loyalties, if the right kind of social climate be provided. In fact, the need to identify ourselves with something greater than ourselves is an inborn psychic imperative.

If what I have to say now sounds "reactionary" and Blimpish, I crave your pardon. A child's first loyalty is towards its family. Anything that weakens family solidarity and stability or makes family pride appear ridiculous impedes this first step in the formation of sentiments of loyalty. In our own day we have seen the rapid decay of the family as the most important social unit—divorce, the debunking in front of the children of one parent by the other, the ridiculing of the old-fashioned, working-class idea of family "respectability", the smallness of the modern family, and so on.

The next loyalty to be developed is loyalty to one's school. In the period between the two world wars, that was made difficult by the fashion of pouring humorous contempt on "the old school tie" and all that that stood for. By the time that proper educational reforms saw to it that all children could have the kind of school that they could be proud of and the symbols that went with it—school caps, school blazers and the like—the damage was done.

Regional loyalties used to be fostered by voluntary service in a local or county regiment. Nowadays, a young man does not know in advance whether he will *have* to serve in the Army Pay Corps, the Tank Corps, the R.A.F. Regiment or what have you.

The final loyalty can be termed patriotism, or love of country. The average man has not got a great capacity for identifying himself with a unit larger than a sovereign, national state. In fact, a world state does not exist outside the pages of science fiction; and, even there, to bring verisimilitude, the picture usually has to be complicated by inter-planetary wars or rivalries. The intellectual climate of today tends to make us ashamed of admitting to patriotic sentiments, or, by rationalization, causes us to regard them as dangerous—flag-wagging, jingoism!

I, like any other reasonably intelligent individual of my generation, would be highly embarrassed if a music-hall singer were to come on the stage and sing a patriotic song supported by a flag-waving chorus; but the point that I would like to make is that, if I did not have to make such an admission, the conditions for a healthy sentiment-formation would be much more favourable.

In case I should sound even more Blimpish than I imagine myself to be, I should say at this point that loyalty to the moral law overrides all other loyalties; and I have throughout this address tried to imply that. The kind of patriotic sentiment that should be allowed to develop is not the old fashioned “my country right or wrong”. In my opinion, if one believes that the legitimate government of one’s country has made a mistake, love of country demands that one does nothing to prejudice the national [12]interests, even if conscience requires that one should register one’s disapproval of government policy in a correct and dignified way, always provided that the moral law itself does not call for more violent action.

Contempt for tradition, just because it is tradition, is not without its dangers, in this context. I believe that true progress consists of selecting what the test of history has shown to be of value in the corpus of traditions, and building onto them.

What happens, of course, to the unsatisfied need for loyalties, when the early stages of sentiment-building have been weak, is that the credulous worship of grandiose ideologies which are not based on respect for the moral law automatically fills the vacuum.

It is said that in a free country there is a greater turnover in the Communist Party than in any other, indicating, I should imagine, that loyalty to an ideology is harder to maintain than loyalty to something less elaborate; and the history of that Party has never been free from charges of treachery and famous treason trials.

There is a great deal more to be said on the problem of treachery in the light of the psychology of sentiment-formation; but I have left myself very little time. In fact, I have left myself insufficient time for consideration of treacherous dispositions as a neurotic construction or for an assessment of the moral responsibility attaching thereto.

Fortunately, much can be inferred on these points from what I have already said.

Many psychoanalysts would maintain, I think, that the way we come to organize our sentiments depends on the primitive emotions attaching in very early life to our internalized parental images. If these are pathologically ambivalent, then the love- or loyalty-objects that are unconsciously identified with these early images are very unstable constructs. To make my meaning clear, even if I have to oversimplify to a ridiculous extent: let us suppose that I am a German who hated my father and all that he seemed to stand for. I might easily grow up with a neurotic hatred of everyone in authority and harbour very ambivalent feelings for my fatherland, *mein Vaterland*, which I might subsequently betray. Or again: let us suppose I have similar, unconscious negative dispositions towards my mother, who has brought me up as a strict Catholic. Later, I may neurotically (I am not talking about intellectual dispositions) “betray” *Mother-Church*. In a rather similar way, internalized self-hatred can cause one to betray anyone (or anything) which has subsequently become a fixation-point for one’s loyalties through the process of identification.

The question of the extent to which we are morally responsible for neurotically determined treacherous acts or dispositions would require a paper to itself. In fact, I expressed my views on moral responsibility in the light of modern psychiatry in a discussion held recently by the “51 Society” in Manchester. It would be out of place—nor is there time—for me to repeat what I said then; but I did maintain whilst admitting the reality of [13]psychological determinism, which I attempted to define, delimit and explain, that we must accept a certain limited moral responsibility for our behaviour, unless we are grossly mentally defective, insane or irreversibly psychopathic.

If that be so, the rule of Law demands that society impose sanctions in the case of a person found guilty of treachery (treason, in this case) after a fair trial.

As I hinted to begin with, I am only too aware that this address is neither learned, scholarly, original nor even well-arranged. I would, however, like to justify my choice of subject and its manner of presentation by suggesting that it is sometimes good for a pure or an applied psychologist to discuss in everyday language problems which are of interest to the community as a whole and which the general public—rightly or wrongly—regards as belonging to the field of psychology.