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GOD: ADOLF HITLER

The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History

silently, pitilessly, in unspeakable wrath; when the dull crackling of the musketry ceased, there lay a horrible heap of corpses piled up to the level of the top of the wall, with the brains oozing out of the smashed skulls of the dead.²²

It was a scene that would be repeated in German history.

German Romanticism

National Socialism fused and transformed . . . Prussianism and Romanticism. It was their illegitimate offspring.

—Hans Kohn

Smashing military victories over Napoleon formed the setting for Romanticism. Although it was primarily a literary and artistic movement, as it developed in Germany it would have profound and protracted political consequences. One of them is set forth in Hans Kohn's arresting aphorism.

As in all acts of human procreation, the father (Prussianism) played an important role. But it was not enough in itself to produce this child. For Prussianism was too cold, elitist, and withdrawn to have wide popular appeal. Nazism electrified the masses with emotion, yearning, and myth—the kind of things supplied by Mother Romanticism. She, according to Kohn (as well as Sigmund Freud), was the more important parent in the child's gestation and early development.

Among others who gave memorable expression to concepts of German Romanticism which would be taken over—and traduced—by the Nazis was the poet Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769–1860).^{*} Arndt illustrates the power of song to form and shape the attitudes of a nation, and the truth of the Scottish balladeer's boast: "Let me write the songs of a country, and I care not who writes its laws." Arndt was the author of Germany's most popular patriotic song until *Deutschland über Alles* later in the century. For generations, Arndt's hymn, *Das deutsche Vaterland* (1813) gave voice to the expansionist dynamic of German nationalism. It raised and answered a rhetorical question about the Fatherland by saying that Germans would never feel fulfilled until all German-speaking people were united in an enormous new *Reich* of the German nation:

What is the German's Fatherland?
The Prussian, or the Swabian kind?
Where Rhenish grapes bloom ripe and full,
Where curves his flight the Baltic gull?

^{*} The most influential Romantic of all, Richard Wagner, had such special personal importance to Adolf Hitler that he has been discussed with those who directly shaped his life and thought; see Chapter 2, pp. 103–113.

then that a *Justizrat* is a private individual who lives by defending swindlers." The passage is difficult to translate, and it may be that Hitler did not really mean to call his father by a title which he never held. But the false identification of his father given in another place is unmistakable—and peculiar. In a letter of 29 November 1921, he demotes his father, and tells a lie, by writing, "I was born on 20 April 1889 in Braunau on Inn, the son of the local postal official [*Post-offizial*], Alois Hitler." ²⁴

His memoirs and conversations reveal a desire to emulate his father, but one can always feel the cutting edge of rivalry and the determination to triumph over an adversary. In recalling, for example, that, as a boy, he once sang in the choir of a local monastery Adolf Hitler says, "I repeatedly had an excellent opportunity of intoxicating myself with the solemn splendor of a magnificent church festival. It was perfectly natural that the position of abbot appeared to me to be the highest idea attainable, just as that of being the village pastor had appealed to my father." He was fond of depicting his relationship with his father as a battle of conflicting wills in which his own will triumphed:

No matter how firm and determined my father might be . . . his son was just as stubborn and obstinate. . . . My father did not give up his "never" and I strengthened my "nevertheless." . . . ²⁵

And so it remained throughout his life. His will must prevail: first against his father, then against his political rivals, and finally against the whole world in battle.

At the time of his father's death, when Adolf was 14, he ostentatiously rejected all identification with the old man. Usually, when a father dies, the surviving male child attempts to play a father role or at least assumes a form of masculine identity of which the father would have approved. But young Hitler immediately took on negative identities—that is, the kinds of life-style which would have infuriated his father. As we shall see, he first played the effete artist and dandy. Then he ran off to Vienna to become an art student dropout and vagabond, an image his father would have found equally abhorrent.

Later on in life, however, Adolf indirectly accepted the challenge of his father "to make something of himself." He did so in a way that would have impressed and intimidated the old man: he too became a government official—but one of unbridled power. In effect, Hitler was saying, "My father always considered me a failure. I'll show him in a way he understands. Not as an artist but as a government official—I'll become so powerful that I could make and break bureaucrats like him and conquer his beloved Austria."

The mixed feelings of respect and disdain which he felt for his father were later transferred to the awesome figure of the Field Marshal-President Paul von Hindenburg who, with his uniform, close-

cropped hair, impressive m of Adolf's own authoritarian Hitler spoke of him with re to his own father—as "The had felt cowed by his father denburg. "The Old Gentle thing we stood for. . . . The I want to hear what kind [*wahnsinnes schwer*] in s ing." And again, using an e he warned his followers th annoy [*was verärgert*] the O

While his memoirs and hatred and fear also keep s justified in doing so, Adolf degenerate. He confided to was forced to go and rescu entering a "stinking smoke drunken father to come hon iating experience I have eve is. It was—because of my f

Hitler also sought syn what a cruel person his fat whippings. A secretary rec father. I therefore feared h and often whipped me." He fond of Karl May stories a refusing to cry out under to his cane and his frighten counted the blows without : gave me 230 blows!" After him again.²⁸

How can one calculate psychological wounds scar t soul, sobbing and alone, ba noninterfering mother? The can trust no one else; he is ness, hatred. Is it not possi was so important to his life less hatred that sobbed: "If experiences, a prominent p Hitler would have agreed co Chessman, who recalled th concluded that "there is not to be anything than to be af

It is, of course, possible and sadistic father were exa

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servant; and there was no ceremony of any kind. One of his Swedish brothers-in-law, Count Rosen, was the only other guest; and the rest of the party consisted of Oberstjägermeister Scherping, Oberstjägermeister Menthe, and a young Air Officer A. D. C., von Brauschitsch, a son of the present German Commander in Chief.

Stag shooting in the dense forests of Europe is not like deer stalking in Scotland—the deer cannot be spied from a distance, and their whereabouts can only be discovered when they roar during the rutting season. A rutting stag has a regular pitch, in the neighborhood of which he is always to be found in the company of the hinds which he has succeeded in collecting. In the evening he comes out into some favorite clearing in the forest where the grass is sweetest, and the easiest way to shoot him is to wait at some suitable spot on its edge till he does so. *Hochstände* (literally highstands, or a sort of platform, or machaan, some twenty to thirty feet high) are sometimes erected at such spots; and all the sportsman has to do is to climb it and wait an hour or so before the stag usually appears with his harem to feed.

I had arrived early in the morning and at about 4 P.M. arrangements were made for me to go to such a place to shoot a big fourteen-pointer which was known to frequent it. Before starting off, Goering remarked that Englishmen, however good they might be with shotguns, were no good with a rifle. The week before, he said, he had invited an English sportsman to shoot a stag, and he had missed it three times! It was not an encouraging start and made me feel as if I had to defend the whole sporting honor of the British Isles, nor was my nervousness diminished when I found that I was to be accompanied

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by Scherping and Menthe as well as by the regular keeper on whose beat this particular stag lived. I could not help reflecting that my companions were all feeling rather contemptuous of a poor damned diplomat and a British one at that. Fortune was, however, with me on that occasion. We mounted the high stand, and after a wait of over an hour the stag and his harem appeared at quite a different place from that at which they were expected, and a good half mile away. There was nothing for it but to descend and attempt a stalk on more or less Scottish lines. That meant walking some distance, then a long crawl on hands and knees, and finally creeping all alone on the flat of my face till I reached a small knobbie about a hundred yards from the herd. When I got there, the stag was kindly standing broadside on; and I shot it through the heart. From that moment my reputation as a sportsman was secure. Goering was, I felt, delighted; and, when his people told him that I had had to crawl on my stomach (a rare event in a German forest), he remarked with a guffaw of laughter that that was the right way for diplomats to get about. Incidentally, I shot a second stag the next morning, again with one shot, and once more in the course of a stalk instead of a set "highstand," which always gives one the impression of shooting at a target. After that I was considered worthy to become, as I did later, an honorary member of the German *Jägerschaft*.

Nothing could have been pleasanter than my two days' visit to Rominten. There is no rabid nationalism in sport, or at any rate, in that kind of sport, nor socialism, either, in the midst of unspoiled nature, where all men are equal. From my host downward everyone was simple, unaffected, and ex-

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war. It is a lovely red brick eighteenth-century house with a mansard roof; and Napoleon, who stopped there on his passage across Germany to his Russian Campaign, is said, on seeing it for the first time, to have exclaimed, "*Enfin un château*," a remark which, while flattering to Finckenstein, was hardly appreciative of the other residences in Germany which he occupied or which were placed at his disposal. Napoleon made it his headquarters for a considerable period, and it was the scene of his meeting and romance with Countess Walewska. The history of Europe might have been different today if he had listened more generously to the pleading of Walewska and re-created a real Polish kingdom, instead of a mere half-baked duchy, which was an untenable proposition, and which was quickly lost sight of again after Waterloo. The suite which he used as a bedroom and as offices during his stay at Finckenstein is still preserved in its original condition.

My hostess was a good-looking and charming woman, and my host a cultivated but, unfortunately, very sick man. Though he spoke English badly, he took in and read the *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily Mail*, and I was astonished at his extensive knowledge of English politics and politicians. He owned, farmed, and administered himself some 10,000 acres of arable land and 20,000 acres of forest at an apparently very reasonable profit based on fixed prices and close state supervision. One coincidence which befell me there remains imprinted on my memory. A number of English books had been placed in my bedroom; and among them the correspondence of the Duke of Wellington as edited, I think, by a great-niece of his. I opened it quite by chance at a letter addressed by the

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Duke to his fellow plenipotentiary, Lord Castlereagh, after the battle of Waterloo. Prussia, Russia, and Austria were at the time clamoring for the dismemberment of France in order to prevent the danger of any repetition of the Napoleonic episode. The letter ran as follows: "If we ask France to make this great cession, we must consider the operations of war as deferred till France shall find a suitable opportunity of endeavoring to regain what she has lost and, after having wasted our resources in the maintenance of overgrown military establishments in time of peace, we shall find how little useful the cessions we have acquired will be against a national effort to regain them."

"We ought to continue to keep our great object, *the genuine peace and tranquillity of the world*, in our view and shape our arrangements so as to provide for it."

The italics are mine, and it was an appreciation of realities which corresponded so closely to my own view about the Treaty of Versailles that I copied it out on a sheet of Finckenstein paper and have it still in my possession. It is so easy to be wise after the event, and the national hatreds and resentments of 1919 were an impossible atmosphere for the building up of the "genuine peace and tranquillity of the world." Only those who could have done better have the right to criticize, but objective judgment in the light of subsequent developments is not inadmissible. Versailles certainly contained a far fairer adjustment of territory, based on the principle of nationality, than had ever previously existed. But it had not been a negotiated peace, and the legitimate fears of a renewal of German *Machtpolitik* handicapped its authors. It was, in fact, a peace but not peace. In every problem, with

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time during his five days' visit to Germany had been fully occupied, and the general effect was up to a point undoubtedly good. Hitler cannot but have been—and in fact, so I heard, was—impressed by the obvious sincerity, high principles, and straightforward honesty of a man like Lord Halifax. The general German public regarded the visit as a proof of British good will toward Germany and was clearly appreciative. Nevertheless, the official German tendency was to sit back and wait. As Goering said to me after the visit, "Does the Prime Minister really mean business, and will he be able to impose his will upon those circles in England which seek to negate everything which is Nazi, or is not run on the old lines of the League of Nations, French encirclement, collective security, and Russia as the counterpoise to Germany in Europe?" That was the orthodox German view of British policy then; but the fact was that, in spite of all his professions of a desire for an understanding with Britain, Hitler was himself in no hurry. He was astute enough to realize that he had first to cross the Austrian and other brooks. He was not prepared to sacrifice his central European ambitions to that understanding. Good relations with England only meant, for him, the acquiescence of England in his schemes for the redrawing of the Central European map. His professions cost him nothing and were a valuable part of his stock in trade for deluding the German people, which, in the mass, really did want to be friends with the English. It was the patter of the conjurer intended to mislead his audience and distract their attention. And, indeed, up to March 15th, 1939, however prepared one might be for the worst, it was still possible to hope that Hitler

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might be sincere; that he meant even approximately what he said; that he would, in fact, be satisfied once the unity of Greater Germany was consummated; that the theory of purity of race was genuine; that all he wanted was Germans; and that, once he had got the Austrian and Sudeten sheep into the German fold, he would leave other nations alone and content himself with peaceful occupations and pursuits. Provided one is prepared for the worst, one can and must always hope for the best, until the worst happens. Peace was my goal, and I could not honestly work for it if I acted on the assumption that, whatever occurred or whatever one did, the end would always and inevitably be the worst. My job was not to prophesy the worst, but to do my utmost to prevent its happening.

At the time, therefore, I allowed myself to cherish the dream that the Halifax visit might indeed constitute the beginning of better things. It is but human to clutch at straws, and there was little else on the political horizon which was calculated to promote optimism. The clouds were unmistakably gathering over Austria, and the star of Henlein was already rising in the Sudeten firmament. The Spanish war was still the major preoccupation of the democratic governments, and behind that smoke screen Hitler was steadily and skillfully consolidating his position. Russia had been weakened by her military purges; while, on the other hand, the Rome-Berlin Axis had become a world triangle through the signature by Italy and Japan of the Anti-Comintern Pact. The three countries constituted a new, powerful, and aggressive bloc; and the smaller states were already beginning to wonder whether comparative immunity under the aegis of Germany

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was not safer than the theoretical collective security offered to them at Geneva.

Generally speaking, 1937 was for Hitler a year of intensive preparation, both diplomatic and military. The economic situation was giving rise to increasing anxiety, but those who foretold early financial disaster failed to reckon with German organized control. When Lord Halifax asked General Goering how the money was found to build all the magnificent new motor roads, the General's answer was "confidence." Much can be done with confidence when any lack of it is strictly *verboten* (forbidden) and very severely punished.

It is probably true to say that the Spanish war afforded Hitler just the breathing space which he required. It pre-occupied Europe, and thus enabled him surreptitiously to prepare the ground for the prosecution of his wider ambitions, by fanning the flames of Sudeten discontent, by encouraging the Nazi elements in Austria, by persecuting the opponents of Nazism in Danzig, and by hectoring the Lithuanians over Memel. What was even more useful to him was the fact that the conflicting ideologies of that war split both France and England into mutually hostile factions. It was these animosities which gave him the opportunity not only of strengthening his external political position but of forging quietly but steadily ahead with military and air-force rearmament. In the annual report on Germany which I wrote for the year 1937, one paragraph ran as follows:

The rearmament of Germany, if it has been less spectacular because it is no longer news, has been pushed on with the same energy as in previous years. In the army, consolidation has been the order of the day, but there is clear evidence that a considerable

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increase is being prepared in the number of divisions and of additional tank units outside those divisions. The air force continues to expand at an alarming rate and one can at present see no indication of a halt. We may well soon be faced with a strength of between 4,000 and 5,000 first-line aircraft. The power of the German air force has been still further increased by the intensive development of air defense, which has reached a degree of efficiency probably unknown in any other country. [Goering gave me on one occasion an interesting explanation of why such attention had been paid in Germany to A. R. P. Soldiers, he said, cannot keep their eyes to the front if their families in the rear are exposed to danger.] Even the navy, though well within the 35 per cent proportion is training a personnel considerably above the requirements of that standard. Finally, the mobilization of the civilian population and industry for war, by means of education, propaganda, training and administrative measures, has made further strides. Military efficiency is the god to whom everyone must offer sacrifice. It is not an army but the whole German nation which is being prepared for war.

In the light of that paragraph written in the course of the first week of January, 1938, it seems astonishing that one should have managed to preserve at the time any shred of optimism. It was, however, still possible to conceive that Hitler was acting solely on the principle: *Si vis pacem, para bellum*. I never had a shadow of doubt that his aims were the incorporation of Austria, the Sudeten Lands, Memel, and Danzig. His claims in these respects were based on the principle of self-determination, and a negotiated settlement in regard to them should not therefore have been impossible. Even Hitler's emotion over dead Germans in connection with the *Hindenburg* and *Deutschland* disasters encouraged the illusion that he might recoil from a war in which such misfortunes would be magnified a hundred thousandfold.

* That is why D. P. encourage
A. H.'s misfortune for German
dealers

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Goering did not; and it was, furthermore, very much in his personal interests, and those of the extremists, to eliminate Blomberg.

Scene

In any case, the shock of this disclosure to Hitler's personal feelings and public prestige was immense. Not only was Blomberg one of his most trusted advisers but also one of his most intimate and possibly most beloved friends. And this best friend had deceived him. On discovering the truth, Hitler's first step was to endeavor to persuade the Marshal to allow the marriage to be dissolved, on the ground that he had been inveigled into it under false pretenses. Blomberg's refusal to agree to this course shook Hitler's faith in the loyalty of his followers both to himself and to Germany. But worse was to follow. Blomberg had probably never, as a political Marshal and as too subservient to the Nazi civilians, been very popular with the Army chiefs. Incidentally he was equally unpopular with the Nazi extremists as not being one of themselves and as being opposed to their excessive interference in military matters. Without waiting for Hitler to find his own way out of the impasse, the Commander in Chief, General von Fritsch, supported by other generals as well as by the sole surviving and highly respected Marshal of the great war, von Mackensen, notified the Führer that Army discipline could not tolerate the retention of Blomberg, married to a lady with such a past, in his post as Minister for War. If there is one thing which a dictator dislikes, it is being dictated to. Partly out of repugnance to having his hand forced and partly out of loyalty to his old friend, he demurred at first to Blomberg's removal. Whereupon General von Fritsch took occasion not only to insist on the point

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of military discipline, but also severely to criticize the Führer's foreign policy, more particularly as regards Austria. This was going further than Hitler would tolerate. As Field Marshal Goering said to me a month or so later: "What would Mr. Chamberlain have done if your C.I.G.S. had come to him and said, 'Quite apart from Army matters, I entirely disapprove of your foreign policy'? He would have said, 'Thank you, good day,' and dismissed him as Hitler did General von Fritsch."

That was, in fact, what happened. Fritsch left and Blomberg also. The only question for Hitler then was how to effect these two main changes with profit, or at least without loss of face to himself. In the end, three weeks later, on February 4th, and after the first of Hitler's temperamental fits of uncontrolled rage of the year, these two removals were announced under a vast camouflage of other changes and retirements, not only in the Army but also in the Navy, Air Force, and Diplomatic Service. Except, however, in the field of diplomacy, little mattered except the removal of Blomberg and Fritsch, inasmuch as at least 90 per cent of the changes would have taken place in the normal course of events a few months later. Hitler himself took over command of the German armed forces and became supreme War Lord, with General Keitel, a serving soldier and a gentleman, performing most of Blomberg's executive functions, but under the direct nominal supervision of the Führer. General von Brauschitsch, a very competent and able officer, succeeded Fritsch as Commander in Chief. General Goering became a Field Marshal, thereby becoming the only one on the active list in Germany. Generally speaking, it may be

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said that Hitler succeeded in maneuvering himself out of his difficult position with remarkable adroitness. He had taken a welcome opportunity to effect a purge of the monarchist and conservative elements in the Army. He had put its leaders in their place and kept the party in theirs. The party had hoped for more drastic action against the Army; and the Army, though it had met with a decided if inconclusive defeat, was possibly relieved that worse had not befallen it. But the seeds were sown of the absorption of the Army within the party structure, and they have been germinating ever since. They sprouted considerably after Munich, but it is the war which will decide which of the two shall govern Germany.

It has been necessary to lay great stress on the incident of the Blomberg marriage. Both morally and materially its consequences were of the utmost importance. Not only did it—as mentioned above—cause Hitler his first brainstorm of the year, but there is good reason to believe that it radically altered his entire outlook on life. Thenceforward he became less human; and his fits of rage, real or simulated, more frequent. His faith in the fidelity of his followers was gravely shaken, and his inaccessibility became greatly accentuated.

* To whom did Hitler really listen? That is a question I thereafter repeatedly asked; and the reply was always "no one." Moreover, the all-important upshot of the incident was to remove from Hitler's entourage two of his most moderate and respectable advisers, Blomberg himself and Baron von Neurath. The replacement of Neurath by Ribbentrop was a major disaster. The failure of the latter's mission to London had long been apparent, I fancy even to Hitler himself; and

* D.T. No one but me.

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he would probably have been removed sooner if any other suitable post had been immediately available to Germany's "Ambassador at Large." The reconstruction gave Hitler the opportunity of giving him the office of Minister for Foreign Affairs, albeit directly, as in General Keitel's case, under his own supervision; and I was inclined to believe that, in making the appointment, the Führer felt that Ribbentrop, who as a yes-man was sympathetic to him, could do less harm in Berlin than in London. I should like to make it quite clear here that I have no personal quarrel with Herr von Ribbentrop, whose original intentions on his appointment to London may have been admirable. But from the beginning I felt that his vanity, his resentments, and his misconceptions of England and English mentality were a serious bar to any prospect of a better understanding between the two countries; and at the end I realized that, as far as lay in his power, no one had done more than he did to precipitate the war. For that there is no hell in Dante's Inferno bad enough for Ribbentrop. It was a consummation which I had long feared and to which I had more than once drawn the attention of his colleagues.

Speaking to Goering and to others before Munich, I had reminded them that if one man had been more responsible than anyone else for the war which began in August, 1914, it was Count Berchtold, the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs. I had known him in St. Petersburg when he was Austrian Ambassador there. He was a great Austrian nobleman, but like Ribbentrop he was a combination of vanity, stupidity, and superficiality. And I warned my listeners that if Ribbentrop were not checked, he would one day lead Germany to ruin as Count Berchtold had led Austria. Un-

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fortunately foreign politics were Hitler's main preoccupation; and in his position as Foreign Minister Ribbentrop had more constant access to, and consequently more chance of exercising his influence on, the Führer than any other German Minister. In September, 1938, as well as in August, 1939, Ribbentrop and Himmler were in my opinion his principal lieutenants in the war party of which Hitler himself was the leader.

Finally there is no doubt that the Blomberg incident and the necessity which it imposed on a dictator to obliterate its memory by some striking external success accelerated the tempo of what may be described as Act I of the drama—"Austria."

Between, however, the prelude and the first act, there was an interlude, in the course of which Mr. Chamberlain made his third effort in eight months to initiate with Hitler discussions, the object of which was to lead to those serious negotiations, with a view to the settlement by pacific methods of all outstanding problems, which was the settled policy of Mr. Chamberlain's Government vis-à-vis Germany. That was, too, from beginning to end, the underlying purpose of my mission to Berlin. Admittedly, there may have been certain honest misunderstandings on both sides. Yet, though Hitler was constantly talking of the hand which he had held out to England and complaining that England had rejected it, whenever definite advances were made to him, he always found some way of withdrawing and of refusing to meet us halfway. It is impossible today to believe that this was fortuitous. The Greek tragedy motif was not accidental but calculated. His aims in Europe were not compatible with negotiations

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with Britain, and he was determined to secure them first before risking actual negotiations with us and above all before we became too strong. The naval treaty was "eyewash"; and there can be little doubt that Hitler always contemplated denouncing it, as he did in April, 1939, whenever it suited his purpose to do so (i.e. after his land and air rearmament was completed). In the meantime, if the Anglo-German Naval Treaty and the guarantee to Belgium could keep us from interfering with his Central European schemes, so much the better. That was, I am convinced, the sole motive of both Treaty and guarantee.

It is so important to realize this that I venture to enumerate here the various concrete attempts which were made during the course of my mission to Berlin with a view to initiating Anglo-German discussions: Firstly, the invitation for Baron von Neurath to visit London in June, 1937, which failed, as I have recounted, in consequence of the alleged Leipzig incident and Ribbentrop's jealousy; secondly, Lord Halifax's visit to Berlin, which led to no response from Hitler, but which was followed, thirdly, by my own equally inconclusive interview in March, 1938, with the Chancellor, which I am about to describe; fourthly, Mr. Chamberlain's own visits to Berchtesgaden and Munich and the Anglo-German declaration which Hitler deliberately tore up when he occupied Prague on March 15th, 1939; fifthly, the visit to Berlin which it was arranged for the President of the Board of Trade and the Secretary of the Overseas Trade Department to make on March 18th, 1939, and which had naturally to be cancelled after Hitler's action on March 15th; and sixthly, Lord Halifax's last effort on June 30th, when, in his great and

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considered speech at the annual dinner of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, he defined British policy as resting upon twin foundations of purpose. "One," he said, "is our determination to resist force. The other is our recognition of the world's desire to get on with the constructive work of building peace. If we could once be satisfied that the intentions of others were the same as our own and that we *all really wanted peaceful solutions* [the italics are mine]—then, I say here definitely, we could discuss the problems that are today causing the world anxiety. In such a new atmosphere we could examine the colonial problem, the question of raw materials, trade barriers, the issue of *Lebensraum* (living space) and any other issue that affects the lives of all European citizens." There could not have been a fairer offer, but it was ignored.

I have quoted this passage at length, because it truly constitutes the theme associated with the whole of my work during those two strenuous years at Berlin, and unceasingly argued by me in all my talks with Germany's leading statesmen. "If you really want peace, we are honestly ready to talk," was the perpetual burden of my language to all who would listen to it. Some undoubtedly did, but others stopped their ears. The truth was that Hitler did not "really want peaceful solutions." I do not mean that he wanted war with Britain—from that he certainly shrank, but he was anxious to try out his new war machine, and was avid for cheap victories over Czechs, Poles, or others who would stand no chance against the organized and disciplined military might of Germany.

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Goering had said after Lord Halifax's visit, "Does Mr. Chamberlain really mean business?" To prove that he did so I was recalled to London at the end of January, 1938, and given instructions to seek an interview with Hitler and to discuss the possibilities of a general settlement. If we judged by the German press, as well as Hitler's own statements to casual British visitors, the twin obstacles to a better understanding between our two countries were our constant opposition to Germany in Europe and our refusal to hand back the colonies of which we had "robbed" her. I was consequently told to inform Hitler that His Majesty's Government would be ready, in principle, to discuss all outstanding questions.

I returned to Berlin on February 4th, but in view of the unsettled atmosphere caused by the reorganization following on the Blomberg marriage incident, my actual audience with Hitler was deferred until March 3rd. By that time Mr. Eden had left the Government, and Lord Halifax had succeeded him as Foreign Secretary. Unfortunately—and it seemed fated that it should always be so for my meetings with Hitler—the moment was an ill-chosen one. Dr. Schuschnigg had been summoned to Berchtesgaden on February 12th, and the Austrian kettle was boiling hard and on the point of boiling over. Hitler was consequently in a vile temper and made no effort to conceal it.

I was received in the old Reichschancery, and was asked to sit down on a big sofa against the wall facing the window. On my left on a small stool was Dr. Schmidt taking notes. On his left again, in a semicircle, Hitler himself in an armchair, and next to him and facing me, Herr von Ribbentrop.

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I began with a statement of my object in asking to see the Chancellor. It was not, I said, to suggest a bargain (*Kubhandel*, or cow deal), an accusation which the German press always made against us when we suggested anything but to create a basis for friendship. His Majesty's Government, I said, did not underestimate the difficulties to be overcome but were convinced that they could be overcome if both parties contributed on a basis of reciprocity and on the principle of higher reason as distinct from the use of mere force. His Majesty's Government admitted that changes were possible, but only if effected on the basis of higher reason; they had discussed what appeared to be the main questions between us, such as a limitation of armaments and the restriction of bombing—to which His Majesty's Government would add the abolition of bombing airplanes—as well as a peaceful solution of the Czech and Austrian problems, and the colonial question. What contribution for her part was Germany, I asked, ready to make toward general security and peace in Europe.

It was perhaps the longest continuous statement which I ever made to Hitler, and must have lasted for the best part of ten minutes. During all that time he remained crouching in his armchair with the most ferocious scowl on his face, which my firm, but at the same time conciliatory, remarks scarcely warranted. He listened, nevertheless, till I had finished and then let himself go. Nothing, he said, could be done until the press campaign against him in England ceased. (He never ceased harping on this subject in every conversation which I ever had with him.) Nor was he going to tolerate the interference of third parties in Central Europe. Injustice was

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being done to millions of Germans, and self-determination and democratic rights must be applied to Germans as well as others. Only 15 per cent of the Austrian population supported the Schuschnigg regime; if Britain opposed a just settlement, Germany would have to fight. If Germans were oppressed there, he must and would intervene; and, if he did intervene, he would act like lightning (*Blitzschnell*). Austria must be allowed to vote, and in Czechoslovakia the Germans must have autonomy in cultural and other matters.

It was clearly not colonies which interested Hitler. After haranguing me for half an hour about the British press, the insupportable meddling of British bishops in German church affairs, the unbearable interference of England generally in matters which, according to him, did not concern her, and about the sad fate of Nazi-loving Germans in Austria and Czechoslovakia, he turned to the question of disarmament and referred to the threat to Germany of the Franco-Soviet pact and of Czechoslovakia's accession thereto. It was, he said, for that reason that Germany had to be so heavily armed, and any limitation of armaments depended, therefore, on the U.S.S.R. The problem was, he continued, rendered particularly difficult "by the fact that one could place as much confidence in the faith in treaties of a barbarous creature like the Soviet Union as in the comprehension of mathematical formulae by a savage. Any agreement with the U.S.S.R. was quite worthless and Russia should never have been allowed into Europe." It was impossible, he added, to have, for instance, any faith in any Soviet undertaking not to use poison gas.

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The sentences in quotation marks are Hitler's actual words as recorded in the written and carefully edited notes made and given to me at the time by Dr. Schmidt. In fact the whole of the three last paragraphs are summarized from that written record, as approved by Hitler himself and communicated to me by Herr von Ribbentrop. I have transcribed it at some length, because Hitler's remarks on this occasion constitute interesting evidence, as taken down and to be used against him, of the Hitler technique. When he spoke of a vote in Austria, I asked him if he meant a plebiscite, a suggestion which had long been canvassed in the German press. Hitler's answer was that he demanded "that the just interests of the German Austrians should be secured and an end made to oppression by a process of peaceful evolution." In other words, he begged the question with a vague reply. He did not intend, as he proved later, to tolerate a plebiscite unless it was held under his own direct auspices. His claim for the Sudeten in Czechoslovakia should equally be noted. It was limited to autonomy at that moment. After he had got Austria, autonomy was not enough, though it continued to be the openly declared objective until his army was ready to strike. As soon as it was so, the incorporation of the whole of the Sudeten Lands in the Reich was demanded. When he got them, that again was not enough; and the Czechs, whose independence he had said that he was prepared to guarantee, had to lose that also. Each stage was always the last for him until he had reached it. As soon as that position was gained, he advanced on the next. Nor are his observations in regard to the U.S.S.R., in the light of August, 1939, less illuminating. As for the limitation of armaments and the prohibition or

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restriction of aerial bombardments, which he had once upon a time expressed such willingness to consider, his attitude toward these problems on this occasion left very little of either of them above the surface. His words were often fair; but, when one attempted to get down to brass tacks, he skillfully eluded the issue. That also was typical of the Hitler technique, and his remark about Russia and poison gas is worth remembering. The U.S.S.R. was still at that time marked out to be the scapegoat, but it was so easy where Hitler was concerned for circumstances to alter cases.

As for colonies he did not seem the least interested in them, and the sum of his reply was that the colonial problem could wait for 4, 6, 8, or even 10 years. He promised, however, to give me a written reply on the subject, and I left Berlin a year and a half later without having ever received it.

We did, however, fitfully discuss such matters, and even studied the globe of the world, which always stands in Hitler's room wherever he is, a practice which I would strongly recommend to all politicians and diplomatists. By that time the scowl on Hitler's face had disappeared, and on one occasion he had even smiled. It was when Ribbentrop intervened with some remark about the British press, which elicited from me the retort that it seemed to me amazing that any man who had lived in Canada and been Ambassador in London should be so profoundly ignorant of British mentality and habits. Hitler seemed to appreciate my onslaught on his Minister for Foreign Affairs, whose ascendancy over him was at that time far from being what it subsequently became. When our long conversation, which must have lasted nearly two hours, was over, I produced from my pocket on leaving an ex-

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militarily to support the Austrian Government. The Duce's only reply, when he was eventually informed of it, was to the effect that such a proposal was a bomb which would surely burst in Schuschnigg's own hand.

The news of the proposed plebiscite reached Berlin at midnight on March 9th. It afforded Hitler, that master of opportunism, just the subterfuge which he was seeking. On the following day he summoned his advisers and his generals, and late that afternoon took the decision to cut the Gordian knot with the sword and to occupy Austria by force. He justified his decision on the ground that it was essential to prevent a plebiscite which according to him—and he was undoubtedly correct, for German propaganda would have insured that he should be—would merely lead to bloodshed and the loss of German lives. Nevertheless, I still do not believe, any more than I did at the time, that the rape of Austria in the form which it finally took, or at that date, was definitely premeditated. Hitler would have preferred to incorporate his native Austria into Germany by what he regarded as peaceful means. However clear in his mind Hitler may have been as to his ultimate ends, the decision as to the means for achieving them always depended upon the development of events and was never taken till the last moment.

But there had, of course, been plans in existence since 1934 for armed support of Nazi rebels in the event of revolution in Austria. These were, undoubtedly, rapidly revised; and the concentration of the Army on the border of Austria was completed by dawn on March 12th with very great speed and secrecy. Once it became clear that there would be no opposition, the "invasion" degenerated into spreading

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troops all over Austria as rapidly as possible, with little regard to war-service conditions. In certain respects it was a slovenly performance, which in itself was proof of inadequate preparation. But it served the Army a useful lesson, as a curtain raiser for possible subsequent forcible action in the case of Czechoslovakia. Moreover, it predisposed the world to believe that what had happened in Austria would be repeated in Czechoslovakia, and thereby helped to promote the subsequent incident of May 21st.

News that troops were on the move against Austria reached me in the early morning of Friday, March 11th. I at once asked the Military Attaché to His Majesty's Embassy to go round to the Ministry of War to ascertain the facts. Colonel Mason-Macfarlane received the answer that there was no information to give and that no troop movements were taking place. He immediately motored to Leipzig and obtained abundant evidence that military operations were afoot, but it was not until 6 P.M. that the War Ministry admitted to the Assistant Military Attaché that Colonel Mason-Macfarlane had been misled in the morning.

Herr von Ribbentrop was at the time in London, whither he had proceeded to present his letters of recall, another fairly evident proof of the unpremeditated moment of the "rape." As Minister for Foreign Affairs he would never have absented himself from Berlin at that moment if he could have foreseen it, and he, in fact, endeavored to return immediately but was told to remain where he was. Indeed, the big question which all Germans asked themselves was, "What will England do?" England, however, left it to words to carry conviction, as Hitler on March 10th had doubtless

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impossibility of any other course being followed than that which was being taken. Our conversation, which took place in Goering's private room in the building, was an unpleasant one; but the only point that mattered was that the German troops and airplanes were already crossing the frontier. Nothing in fact could have saved Austria or even have restored her to independent existence except a resort by the Western Powers to a war in which probably the greater part of the Austrian youth would have been found on Germany's side. After fighting Schuschnigg's battle for him to the bitter end, I finally said to Goering that "even supposing the Austrian Chancellor has been unwise, that is no excuse for Germany to be a bully." I also took occasion strongly to urge the Field Marshal to do his utmost to see that the anti-Nazi Austrians were treated with the decency which their loyalty to their country merited. Had Goering been left to his own devices in Austria, I believe that he would have done his best to carry out such a policy. As it was, the embittered Austrian Nazis, backed up by Himmler's secret police and S.S., very soon undid what Goering attempted to do during his brief visit to Vienna after the occupation. My last remark to Goering as we returned to the great hall was that, if he did not wish that Herr Hitler should read what British public opinion would think of his actions, he had better arrange that the English newspapers should not be shown to him for a fortnight. I gave the same advice to Dr. Meissner, the head of the secretariat of the Reichschancery and the man who had served Ebert and Hindenburg in the same capacity as he was serving Hitler. It was not that I wished to spare the latter's feelings, but because I was conscious of his habit of making those who

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lay in his power, in this case the Austrian anti-Nazis, pay for the resentment provoked by those who were fortunate enough to live outside his jurisdiction.

The die of the fate of Austria had in fact been cast on March 10th. The rest is a matter of simple history. No opposition of any kind was offered to the German troops who entered Austria on the morning of March 12th. After spending the night at Linz and visiting the grave of his mother, Hitler himself reached Vienna on Sunday the 13th; and the curtain for Act I fell amid the cheers of the Austrian mob which welcomed their new Führer and applauded his announcement of the final incorporation of the Ostmark in the German Reich. One of the first acts of the Nazi Government after the occupation was to declare Planetta and the other assassins of Dollfuss to be heroic martyrs for the cause of German unity! Vienna was a landmark in that it constituted Hitler's first step outside the Reich along the path of violence. Moreover, it had been accomplished without actual bloodshed, since, however much they may be regretting it today, there is no doubt that many Austrians, notably the younger ones, were at the time themselves in favor of the *Anschluss*. They little realized at the time that their country would be treated as occupied territory and with complete indifference to its national individuality.

There was for me one last commentary on the proceedings before the act was finally over. March 13th was the German *Heldenstag*, or anniversary for the dead of the Great War. In view of what was happening I declined to attend the ceremony, at which all the heads of missions were wont to be present. Instead, I proceeded to pay a visit to the Austrian

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"be the earnest desire of his Government to improve German-Czech relations"—it was the old refrain and carried ever diminishing conviction.

Nor could there have been any shadow of doubt at all on the subject. In the years between 1933 and 1938 it was a common question to hear, "What does Hitler really want?" It had always been answered—and notably by my predecessor, Sir Eric Phipps, in his valedictory dispatch of 1937—in the same sense: first, Austria, then the Sudeten Lands; and after that, the liquidation of Memel, the Corridor, and Danzig; and finally the lost colonies. From the beginning of my mission I had never found any reason to disagree with the accuracy of a judgment which I entirely indorsed.

Czechoslovakia was the keystone of the French alliance system, and the potential bulwark against German expansion southeastward. But after the *Anschluss* she was left—vis-à-vis Germany—in a completely helpless position both strategically and economically, and it was clear that the integrity of her Versailles frontiers could only be upheld if France and England were prepared either to negotiate or to fight for their maintenance. War or peaceful negotiations were, in fact, the issues at stake. It was equally evident that something had to be done quickly, if Germany were not once more to take matters into her own hands, regardless of the Western Powers. When, therefore, His Majesty's Minister at Prague, in a sober and reasoned telegram, urged His Majesty's Government to intervene, together with France, before it was too late, with a view to persuading the Czech Government to readjust their relations with Germany, I had no hesitation in telegraphing immediately that I concurred wholeheartedly

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and unreservedly in the sage counsel given by Mr. Newton.

Nor, in doing so, was the only consideration that which one realistic glance at the map of Europe would have sufficed to prove, namely, the indefensibility of Czechoslovakia's strategic and economic position, once Austria had become an integral part of Germany. Though heavily fortified in the north, she had now become highly vulnerable to attack from the south. Quite apart from the national artificiality of this creation of Versailles, which contained in miniature all the diverse racial problems of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, Czechoslovakia suffered from one fatal defect: her minorities, Polish and Hungarian no less than German, were situated on her very frontiers, and contiguous to the nations which claimed them as their own subjects.

On the broadest moral grounds it was thus difficult to justify offhand the refusal of the right of self-determination to the 2,750,000 Sudetens living in solid blocks just across Germany's border. Its flat denial would have been contrary to a principle on which the British Empire itself was founded, and would, consequently, never have rallied to us the whole-hearted support either of the British people or of that Empire. There were, on the other hand, obvious grounds, strategic and economic as well as historic, for the maintenance of this minority within the Bohemian state; and Dr. Benes, in the months which followed, was quick to take advantage of these points and to make them the foundation of his reluctance to grant an autonomy to the Sudetens which he feared would merely end in their complete secession.

But there was a further consideration which carried much weight. If Germany were not always to be allowed to settle

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cially confirming the warning given in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister on March 24th, as quoted above.

My first interview with Herr von Ribbentrop on May 21st proved the occasion for a certain amount of acrimony on both sides. Owing to a regrettable indiscretion, one of the British newspapers had quoted General Keitel by name as having denied to me the reports of German troop movements. Ribbentrop, who was doubtless offended that I should seek information from anyone except himself, began by complaining of this and said in consequence no military information would ever in the future be communicated to me. I retorted that I could only infer from his attitude that General Keitel's information to me had been incorrect and that I should feel obliged to report to that effect to my Government. He thereupon turned in wrath to the accidental murder of two Germans near Eger, and used as regards the Czechs the most reprehensibly bloodthirsty language. They would, he assured me, be exterminated, women and children and all. When I observed that, while the death of two Germans was greatly to be deplored, it was better that two should die rather than hundreds of thousands in war, his only reply was that every German was ready to die for his country. Incidentally, I believe that the unsuitability of his language on this occasion earned for him a reprimand from his master; and for some time thereafter he remained out of favor. He was to get back again into it when, later in the crisis, his comforting assurances that England would never fight were to give that master the encouragement which he needed for the prosecution of his policy in September.

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In any case, Ribbentrop's attitude on the morning of May 21st did nothing to ease the strain; and on the same afternoon I saw him a second time on instructions from London; and, after notifying him of the action which His Majesty's Government were taking in Prague with a view to inducing the Czech Government to come to a settlement direct with Henlein, I warned His Excellency that France had definite obligations to Czechoslovakia and that, if these had to be fulfilled, His Majesty's Government could not guarantee that they would not be forced by events to become themselves involved. Ribbentrop, who had been highly excitable in the morning, had become sullen in the afternoon. His attitude (doubtless on orders from Hitler, for whom the point continued to be a bitter one till the end) was that all remonstrances should be addressed to Prague and not to Berlin, and he declined to give to Henlein any advice on the lines of that which we were giving to the Czech Government. "If a general war ensued, it would," he said, "be a war of aggression provoked by France, and Germany would fight as she had done in 1914." He repeated this phrase constantly in September. Finally, on the Sunday, I conveyed to him through the State Secretary (Ribbentrop having left Berlin by then to report to the Führer at Berchtesgaden) a personal message from Lord Halifax drawing his attention to the risk of precipitate action's leading to a general conflagration, the only result of which might prove to be the destruction of European civilization.

So far as official action went, this ended the so-called May 21st incident at Berlin. By the Monday morning, all but the most intractable had become convinced that the stories of German troop concentrations were in fact untrue; the municipal

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"I heard the first explosion, my immediate reaction was 'those cursed Czechs have begun it.'" If Goering could have jumped to such a conclusion, it is not strange that other people should have had misgivings. The story is at the same time an illuminating one in regard to German mentality. When we were thinking only that Germany was on the point of attacking the Czechs, the Germans were apprehensive lest the latter meant to provoke a European war before they themselves were ready for it.

As I said before, things might have been expected to resume a normal course after the scare of the May week-end. That they did not was no doubt partly due to the attitude of the foreign press. The publicity of the impressive official warning given, as it eventually proved, without due cause at Berlin was unfortunate enough. The defiant gesture of the Czechs in mobilizing some 170,000 troops and then proclaiming to the world that it was their action which had turned Hitler from his purpose was equally regrettable. But what Hitler could not stomach was the exultation of the press. The protagonists of collective security proclaimed the victory of their system. Every newspaper in Europe and America joined in the chorus. "No" had been said, and Hitler had been forced to yield. The democratic powers had brought the totalitarian states to heel, etc.

It was, above all, this jubilation which gave Hitler the excuse for his third and worst brain storm of the year, and pushed him definitely over the border line from peaceful negotiation to the use of force. From May 23rd to May 28th his fit of sulks and fury lasted, and on the latter date he gave orders for a gradual mobilization of the Army, which should be pre-

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pared for *all* eventualities in the autumn. He had made up his vindictive mind to avenge himself upon Benes and the Czechs. Once again it was a case of those within his power paying for the humiliation which others had caused him. At the same time, in order to protect himself from any possible reaction on the part of France, he initiated the monumental and costly work known as the West Wall in Germany and abroad as the Siegfried Line. It cost Germany 9,000,000,000 marks (or £750,000,000 at the official rate of exchange of 12 RM to the pound); and the expense of it added to Hitler's resentment. He went so far on May 28th as to fix October 1st as the actual date for the Czech crisis.

Looking back on the past, one realizes how little justified by actual facts was the so-called victory of May 21st. The Germans had never mobilized; nor, though their own newspapers and the recent invasion of Austria were greatly responsible for the illusion, had they actually any intention at that time of a coup for which they were not yet ready and which as they realized required infinitely greater and more careful preparation than had been necessary in the case of Austria. We had cried "wolf, wolf" prematurely, but the fact of the matter was that the world had already lost all confidence in Hitler's good faith, and the liveliness of the general anxiety was the measure of their complete mistrust. Moreover, the upshot of the press campaign was unfortunately twofold: not only did it serve as an excuse for Hitler to come down on the side of his extremists and to approve once again of solutions by force, but it also fatally encouraged the Czechs to believe that their position was secure and Benes in his reluctance to go far enough to satisfy the Sudeten Germans.

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The first interview at Godesberg thus ended without any reference to a subsequent meeting, and until the late afternoon of the following day it looked as if there might be none. Two written communications were exchanged in the course of the day without producing any modifications of the respective positions. The British press even reported that the negotiations had definitely broken down; and in the interval London informed Prague that it could not advise against a Czech mobilization, while pointing out, nevertheless, that mobilization might precipitate a conflict.

The Prime Minister's patience was, however, not yet finally exhausted. He was unwilling to refuse discussion of proposals which he had not actually seen in writing; and at 5 P.M. that afternoon he instructed Sir Horace Wilson and myself to see Ribbentrop and to suggest that Hitler should embody the exact nature of his proposals for the occupation of the Sudeten Lands in an official document. It might have been anticipated that Hitler would reject this request on the ground that he had made his proposals sufficiently clear verbally in the course of the conversation on the preceding day. But the war party in Germany was also not yet finally in the ascendant. Mr. Chamberlain's refusal to renew contact had provoked some consternation among the moderates in the German camp; and Hitler, in view of the high hopes placed by the German people in Mr. Chamberlain's intervention, was reluctant to break off the negotiations and anxious for a further meeting. Ribbentrop was accordingly instructed to inform us that a German memorandum would be prepared in the course of the evening and that we should be informed as soon as it was ready. At 10:30 that night the conversations were resumed.

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Although Hitler was in a much less truculent mood and even made an effort to appear conciliatory, his memorandum showed that he had not moderated his demands, which were presented in a most peremptory form and described by Hitler as his last word. In this document he required the Czechs to begin the evacuation of the predominantly Sudeten areas at 8 A.M. on September 26th and to complete it by September 28th. Thus, the Czechoslovak Government was to be given a bare forty-eight hours to issue the necessary orders, and only four days in which to evacuate the whole of the Sudeten Lands. It is characteristic of Hitler's methods of argument that, when the Prime Minister pointed out that this was a sheer dictate (the word always applied by Hitler to the Treaty of Versailles) imposed on a country voluntarily surrendering a part of its territory without having been defeated in war, the Chancellor replied: "It is not a dictate; look, the document is headed by the word 'memorandum.'"

In the course of the long discussion which followed, Hitler agreed to modify his timetable slightly, and he also made in his own handwriting a number of minor alterations designed to attenuate the asperity of the memorandum. "You are the only man," he said somewhat bitterly to Mr. Chamberlain, "to whom I have ever made a concession." He appeared, however, relieved when the Prime Minister finally said that, while he could not accept or recommend the German proposals, he could nevertheless, as an intermediary, not refuse to submit them to the Czechoslovak Government. Hitler had no desire that the German people should think that the negotiations had broken down as the result of his own intransigency. He was nonetheless bent on the military occupation of Czecho-

personal message. Therein Mr. Chamberlain, while acknowledging the references to himself in Hitler's speech, guaranteed if Germany refrained from force to see that the Czech undertakings already given would be carried out. Sir H. Wilson accordingly saw Hitler for the second time at 12:15 on the morning of September 27th. He asked the Chancellor if, in the light of the Prime Minister's statement, he could take any message back to London. Hitler replied that the Czechoslovak Government had only two courses: acceptance of the German memorandum; or rejection. In the course of this conversation Hitler shouted savagely on two or three occasions: "*Ich werde die Tschechen zerschlagen*," which Herr Schmidt, the interpreter, faithfully translated as: "I will smash-sh-sh the Czechs." He showed by his demeanor that he was longing to chastise the Czechs for their insolence; bombs must fall on Prague; the Czech Army must be put to rout; Dr. Benes must be forced to ignominious flight. When it was clear that Hitler's determination to go to war was quite inflexible, Sir H. Wilson said that he was charged by the Prime Minister to give him a message to the following effect: "If, in pursuit of her Treaty obligations, France became actively engaged in hostilities against Germany, the United Kingdom would feel obliged to support her."

Hitler's answer was that he could only take note of this communication. It meant, he said, that if France elected to attack Germany, England felt obliged to attack Germany, also. Sir H. Wilson attempted to refute this interpretation of his statement, but Hitler declined to be convinced. "If France and England strike," he shouted, "let them do so. It is a matter of complete indifference to me. I am prepared for every

eventuality. I can only take note of the position. It is Tuesday today, and by next Monday we shall all be at war." On this depressing note the interview ended.

Sir Horace flew back to London early the same afternoon. Nevertheless, his conversations had had their effect; and I was officially informed that night by the State Secretary that Hitler had addressed, through the German Embassy in London, an immediate and important personal letter to the Prime Minister, attempting to justify his attitude and begging Mr. Chamberlain to continue to use his good offices with a view to inducing the Czech Government to see reason. It constituted a perceptible attempt at conciliation and was indicative of a certain nervousness. Therein he gave the Prime Minister the definite assurance, which he was so cynically to disregard six months later, to the effect that, once the Sudeten Germans were incorporated in the Reich, he would cease to be interested in the Czechs and would *do nothing to infringe in any way their independence*. I have included the English translation of this letter, for obvious reasons, as Appendix I at the end of this volume.

A chance episode had, as it happens, produced a salutary revulsion in Hitler's mind. In the afternoon of that Tuesday, a mechanized division had rumbled through the streets of Berlin and up the Wilhelmstrasse past the Chancellor's window and those of the Embassy. For three hours Hitler stood at his window and watched it pass. The Germans love military display, but not a single individual in the streets applauded its passage. The picture which it represented was almost that of a hostile army passing through a conquered city. Hitler was deeply impressed. At that moment he realized

for the first time that the cheers of his sycophants in the Sportspalast were far from representing the true spirit and feelings of the German People.

Late in the afternoon of September 27th, I had been advised by the Foreign Office by telephone that instructions were on their way to me for yet another communication to the Chancellor. I accordingly made arrangements to meet the State Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs at 11 P.M. that night and handed to him a note for immediate translation and submission to Hitler. It contained proposals, agreed to by the French Government and transmitted to Prague, pressing the Czech Government to agree to the immediate transfer of the Sudeten territories on the basis of a timetable guaranteed by His Majesty's Government. The first areas were to be handed over on October 1st, and the creation of an international boundary commission for the settlement of details was also suggested. The proposals went far to meet Hitler's demands, and in the end they constituted the main basis of the final settlement at Munich. Baron von Weizsäcker was noncommittal, though he undertook to arrange that these proposals be conveyed immediately to the Chancellor; and with faint hope I retired to bed on the Tuesday night, realizing that, if nothing new intervened, the announced general mobilization of the German Army would take place the following day at 2 P.M. Since the Army was already concentrated and mobilized, in effect this meant the beginning of the march into Czechoslovakia.

I was aroused at 7 A.M. the next morning (Wednesday) by the French Ambassador, who informed me by telephone that his instructions to make a similar communication to mine

had reached him at 4 A.M., that in some respects they went even further than mine, and that he had been requested to see Hitler himself. He said that he had already asked for an audience.

Three hours later, at 10 A.M., he rang me up again to say that he feared the worst, since he had had no answer to his request for an audience and probably would not now receive one. I replied to M. François-Poncet that I would come and see him at 10:30. I then asked to be put into communication with Goering by telephone and was able to get into immediate touch with him. Fortunately the telephone was working well everywhere on that critical day. I told the Field Marshal that the French Ambassador had asked for an audience, that no reply had yet been vouchsafed him, that it was a question of fresh proposals, and that peace or war depended on it. I began to describe the proposals, but Goering cut me short. "You need not," he said, "say a word more. I am going immediately to see the Führer."

I then went round to see the French Ambassador; and, while we were discussing the new proposals, a message came from the Reichschancery that Hitler would see François-Poncet at 11:15. Simultaneously a Secretary brought round to me at the French Embassy a telegram from London, instructing me to give immediately a final personal message from the Prime Minister to Hitler himself. Its gist was that, after reading Hitler's letter of the previous evening, Mr. Chamberlain was still convinced that Germany could obtain her essential requirements without resort to war and that he was ready to come to Berlin at once himself in order to discuss the whole question with Hitler and with representatives

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of France and Italy. Did Hitler, it concluded, wish to take the responsibility of starting a world war for the sake of a few days' delay in settling the problem?

It is worth recalling the exact sequence of events on that critical day. Goering went to see Hitler between 10:15 and 11:15 and was joined there by Neurath, who had forced his way in uninvited. Both were in favor of a peaceful solution by negotiation. At a meeting of Hitler and his advisers there had been some plain speaking, in which Goering had vehemently accused Ribbentrop of inciting to war. Among other things, it was related that Goering shouted that he knew what war was and he did not want to go through it again. If, however, the Führer said "March," he would go himself in the first and leading airplane. All that he insisted upon was that Ribbentrop should be in the seat next to him. He did say this or something like it, but it was not in the Führer's presence. But I believe that he did call Ribbentrop on that occasion a "criminal fool." Nor, of the various factors which induced Hitler to abandon his idea of a Czech war, was Goering's intervention the least important.

Then came the Poncet interview, in the middle of which, at 11:40 A.M., Hitler left the room to see the Italian Ambassador, who had arrived with a preliminary urgent appeal from Signor Mussolini for the postponement of the so-called general mobilization for twenty-four hours. The Italian intervention proved the final and decisive factor for peace. It enabled Hitler to climb down without losing face. His first remark to me when I saw him at 12:15, immediately after Poncet, was: "At the request of my great friend and ally, Mussolini,

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I have postponed mobilizing my troops for twenty-four hours."

Before actually seeing Hitler himself I had, however, realized that the situation had taken a turn for the better. When I entered the Chancellery, there was an atmosphere of relief in the faces of the less bellicose of the crowd of Nazi soldiers and aides-de-camp who filled the hall. One friend of mine whispered in my ear: "*Das geht besser: halten Sie nur fest.*" (It is going better: only stick to it.) I was at once ushered into Hitler's Cabinet room, where I met Goering and Neurath on their way out. I gave Hitler the Prime Minister's message, and his reply was that he must consult again with Signor Mussolini before giving me a definite answer. We discussed fairly amicably the latest proposals of the French and British Governments; and the Chancellor, though a little distraught, was not unreasonable. My interview with him, which lasted over an hour, was also interrupted by a second visit from the Italian Ambassador, this time to say that Mussolini himself was prepared to accept the British proposals for a Four-Power meeting, which had been telegraphed to Rome.

I had been left to argue desultorily with Ribbentrop; and, when Hitler rejoined us, I failed to notice any particular change in his attitude. Yet neither before nor after was he other than comparatively amicable, though he shouted once or twice when he described the orders which he would give to Goering's air fleet, if compelled to do so. I was, however, told afterward that those who listened anxiously within ear-shot on the other side of the door had feared from the noise that things were going badly. I had, however, become used

CHAPTER VI. *SECOND ENTR'ACTE:*
HITLER'S REACTIONS
AFTER MUNICH

I LEFT Berlin as soon as was practicable after the conclusion of the work of the International Commission. I had, of course, the utmost misgivings as to Hitler's good faith and the honesty of his ultimate intentions toward the Czechs; but a Government had assumed power at Prague which sincerely sought co-operation with Germany; and, since Hitler had got the Sudeten Lands, which he had solemnly assured Mr. Chamberlain was his sole object, it was still permissible at least to hope that he might treat a friendly disposed Czech Government with some generosity and fairness. Nevertheless, I left for England about the middle of October thoroughly disheartened, and if I had been a free agent I would never have returned to Berlin. The Hitlerian methods had been too much in evidence at Godesberg and Munich, as well as at Berlin during the session of the International Commission, for me to feel otherwise than disgusted.

Moreover, I was a sick man and had been for some months past. Within a couple of weeks I was operated upon in a nursing home, and for four months altogether I remained completely out of everything. It was only thanks to Mr. Stanford Cade's marvelous skill and care that I was more or less fit, and even so rather less than more, for duty again about the

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middle of the following February. That in itself was a minor disaster. I am not presuming to suggest that anything might have been altered by my presence at Berlin. But four months were too long to be absent from Germany in the dynamic state through which she was passing, and in view of the appetites which had been whetted by the inclusion of 10,000,000 Austrian and Sudeten Germans in the Reich.

Furthermore, events occurred during that interval which had a considerable bearing upon subsequent developments. One of these was the organized persecution of the Jews which took place in November. In revenge for the murder by a young unbalanced Jew of a German diplomatist in Paris, at the instigation of Dr. Goebbels' propaganda press and with the connivance and actual participation of Himmler's secret police and extreme Nazis, squads of German hooligans reverted to the barbarism of the Middle Ages and indulged in an orgy of violent ill treatment of the Jews such as even the Middle Ages could scarcely equal. The motives of this disgusting exhibition, which shocked all decent Germans as much as it did the whole outside world, were twofold. One was utterly ignoble and revolting, namely, the opportunity which the murder afforded to plunder the Jews and expedite their expulsion. The second, within limits, might have been comprehensible. The German authorities were undoubtedly seriously alarmed lest another Jew, emboldened by the success of Grynspan, should follow his example and murder either Hitler or one of themselves.

The exaggerated and inhuman revenge which the Germans took was, however, from their own point of view an act of incredible stupidity comparable in its effects with the sinking of the *Lusitania* and the shooting of Nurse Cavell in the war.

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Thereby they turned the whole of the world's opinion definitely against themselves. The most ingenious propaganda of their enemies could not have achieved a similar success. The revulsion abroad, and particularly in the United States, where Dr. Benes had taken refuge, had, however, one important sequel. It encouraged the anti-German section in Czechoslovakia, or what the Germans were pleased to call the Beneshists, to raise their heads again and to hamper the conciliatory efforts of Dr. Hacha and M. Chvalkovsky for better relations with Germany. It was the hostility of this section which served as an excuse for Hitler to swallow, some months later, the rest of the cherry, of which he had only bitten off the first half at Munich.

The second interesting feature of my four months' enforced absence, was what I can only describe as the reactions of Hitler after Munich.

It must first be clearly realized what were Hitler's objectives in September. Quite apart from his openly expressed desire to complete the unity of Germany by the incorporation of the Sudetens, he was bent on humiliating the Czechs and particularly Benes. After the May crisis the Czechs had announced, *urbi et orbi*, that it was their mobilization which alone had prevented Germany from marching. It was, according to them, they who had put Hitler in his place and had taught him what "No" meant. Such an attitude was enough to infuriate any hypersensitive dictator, and from that date Hitler was determined to get his own back and teach Benes a lesson. After May 21st Hitler deliberately sought an opportunity to crush Czechoslovakia by force. A small war would, he also reckoned, give his new army that confidence and ex-

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perience which he felt that it required. But anything more than a local war, in which victory was certain, was something quite different, since in a world war it would be his regime and his position as Führer of the German people which would be at stake. In September, however, he had not believed that, when it came to the point, the French nation would be ready to fight for the Czechs or that England would fight if the French did not. He argued as follows: Would the German nation *willingly* go to war for General Franco in Spain, if France intervened on the side of the Republican Government at Valencia? The answer which he gave himself was that it would not; and he was consequently convinced that no democratic French Government would be strong enough to lead the French nation to war for the Czechs. That was the basis of his calculations, and his policy was in accordance therewith. The repeated British warnings, backed by military unpreparedness, had consequently little effect. Nor, in fact, did His Majesty's Government officially ever go further than to say that we would support the French once the latter were involved in hostilities. In his speech at Danzig, after war had broken out, on October 24th last, Herr von Ribbentrop told his listeners that the British Government had promised their assistance to the Czech Government in those days (i.e. September, 1938) and so made a European crisis out of a problem that without British interference would have been solved overnight. Ribbentrop did not say how it could have been solved—though one can imagine the German solution which he may have had in mind—and the actual statement is in itself one of the many falsehoods in that speech. We were, except collectively as members of the League of Nations, under no

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obligations to the Czechs; we repeatedly said so; and we undertook the ungrateful role of honest broker on that very account, and never gave them at any time any promise of assistance.

The Munich settlement thus deprived Hitler of the great satisfaction—to which he was ardently looking forward—of giving his army a little experience, of appearing himself in the role of a conquering hero, and of wreaking vengeance on Benes and the Czechs. In one sense he may have been not ungrateful to Mr. Chamberlain for having prevented a world war to which his army and people were opposed; in another, any gratitude which he may have felt was far outweighed by resentment at having been compelled to change his mind and at being deprived of his local war. The unanimity with which the French Chamber (unlike the House of Commons in this respect) approved of the Munich Agreement certainly helped to confirm him in this opinion. In yet another sense, too, Hitler felt irritated with himself. A section of his followers were always egging him on to fight England while the latter was still militarily unprepared. They reproached him for having accepted the Munich settlement and thus having missed the most favorable opportunity. An uneasy feeling lest they might have been right contributed to Hitler's ill humor.

Nor was Munich in itself an agreeable experience for him. He found himself there for once in the company of three men who were his equals, instead of being surrounded by sycophants obedient to his slightest gesture. The experience confirmed his dislike for settlement by negotiation. Moreover, the evident popularity of Mr. Chamberlain with the German people not only detracted from his own personal prestige but

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also gave him food for uneasy reflection. He could drag on his people, and they would always follow him; but could he count on their willing devotion in all circumstances? It was the first unpleasant rift between him and his people, and it was the peace efforts of Mr. Chamberlain which had started it.

It is certainly a fact that, after Munich, he showed considerable ill will toward those who had argued with him against pushing things to extremes. His Voice had told him that there would be no general war, or that, even if there were, there could be no more propitious moment for it than that October; and for once he had been obliged to disregard that Voice and to listen to counsels of prudence. After Munich, those whom he regarded as the faint hearts in Germany, beginning with Goering and passing through many strata of the party and of the Government officials, fell from grace. On the other hand, this uneasy reflection was the main cause of the rise to favor of the Ribbentrops and Himmlers, and of his subsequent measures for the reinforcement, by means of the S.A., of the party vis-à-vis the Army, which had also been antiwar. But it was his own faint-heartedness which probably infuriated him more than anything else; for the first time he had failed to obey his Voice.

One is obliged to theorize to a certain extent in endeavoring to arrive at an accurate estimate of these underlying forces, since the world problem today starts with individuals. In the final report on events leading up to the declaration of war, which I wrote on my return to England and which I largely reproduce in the final chapter of this book, I remarked that Hitler would prove a fascinating study for historians with psychological leanings in the future. His critics today describe

* ~~He~~ ^{He} did act against me, and was sick for it afterwards

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him by many strange names: he may be any or all of them, but I prefer to leave it to the professional psychiatrist to pronounce the verdict. For me he was a sort of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. To begin with, he may not have been more than a visionary of genius or a practical dreamer with a sublime faith in himself and in his mission to reinstate Germany in her former position among the nations. *Mein Kampf* shows that he was naturally endowed with a highly developed political sense, but it is unlikely that his original ambitions were as wide as they subsequently became. His initial aspiration may well have been to become Chancellor of Germany, to complete her unity by means of the incorporation of Austria, his own motherland, as a first objective, and to restore to Germany her self-respect and prosperity. The interesting point to elucidate would be when he ceased to be Jekyll and became Hyde. It was probably a matter of gradual evolution. Dictators, having achieved absolutism, lose their sense of proportion. Each success leads to ever expanding aims, while their insatiable desire for their own permanence drives them in the end to put self before their country, and to adventure as the sole means of maintaining their hold. So it was with Napoleon and so it seems to me to have been with Hitler. The Chancellorship, the unity and prosperity of Germany were, in the end, not enough. His flatterers described him as the successor of Frederick the Great and Bismarck; and, as time went on, he felt himself called upon to emulate their military victories as well as their other constructive achievements. During that first visit of mine to Nuremberg I could not, as I have related, forbear asking myself how any human brain could keep its sanity amid all the adulatory worship which his followers

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accorded to him. When I first met him, his logic and sense of realities had impressed me; but, as time went on, he appeared to me to become more and more unreasonable and more and more convinced of his own infallibility and greatness. In the end Bismarck was no longer an equal. Hitler could and did describe Ribbentrop as a second Iron Chancellor.

He himself had become something far greater, conceivably a sort of Mahomet with a "sword in one hand and *Mein Kampf* in the other." And with such a sword there need be no longer any limit to his ambitions except his own death. His habit of constantly hinting, in public as well as in private, that his life would not be a long one gave rise to rumors about some incurable disease from which he was suffering; but I often wondered whether he did not merely use the idea as an excuse to justify his own restless impatience. He was a skillful mixer of fraud with force, and was always seeking to find for everything excuses which would hoodwink his people into submitting to anything which he might order for them. Even a dictator cannot ignore altogether the feelings and wishes of his people, and Hitler used his internal propaganda with immense skill for this purpose. His constant aim was to persuade them that everything he did was right and justified, that he and Germany were the victims of calculating and hostile foreigners who drove him (Hitler) to act as he did solely in self-defense. In *Mein Kampf* France, then in occupation of the Ruhr, was held up to execration as the chief enemy; during the struggle for power it was the U.S.S.R. and the communists; then England became public enemy No. 1; in the summer of 1938 little Czechoslovakia became the archfiend which threatened the independence of the Reich, and in the summer

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of 1939 there had to be war "because Poland invaded Germany!" That was part of what Mr. Chamberlain so aptly and feelingly described as the "sickening technique" of Hitlerism. It was always poor little Germany which was being ill-treated.

Yet at the same time, Hitler was always preaching to Germans that they should forget that inferiority complex which is so often attributed to them. I used to ask my Nazi friends how they combined Hitler's doctrine of the superiority of Germans over all other races with this habit of describing Germany as the "poor little downtrodden victim" of unscrupulous neighbors. I told them that it would revolt me to hear my own country so alluded to. One, possibly more perspicacious than the others, remarked to me that Hitler's excessive insistence on the point of the German inferiority complex only meant that he still had it himself. He was probably right.

But I must return to the reactions of Hitler after Munich. It must always be borne in mind that Hitler was no administrative leader, and that his power over his people was mystical rather than executive. He owed his success in the struggle for power to the fact that he was the reflection of their subconscious mind and to his ability to express in words what that subconscious mind felt that it wanted. Once he achieved power, he impressed the people most by his opportunistic or instinctive judgments as to what could or could not be done and as to the right moment to do it. He had acted on several occasions in direct defiance of the advice of his stoutest followers and of his army; yet the event had always proved him to be right. Until Munich. There, for the first time, he had

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been compelled to listen to contrary opinion, and his own faith in his Voice and his people's confidence in his judgment were for the first time shaken.

Much in his outbursts of spleen after Munich was, in my opinion, due to this psychology. Hitler was always waiting for the right moment and consequently slow to take a final decision; but, once it had been taken, nothing had hitherto turned him from his purpose. Yet he had decided in May to occupy Czechoslovakia by force in October, and in the end he did not. Mr. Chamberlain at least saved Czechoslovakia from that utter ruin and destruction which Goering had foretold, and it seems to me amazing that there should have been people who honestly believed the contrary. I am aware that such people continue to argue that a more categorical attitude on the part of His Majesty's Government would have deterred Hitler from either pressing his claims to the Sudeten or from attacking the Czechs. It is difficult to see how our attitude could have been made more definite than it was—and yet Hitler was not deterred by it. He was convinced that the Czechs could have been crushed in a few days or at most weeks and that this result could have been achieved long before France or England could have brought them any effective assistance. He would never have attacked either France or England and by waiting to be attacked by them he could have rallied behind himself the whole of Germany, as the victim of Western aggression, or preventive war. Once Prague had been occupied, he would then have offered peace, in the belief that the British and French peoples would have been loath to continue a world war for an object which had already been lost and which, even after victory, would have had to be

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settled more or less in accordance with German desires. I wrote in this sense before Munich; and I did so again a year later before Warsaw, in respect to which the technique was the same. Were his calculations in 1938 in this respect ill-founded? Hitler still believed after Munich that they would not have been, and it was that which rankled.

He had, moreover, a further delusion. He had hoped that the Anglo-German Declaration, which had been signed at Munich, would be accepted in England at its face value, and with relief—if not with enthusiasm. He anticipated that after Munich we should be willing to slow down our rearmament, leaving Germany in the happy possession of what Herr Hitler himself described as the mightiest armaments the world has known. In this position he could have dictated to Europe were he so minded. Instead, Mr. Chamberlain announced in Parliament that England could no longer remain the only unarmed nation in Europe and that consequently the rearmament program must be pushed forward with all speed.

Moreover, once the immediate danger of war had been averted, Mr. Chamberlain was vigorously attacked for the Munich settlement, not only by his political opponents, but even by members of his own party. This circumstance gave Hitler the opportunity of violently abusing the so-called English warmongers during the course of several public speeches in the autumn. In a speech at Weimar, in November, he even made an offensive personal reference to the Prime Minister. At the same time the English press campaign against Munich was answered by a violent anti-English campaign in the German press. The only difference was that, whereas in

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England the Opposition papers were concerned, in Germany it was those newspapers which stood closest to the Ministry of Propaganda, such as the *Völkischer Beobachter* and the *Angriff*, which led the anti-English agitation. In this atmosphere there could be no *détente* in Anglo-German relations, but only an aggravation of ill will; nor was the situation improved by the anti-Jewish riots which took place all over Germany in November and which aroused a storm of indignation in England, as well as in all other foreign countries. With each attack on him, Hitler's resentment and irritation grew. The German military machine redoubled its efforts; and, with a view to convincing the German people of the necessity for yet more guns, England was represented to them as preparing for war. Since Mr. Chamberlain was now firmly established in the eyes of that people as a peacemaker, he was described by Hitler in his speeches as likely shortly to be replaced under the British Constitution by a Government which desired war with Germany. "Tomorrow," said Hitler, "Churchill may easily be Prime Minister of England," and he reinforced his arguments about British warmongers by misquoted statements taken from debates in the House of Commons about "the destruction of dictatorships" and "airplanes carrying bombs to Berlin."

"The resentments of a petty mind may ruin an enterprise which would have profited an Empire." Germany was led to the brink of war in September, 1938, in order to satisfy the resentments of a dictator—and over the brink the next September. I do not know what the feelings of the German people are today, but nothing in 1938 shook their confidence

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aggression at all had Britain remained strong after 1920. It was her weakness which had encouraged them to cherish their dreams of European domination. The truth is that peace can never be assured, if one country is allowed to indulge in armaments which are much more powerful than those of her neighbors. Human nature cannot be trusted to that extent, particularly when the standards of civilization in the various countries of Europe are different; and the best check, till the millennium arrives, on excessive appetites and ambitions is such an equality of strength as to make adventure a precarious and risky undertaking for any country. Not the least cause of my optimism in February, 1939, was in fact the belief that the rapidly increasing strength of Britain's armament would serve as a useful deterrent and make Hitler think twice before he threw down the gauntlet.

Another point in favor of peace that February was the fact that the Spanish Civil War was at last drawing to its close, and the risk of further incidents on that score had become no longer a dangerous factor in the situation. Finally, I found that Goering himself, whose presence as head of the Air Force and as a Field Marshal would be indispensable at the outbreak of serious hostilities, had decided to get thin, and by one means or another had actually lost forty-two pounds! Even if one weighs two hundred and sixty or seventy, one cannot lose forty-two pounds with impunity. His heart had been affected by his treatment, and he told me he was going to San Remo at the beginning of March for a long cure. That and his reference to warmongers being fools and dictators being obliged to take the wishes of their people into account were indications of a nature to reassure me. He may

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have been fooling me, but I doubt it. It is true, on the other hand, that Ribbentrop was now supreme in all matters of foreign affairs and apparently enjoying the unbounded confidence of his master. Even so, realizing that he was merely the echo of the voice of that master, I was not unduly perturbed. Even today and after the event, I still find it hard to accept the view that any particular step was actually contemplated by Hitler for that March. He was never a dealer in exact dates, and I was once told by someone who ought to have known that he only once fixed a date in advance, and that was October 1st, 1938, which he chose on May 28th of that year for the invasion of Czechoslovakia. In the middle of February I do not believe that he had any time limit in his head for the settlement of the Czech question. Everything was still dependent on how the incident which would suit his purpose could be worked up to a head. Certainly his ultimate object was to get Bohemia and Moravia in some form or another back inside the Third German Reich, as they had been in the First Reich; but he was still uncertain exactly how this end was to be achieved. It is true also that he was greatly annoyed at the recrudescence of the anti-German faction in Czechoslovakia and that his agents were encouraging the Slovaks in their quarrels with the Czechs with a view to weakening the latter. But his final plan was still unformed. Everything depended on the development of the situation.

Hitler is an Austrian; and the best-known trait of the Austrians is what is known as their *Schlampererei*, a sort of happy-go-lucky and haphazard way of doing things. I always felt that Hitler had his full share of this characteristic. He had all sorts of general plans in his head, but I greatly doubt

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and there were such, who believed that my language, particularly at Nuremberg in the preceding September had not been strong enough. What some people are apt to forget or fail to realize is that remonstrance is much more readily listened to and heeded when it comes from a person who attempts to understand another point of view, even when it is not his own. An official representative abroad cannot really serve his own country to the best purpose if he is known to be hostile to the government of the country in which he resides. On the other hand, his language can be much more forcible, without merely arousing a resentment which merely defeats the purpose of that language, if he is known to be trying his best to serve the interests of both his own and the country to which he is accredited. One does not serve one's own country less well thereby, since the two interests are not always incompatible. Far from it. It would, for instance, have certainly been in the interests of both Germany and Britain, as well as of the rest of Europe, to have honestly and reasonably kept the peace.



CHAPTER VIII. THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

I MUST, however, now turn back to the general situation in Germany as it appeared to me and as I reported it to the Foreign Office at the time when I went back that February to Berlin. Nineteen hundred and thirty-eight had been a momentous year for Europe. In the course of a few months and without bloodshed Hitler had completed the work begun by Frederick the Great and Bismarck, and by consummating at long last the unity of Greater Germany through the incorporation in the Reich of Austria (the Ostmark) and the Sudeten Lands had completely modified the strategic and economic structure of Europe, to the great advantage of Germany and to the detriment of Europe generally but of France in particular, for which Munich marked the end of her post-war system of alliances. Remarkable though Hitler's achievements sound in the twentieth year after Germany's defeat in 1918, history will, I feel sure, regard them as the inevitable consequences of that war and of the peace which ended it. In 1937, when I went for the first time to Nuremberg, General Goering, as he then was, asked me who, taking the long view, I regarded as the principal beneficiary of the World War. I replied Italy, which had finally secured her natural and strategic frontiers, and the Slav States. Goering's reply

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was, "No, Germany; since without such a war and without such a defeat, German unity would have been impossible."

Nor did I even then think that he was wrong. Nationalism was one of the features of the age which followed Napoleon, who was its supreme, if unconscious, patron. Italian unity and the Second Reich were the two principal examples of it in the nineteenth century; and Ireland, no less than the re-creation of Poland, Bohemia, the Baltic States, etc., the postwar fruits of it. Even the Jewish question, which is likely to prove one of the chief problems of the twentieth century, is in itself merely a byproduct of nationalism driven to excess. What was indeed almost more remarkable than Hitler's achievements was the fact that the realization of German internal and national unity had been so long delayed. Volumes could be written on this subject; but a brief, yet necessary, glance at the salient features of the background of German history is sufficient to support the truth of this assertion. To begin with, it was the German Emperors of the First Reich (or Holy Roman Empire) who, by pursuing the shadow of universal power, threw away the substance of national German unity. Thus the Hapsburgs of Vienna forfeited their chance, and it fell to the Hohenzollerns of Prussia to be the champions of pan-Germanism. The Austrian Empire was built up at the expense of German unity, and the rivalry between Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns split Germany in two. It was the heterogeneous elements of the Austrian Empire which mainly prevented Bismarck from completing, in his Second Reich, the full union in the nineteenth century.

The unity of England was completed so early in her history that it is difficult for us to realize that in the middle of



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the seventeenth century, after the Thirty Years' War, which did so much to retard her natural political development, Germany consisted of about three hundred and fifty completely independent states, each with its own separate administration and free to adopt whatever foreign policy might suit its individual inclination. At the outbreak of the Napoleonic Wars at the end of the eighteenth century there were still about one hundred and seventy of these states. Some fifty disappeared as the result of the Napoleonic reforms and of their inclusion in the kingdoms which he set up for his relatives or friends in Germany. The Bismarckian era of the nineteenth century eventually reduced them to the twenty-six states, most of them with their own ruler, government, and legislative assembly, which comprised the Germany of 1914. The chaos and distress of the postwar era enabled Hitler to complete the internal unification of the Third Reich by abolishing the parliaments of the individual states, by transferring to the central government their sovereign rights, and by transforming them into mere provinces of the single state. Had he stopped there the world might have had cause for congratulation. Nor could Hitler have done what he did if it had not been for the defeat of Austria in 1918, which freed the Poles, Czechs, Rumanians, Croats, Slovenes, Italians, etc., from the government of Vienna and left the Ostmark isolated and the Sudeten Germans under the rule of the Czechs, whom they hated and despised. It was always thereafter a mere question of time for these nine or ten million Germans to gravitate by the natural force of attraction into the Germany of the Third Reich. The weakness of Germany alone prevented this occurring immediately after the war, and the unattractiveness

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agreeable though the task might well have been for him personally. Hitler's position in Germany was such that he could have imposed any course that he willed upon his followers. He was not merely the victim of the movement which he had initiated; he was also the slave of his own growing megalomania. He owed all his successes to his tactical opportunism; and, when once again a chance was afforded him of scoring another such success, as was the case when the Czech Government used force to overthrow the Tiso Government at Bratislava, he lost his last sense of proportion and reason and seized it, regardless of the ultimate consequences to Germany, to the world, and to himself.

Admittedly, if he had wished to follow the road to normalcy, he would have been obliged to break with his extremist minority, with the Ribbentrops and Himmlers, Hesses and Leys, and rabble of his street-fighting days. Possibly also with the youth of the country, which he had spent the last six years in perverting to his own revolutionary uses. The Germans are notorious for their lack of only of balance but also of any understanding of the mentality and reactions of others. The successes of Nazism had been so great that its devotees, and especially the German youth, felt that nothing and nobody could stop them anywhere. After the postwar humiliations, their desire to prove their recuperated strength and importance to the world was a consuming one; nor did they regard anyone in continental Europe as capable of standing up to their bullying. Her postwar experiences had unfortunately taught Nazi Germany that nothing could be achieved except by force or the display of force; and in such a frame of mind any compromise or reversion to static conditions was

* Henderson writing his reports



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difficult and would only have been regarded as a sign of weakness.

To all such elements as those just mentioned above, the road to adventure was clearly the most attractive and the most profitable. It is true that they constituted but a small minority; and, as a demagogue, Hitler's natural inclination should have been to please the majority of his people. But minorities, especially in revolutionary times, exercise an influence entirely disproportionate to their actual numbers. It has been estimated, for instance, that at the time of the French Revolution, only 3 per cent of the population of Paris were active and wholehearted revolutionaries. And Hitler himself was an extremist; and his principal advisers, since the disappearance of Blomberg, were the same.

Apart from these active careerists, another dangerous aspect of the situation was Germany's increasing financial and economic difficulties. The strain, both mental and material, under which the German people had been working since 1933 was immense, and required an increasingly violent psychological stimulus to keep it working. It was estimated in 1938 that 60 per cent or more of the sum of her efforts in human beings, labor, and materials was destined for war. No people, even though disciplined and hard working as are the Germans, would put up indefinitely with guns instead of butter or endure an economic policy based solely on *Wehrwirtschaft*, namely, the control of the whole of a nation's economic output in the interests of military preparedness. There was always the question, therefore, whether Hitler would not feel obliged to seek to conquer by force the markets which Germany had lost by over-concentration on arma-

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pleasant advice to give, but things might have turned out differently if it had been taken earlier. When not only Chvalkovsky but also President Hacha himself came to Berlin, it was already too late; and the announcement, which was made on the following day, March 14th, that the latter was on his way to appeal to Hitler filled me with consternation. Chvalkovsky was one thing, but Hacha was another. The latter was head of the state and as a gesture it seemed to me unwisely humble and excessive. Hitler had put him where he wanted him and would show neither mercy nor generosity. From that moment I was under no illusion that all was not lost. There was some question of my sitting up on the night of March 14th in order to await the earliest possible news of what was happening at Hacha's meeting with Hitler. But I could do nothing more and preferred to go unhappily to bed. My first glance at the newspapers in the morning was sufficient to confirm my worst apprehensions. It was the final shipwreck of my mission to Berlin. Hitler had crossed the Rubicon.

Up to March 12th the plan had been to send an ultimatum to the Czech Government supported by a display of force. I have some reason to believe that the text of such an ultimatum was actually telegraphed on the Saturday to the German Legation at Prague but cancelled before it could be presented. Its terms would certainly have been harsh but would probably have left the Czechs at least a shadow of independence. But the German controlled press and Himmler's provocative agents, those essential pieces of the machinery of Nazism, were already at work. What had happened after Mr. Chamberlain's visit to Berchtesgaden six months earlier



The Occupation of Prague

and what was to happen in respect to Poland less than six months later were again being enacted. The tales of Czech atrocities grew, Germans were reported as being ill-treated and massacred, refugees from the German area of Brünn were described as streaming in thousands toward the Austrian frontier, and so on and so forth *ad nauseam*. It was these stories which served as the pretext for Hitler to change his mind, to cancel the ultimatum, and to substitute in its place a full military occupation and the establishment of the Protectorate. He was a genius at finding or creating plausible excuses for all his actions, however iniquitous!

It is difficult to believe that these machinations were not an intrinsic part of Hitler's own schemes; yet it seems but fair to relate that I heard some months later a story which seemed to indicate that they were not. On his arrival at Prague on March 15th, one of the first things which Hitler expressed a wish to do was to visit the hospitals. His entourage, probably soldiers and consequently less well informed than Himmler's blackshirts, asked him for what purpose. "To visit the German wounded victims of Czech ill treatment," was Hitler's answer. As there were none, his followers had some difficulty in persuading him that such a visit would be useless. Possibly they induced him to believe that they existed everywhere except in Prague itself; but, if the story is true—and my source was both a Czech and a good one—it would seem to indicate that some of the party were even more impatient than Hitler himself or even that the Führer was to some extent at least the tool of his extremists. Nevertheless, it was more a question of timing and opportunity than of principle. The Bohemian Protectorate was a long-cherished design, and



* He does believe. He believes
his own lies. It was exactly
the place I had wished to bring him to

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superficial success and particularly its execution without bloodshed appealed to the great majority of even moderate Germans and temporarily enhanced Hitler's prestige on that account, there were many Germans who did not hesitate to criticize it for what they described as its faulty timing. In their opinion there were other more immediate questions, such as Memel and Danzig and the Corridor, which it would have been wiser and easier to settle first. Czechoslovakia could so easily have waited, and in due course have been reduced to the necessary state of vassalage by methodical and relentless economic pressure. I still think it strange that Hitler did not follow this course, and that is why I can only imagine that it was a case of his love of displaying his mastery of opportunism proving stronger than his sense of judgment. The Czechoslovak quarrel was just too good a chance to be missed, and so was the opportunity for putting Mr. Chamberlain and M. Daladier in their places for their presumptuous interference at Munich with Germany's freedom of action in Central Europe.

Furthermore, it was easy for Hitler to find for the satisfaction of his own people both military and economic excuses for the gratification of his own personal ambitions and resentments—since even Munich had not assuaged his rage against the Czechs for their attitude in May, 1938. It was, I think, Bismarck who said that: "Who holds Bohemia holds Central Europe." The strategic importance of the two provinces is indeed obvious from a mere glance at the map. It would enormously simplify the task of the German General Staff if Bohemia and Moravia were included in the Reich. The surrender of the Sudeten Lands had compromised the whole

*P.T. Another improvisation
Now, the British were usually
ready to go to war.*



The Occupation of Prague

scheme of Czech defense against German aggression. Disrupted from within as well as from without, Czechoslovakia could not now hold up a German invasion even for a few weeks. The danger, on the other hand, still existed of a coalition between Russia and the Western Powers; and, as Hitler told his generals, England was rapidly preparing for a preventive war. (The fact that Ribbentrop was incessantly preaching that Britain was utterly decadent and would never fight for anybody or anything made no difference to Hitler's arguments to the contrary when it suited him to put them forward.) In such circumstances the approval by his military advisers of the course which he proposed to take was a foregone conclusion; and Hitler gracefully pretended to yield to their insistence. His economic advisers were subjected to similar arguments. Raw materials were Germany's supreme need. The possibility of a British blockade, particularly as the United States had become so hostile as the result of the persecution of the Jews, rendered it indispensable that Czechoslovakia should be incorporated without delay in the German Reich in order to prepare against the eventuality of that blockade. Encirclement on land, the blockade by sea, inflation, and the lack of raw materials were Germany's constant bugbears; and Hitler could always play upon one or another of them to keep his people subservient to his own policy.

Is it, nevertheless, possible that Hitler should have failed to realize the effect which his action would inevitably produce abroad? Whatever specious arguments he may have adduced to satisfy himself and his followers of the rightness of his action, I cannot believe that he would have acted as he did on March 15th if megalomania had not by that time super-

seded all the other characteristics which had raised him from nothingness to the leadership of a great nation. That did not, however, prevent him from simulating surprise at the immediate and immense repercussion which the Prague occupation produced in the world generally. When Goering was informed that the Stanley-Hudson visit would not take place, he professed the utmost indignation that it should be cancelled for such a trifle! The Germans are a strange people: they seem utterly incapable of seeing any side of a question except their own, or to understand the meaning of civilized decency and moderation. Many Czechs themselves felt that a Czechoslovakia hostile to Germany, lying as it did between Silesia and Austria in the very jaws of the German wolf, was an untenable proposition. The peace of Czechoslovakia's economic existence depended upon the establishment of good relations with Germany. The text of an agreement to place her relations with Germany on such a mutually satisfactory footing actually existed in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the Wilhelmstrasse. In Germany's own interests, a nation of contented and hard-working Czechs on her frontier and within her own economic sphere should have been far more valuable to her than seven or eight millions of resentful and revengeful vassals. The old Austrian Empire, with its mosaic of different nationalities and its traditional skill in handling them, had always found the Czechs the most difficult and indigestible of all to deal with. They are a race of tough fiber, and their strength has always lain in their subterranean capacity for opposition. As Jan Masaryk, the Czech Minister in London, is said to have remarked, "The Czechs will at any rate give Germany a stomach-ache."

Germany can hold the Czechs down by brute force today, but in this age of nationality she cannot permanently do so. Whatever be the immediate outcome of the present war, "The Gods remember everlastingly and strike remorselessly. By their long memories the Gods are known." The occupation of Prague on the Ides of March was an immense political blunder. Until then the world, passionately anxious for peace as an end in itself and fully conscious of the horrors of the next war, had watched Hitler proceed from success to success and had appeared to forgive or to be taken in by the hateful methods and technique which he invariably employed. But Prague was the limit. There was no sense of security left anywhere in Europe, nothing but an atmosphere of complete lack of confidence in Hitler's good faith or in his readiness to abide by any undertaking which he might in future give. As I telegraphed on the following day to Lord Halifax, "The annexation of Bohemia and Moravia constitutes a wrong which will be always calling for redress, and though it may have afforded Hitler and Ribbentrop a facile triumph, it would be sad not to believe that in the end it will prove a costly error.... His Majesty's Government will doubtless consider what attitude to adopt toward a Government which has shown itself incapable of observing an agreement not six months old." His Majesty's Government took the only course open to them at that moment, by recalling me for an indefinite period to London. My mission to Berlin was already a failure, and from that moment I had no real hopes of peace except in a miracle. Though the ship was sinking, to that precarious hope I clung for another five and a half weary and anxious months.

CHAPTER X. ACT IV: POLAND

SCENE 1: THE ANGLO-POLISH
AGREEMENT

THE ostensible motive of my recall to London was to report, but I left Berlin feeling that I might well never return there. It would have been natural and possibly more politic to have withdrawn me altogether. I represented a policy of attempting to seek a *modus vivendi* with the Government of Hitler. That policy had been wrecked by Hitler's act of piracy on the Ides of March, and under ordinary circumstances it would have been more normal to appoint another ambassador in my place. But events were moving rapidly, and His Majesty's Government presumably preferred not to swap horses in the middle of the stream.

My stay in London was a period of suspense and anxiety during which events of great moment were taking place. The world, and, above all, public opinion in England, had been profoundly shocked by the occupation of Prague and the violation of the whole spirit of the Munich Agreement. After Munich, the British people were united, as they had never been since 1920, in support of a single policy. Hitler felt that, in these circumstances, it would not add much to the universal execration of his aggression against the Czechs and of his ill faith toward Mr. Chamberlain, if he quickly settled at the same time the problems of Memel and Danzig. Orders



The Anglo-Polish Agreement

were accordingly given to Ribbentrop to browbeat the Lithuanians and the Poles into accepting the German conditions for a solution of both these questions. With the Lithuanians he was successful, and Memel was surrendered to Germany on fairly reasonable terms. But the Poles were made of sterner stuff. They had, moreover, been double-crossed by Hitler in respect to Slovakia, which they had regarded as within their sphere of interest; and resentment had been added to mistrust. When, therefore, Ribbentrop peremptorily dictated to the Polish Ambassador in Berlin the conditions which Hitler would be graciously pleased to impose on the Polish Government, M. Lipski was instructed to break off the negotiations which had been proceeding for some months in respect to Danzig and the Corridor, while offering to reopen them on the basis of free and equal discussion.

The air was electrical, and full of rumors. The German Army was already on a semiwar footing, and for some time past had been accumulating stores and war material on the Polish frontier. Hitler was infuriated by the Polish reply, and for a moment it looked as if hostilities might begin at any moment. Alarmed by the threatening attitude adopted by the German Government, the Polish Government mobilized part of its own forces; and on March 31st Mr. Chamberlain, with the unanimous approval of the House of Commons and of British public opinion, announced that His Majesty's Government had undertaken an obligation of mutual assistance to Poland in the event of any aggression which might endanger the independence of that country. It was a momentous decision, but after Prague no nation in Europe could feel itself secure from some new adaptation of Nazi racial superiority

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a propitious one to him. The initiative would always be his; and, even if he held his hand temporarily as regards Danzig and the Corridor, it would not mean that he had renounced his claims and ambitions, but merely that the favorable opportunity which he was seeking had not presented itself. Finally, I was convinced that no solution which fell far short of his offer or ultimatum to Poland on April 28th would ever be a lasting one. For, as I pointed out at the time to His Majesty's Government, the Polish question was not one of Hitler's making. As an Austrian he was possibly better disposed toward Poland than any Prussian could be. The Corridor and Danzig were a real German national grievance, and some equitable settlement had to be found in respect to these questions if ever there was to be genuine peace in the future between Germany and Poland. This was, in reality, fully appreciated by His Majesty's Government; and in every subsequent speech made by the Prime Minister or Lord Halifax, and in every conversation which I had later with Hitler or any of the Nazi leaders, our desire to achieve an equitable settlement was emphasized no less frankly than our resolution to resist force by force.



CHAPTER XI. *THIRD ENTR'ACTE*

AS in 1938, so once again in 1939, the summer months were spent in fruitless negotiation. Moscow had now become the center of the stage; and His Majesty's Government and the French Government sought sincerely but in vain to persuade the Russian Government definitely to assume the same obligations toward Poland as we ourselves had undertaken. As soon as one alleged obstacle to Russian co-operation was overcome, Stalin produced another with unfailing regularity and with the same persistence as we displayed in overcoming each difficulty in turn. Nor did we cease during the same period constantly using our good offices at Warsaw, with a view to the avoidance of the kind of incident which Hitler was so skillful in turning to his own purposes. For my part in Berlin I was preaching patience and giving solemn warnings to all and sundry. My main and indeed almost sole object was to convince the Germans that any further act of aggression by them would mean war with Britain. It was at the end of May, for instance, that I had my conversation with Goering which I reported at the time and which constituted one of the documents included in the Blue Book issued by His Majesty's Government on the outbreak of war. I made it quite clear to the Field Marshal that, while nobody desired more than we

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did an amicable arrangement between Germany and Poland in respect to Danzig and the Corridor, we were determined to oppose in the future force by force. Though Ribbentrop was at that time making great play with his own special brand of propaganda, to the effect that Britain would never fight over Danzig, the Field Marshal himself did not, on that occasion, appear to doubt that such was our fixed resolve. He rather seemed or pretended to believe that Britain contemplated a preventive war in any case against Germany. He probably took his cue from Hitler, who with his phenomenal capacity both for self-delusion and misrepresentation is still arguing that his justification for war was that belief. Goering was accordingly at pains to explain to me at length why no power or combination of powers could prevail against Germany in Europe. He expatiated on the inability of France to stand a long war, on the military unpreparedness of the Poles and of their lack of real unity, on the unwillingness of the U.S.S.R. to give Poland any effective assistance, on the harm which a war would cause to the British Empire, and on Germany's invincible might.

It was at this time and throughout the summer quite useless to argue about the equal rights of the Poles to *Lebensraum* and economic existence; and in the end I gave up trying to do so and concentrated on the inevitable consequences of aggressive action. The invariable retort of every German was that Britain had given a blank check to the Poles or had placed her sword in their hands. It was once again a case of the fable of the wolf and the lamb, just as it had been in regard to the Czechs the year before. Everything that the Poles did or said was wrong and, moreover, entirely due to British en-

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couragement. Even Weizsäcker was impervious to reason or logic in that respect. The Germans could only think in terms of their own *Lebensraum* and had made up their minds that the Poles would never agree to any modification of the status quo so long as they had the backing of England. All Hitler's plans were made on that assumption.

My conversation with Goering led consequently nowhere in particular, as was, I fear, the fate of all my conversations, however stimulating, with him. But, whatever may have been in Hitler's mind, war did not appear at that time to be either the desire or an immediate preoccupation of Goering. It was on that occasion he showed me with pride the colored sketches of the tapestries which he proposed to hang in his new dining room at Karinhall. I described them in my official dispatch as drawings of "naked ladies," but I am glad to have this opportunity of saying that I did so in no disrespectful or suggestive spirit. Had I anticipated that my dispatch would ever be published, I should certainly have written "nude figures" in place of the cruder expression which I actually used. These drawings were in fact very artistic; and I should not have referred to them at all if it had not been to point the argument of patience, which had been the gist of all my talk with Goering that morning. That was why, when he read out the names of Mercy and Purity, etc., I took the opportunity to observe that I failed to see Patience among them. Goering, who never missed a point, roared with laughter at the innuendo.

Incidentally, I learned, after the publication of the Blue Book, the origin of these drawings. Miss Alice Head, who is Mr. William Randolph Hearst's legal agent in England, wrote

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to me from St. Donat's Castle to say that the tapestries in question, which were Flemish of the middle sixteenth century and known as the "Four Seasons," were the property of Mr. Hearst and were to have been purchased by Goering from him. They were actually at the Castle, and the price to have been paid for them was £5,000 in English money. She added that Goering's representative was to have come to the Castle on August 16th to complete the deal, but that shortly before that date she was informed that his departure "had been delayed." Miss Head concluded her letter to me by observing, not without insight, that "As events developed, I knew of course that the deal was off."

During the next four months the chief impression which I had of Hitler was that of a master chess player studying the board and waiting for his opponents to make some false move which could be turned to his own immediate advantage—so long as Russia's final attitude remained unpredictable, he himself would not move. His army, of whom a considerable section, communism or no communism, were always preaching the superior value of a Russian alliance, would never have allowed him to risk a world war in which Russia might be actively on the side of Poland. Germany's military nightmare is the war on two fronts; and, if Poland did not seriously count in that respect, the inexhaustible military reserves and numerically powerful Air Force of Russia did, in spite of the drastic Army purges to which she had been subjected in the preceding year. At the same time, though Hitler might sit and wait, it could be taken for granted that he would never be contented with less than or even as much as he had offered to Poland on April 28th. His extremists and many other Germans did

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not even approve of the settlement which he had adumbrated on that occasion; and, without greatly stretching one's imagination, one can be fairly certain that Hitler himself never meant that offer to be a final solution. It was for him merely a matter of moving a pawn one square forward. He was always moving pawns; and what did it matter to him, as long as he won the game, whether he cheated or not, and moved his knight on occasion like a bishop or his castle like a knight. He could always hope that nobody was looking or, if somebody was, find some excuse for protesting that it was not he but his adversary who had first broken the rules. It was the so-called Wahnsystem, or capacity for self-delusion, which was a regular part of his technique. It helped him both to work up his own passions and to make his people believe anything that he might think would be good for them.

When he comes up before the bar of the Last Judgment, he will certainly argue with apparently complete self-conviction that he would have spared Europe the horrors of war if the Poles had accepted his reasonable and generous conditions. It will, I submit, be false. He knew full well that what he really wanted was something more, namely Posen and Silesia and their freedom itself, which the Poles would never surrender without war. He knew that to achieve his full ambition war in the end was inevitable, and his vast armaments were created in readiness for that final consummation. Moreover, as I have said before, he regarded himself as the reincarnation of Frederick the Great and Bismarck, whose portraits and busts adorned his offices in Berlin, Munich, and Berchtesgaden. Mars was the god whom they had served, and Hitler's fame would be incomplete without his own sacrifices to that deity,

* D.T. I had taken care of
careful tending to the vagaries of his
brain to bring him to their point.

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lull. The whole problem, to my mind, was how to reach the Nuremberg party rally without disaster.

Thus the summer began. Early in May Ribbentrop met Count Ciano in the north of Italy, and an agreement was reached for converting the Rome-Berlin Axis into a definite military alliance, which was eventually signed with much pomp and circumstance in Berlin on May 22nd. The formal announcement of this military alliance which, so far as she herself was concerned, Italy had been partly induced to sign in view of her suspicions lest the British negotiations with the U.S.S.R. and Turkey might be directed against herself, constituted no particularly new situation. The Axis had always been regarded as sufficiently strong without the emphasis of a military alliance signed, sealed, and delivered. Undoubtedly the most interesting clause in it was its first article, which made the alliance conditional on Italy's being kept fully informed in advance of any German intentions which might provoke an international conflict. It was a hint on Italy's part that Rome was not merely tied to Berlin's apron strings and that friendship might be overtaxed if it had to stand the strain of another unannounced coup, as at Prague. The alliance thus seemed to afford a slight guarantee to the rest of the world against the repetition of any such lightning stroke. But, above all, it provided Italy with an opportunity to circumscribe the area of hostilities if Hitler were to take action without first informing Mussolini and securing his consent.

In May, also, Estonia and Latvia, which were feeling justifiably distrustful of Russia's ulterior intentions and were apprehensive of the extent of our negotiations at Moscow, combined together to reinsure their position by means of

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nonaggression treaties with Germany. At the time this seemed a further diplomatic victory for Ribbentrop; but it was an ephemeral success, which availed neither Germany nor the Baltic States when Stalin entered the war as the ally of Germany.

May was quickly over, and we were no nearer the formation of the peace front than before. M. Litvinov had been dismissed, and the British and French Ambassadors at Moscow were beginning again with M. Molotov. In the last days of May, I urgently represented to the Polish Ambassador the desirability of resuming conversations at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, but his answer was that he could do nothing till the German Government had given some evidence of its good will and readiness to talk. The latter for its part took the line that Colonel Beck's speech on May 5th had closed the door and, until he himself reopened it, there was nothing to be done.

June followed, and was the last month when I myself had even any comparative peace of mind. So far as Berlin was concerned it began with the state visit of the Prince Regent of Yugoslavia, who was accompanied by his wife, Princess Olga, the sister of H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent. It was the first royal state visit to Berlin; and Hitler laid himself out, not unsuccessfully, to charm his guests. Nor was any effort spared by the German Government—by means of a review of troops which lasted for nearly four hours—to impress Prince Paul with the military might of Germany. Hundreds of airplanes flew in formation overhead, barely missing the tops of the houses, while an endless succession of tanks and guns and other mechanized forms of warfare constituted an imposing

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Acce
spectacle. The crowd, nevertheless, showed some discrimination by reserving its chief applause for the two or three regiments of cavalry, with their drum majors on horseback, which, albeit in field gray uniforms, were all that was left of the colorful glory of the pre-1914 military displays. It was a monotonous performance which filled one with sadness and horror at the destructive folly of modern civilization.

I had hoped that, in view of their connection with the British Royal family, Prince Paul and Princess Olga would have done me the honor of having luncheon or dinner at His Majesty's Embassy. But the German arrangements were too thorough and complete to permit of this; and, if it had not been for Field Marshal Goering, I should have had no opportunity of seeing them except at a gala performance at the Opera, which was the sole function during the visit to which the diplomatic corps was invited. Even this civility was, I always felt, partly due to the attitude which I had adopted when Signor Mussolini visited Berlin in September, 1937. Neurath was Minister for Foreign Affairs at the time; and, when I learned that the diplomatists were not to be asked to any of the parties given in the Duce's honor, I told the Baron that in such circumstances I was certainly not going to stop in Berlin and be one of the hired applauders of the Axis. And, in fact, I left Berlin. But thereafter, whenever there was a state visit, the heads of the foreign missions were regularly invited to the Opera, which always formed part of the arrangements for the entertainment of state guests. Their Royal Highnesses spent, however, the last two nights of their visit at Karinhall, and Goering was good enough to ask me down there to spend an afternoon with them. It was a tactful

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thought inspired by the knowledge that the Prince and Princess were old friends of mine from the days when I was Minister at Belgrade.

By far the most heartening feature of the month of June was the marvelous success which attended the tour of the King and Queen in Canada and the United States. It re consecrated one's faith in the solidity and permanency of Anglo-Saxon idealism, as exemplified in the British Commonwealth of Nations, and reconvinced one of the futile transiency of Nazi ideology and of the theory of dominion imposed by force. Encouraged by such reflections, we celebrated the King's birthday once more on June 9th; and some three or four hundred British subjects attended the reception which I gave at His Majesty's Embassy on that date. It was the last entertainment of any size which was held there before the war. I also gave a big dinner party on the following day, June 10th, which happens to be my own birthday. Three years before, I had completely forgotten the date until the day itself was over, and I had decided this time to arrange a party in advance so as to insure that I did not forget it again. My particular friends in the diplomatic corps were the Italian and Belgian Ambassadors and their wives. No party was complete in Berlin, at any rate for me, without the Attolico and the Davignons. Madame Attolico was unfortunately absent in Rome; but her husband was present and proposed my health, very unnecessarily but very charmingly. The South African Minister and his wife were, of course there, as was Kirk, the United States Chargé d'Affaires. Among the Germans were Baron von Weizsäcker and his wife, both of whom I greatly respected; Herr Laurenz and Baron von Steen-

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I went to London for a few days in connection with private business at the beginning of July and warned His Majesty's Government that the clouds were gathering. But Russia remained the stumbling block. The Labor and Liberal parties, as well as a section of the Conservatives, were vociferously clamoring for an agreement with the U.S.S.R. at any price and, by their public insistence to that effect, merely encouraging Stalin and Molotov to keep putting that price up. We always seemed to be on the eve of an agreement with the U.S.S.R., only to find the next day that some new difficulty had been raised and had to be overcome. By July the Russian negotiations had ceased to have for me even the superficial appearance of any reality, and I still believe that from the outset Moscow never meant them to terminate in agreement with us. Moscow had become the seat of an oriental despotism, and the ideological basis of the Soviet regime was now nothing but a sham and a delusion. Stalin's sole objective was to embroil Germany with the Western Powers and to make one or the other pull the chestnuts out of the fire for himself.

The moment at which Hitler began his own negotiations with Stalin must remain for the time being a matter for conjecture. But it can scarcely have been coincidence that in Hitler's speech of April 28th his usual hostile references to the U.S.S.R. were conspicuous by their absence; that on May 3rd Litvinov, the Russian protagonist of the League of Nations, was relieved of his post as Commissar for Foreign Affairs; and that a few weeks later a new Soviet Ambassador to Germany was received with marks of quite unusual courtesy. Why should it have been otherwise, since the British

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agreement with Poland had relieved Russia of all fear of German aggression against herself and, instead of being obliged any longer to consider her own safety, she could now afford to think only of her personal advantage? Peradventure, if England had been willing to traffic in the honor of neutral Baltic States, the end of our negotiations might have been different. Hitler was less scrupulous or maybe he was in turn duped by Stalin. It was important for Russia that the population of the Polish Ukraine, which was more Orthodox Russian than Catholic Polish, should be in Soviet hands rather than constitute a lure to German expansion via Poland. A fourth partition was always a possible eventuality; and, if Moscow could restore her influence in the Baltic States and raise a barrier in the Ukraine to the German *Drang nach Osten*, the Reich would be driven back toward the west again; and that was and must always be the supreme aim of Russian policy. These and other similar considerations cannot fail to have been constantly present in the mind of the ruler of the Kremlin. At the same time he personally admired Hitler, or at least his successes, and was quite ready to take a leaf out of his book and follow the example of his opportunism.

The cards were, in fact, stacked against us; and the peace-front negotiations dragged on interminably between London and Moscow. Stalin, too, was studying the chessboard. On the other hand, instead of there being any relaxation of the tension at Danzig, the position there was growing more and more strained. The remilitarization of the Free City, alleged by the Germans to be purely defensive and in anticipation of a possible Polish attack, was proceeding apace. The so-called safety measures which were being taken in this connection

Hitler
Stalin
mutual
allurements

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readiness for war. It apparently failed to convince Ribbentrop, who to the last continued to assert that England would never fight. I say "apparently" with intention, since I am still unable to credit even Ribbentrop with being so obstinately foolish as seriously to believe that England would fail to honor her obligations. There is no shadow of doubt that he was all the time saying so to Hitler and to everyone. But that he believed himself what he said seems to me incredible.

By 1939 Hitler had become so great in his own esteem that he could afford to describe his Foreign Minister as the second Bismarck. He often said so to others, and no one was surer that it was so than Ribbentrop himself. But the world had yet to be persuaded that it was so, and for this a war was necessary. To insure war any means were legitimate. If he could persuade Hitler, who possibly needed little persuading, to go to extremes by representing England as afraid of war, all the better. Bismarck had provoked the 1870 war by falsifying the Ems telegram, and Ribbentrop's idea of emulating Bismarck had to give his Führer and his countrymen a false estimate of Britain's intentions. Was not his refusal to give me, at the eleventh hour, as will be recounted later, the text of the German proposals for a solution of the Danzig and Corridor problem a similar maneuver on what he regarded as Bismarckian lines? Was he not afraid lest war might be averted if these proposals were seriously discussed? I cannot say for certain, for the evidence is only circumstantial. But it may well have been so; and the only other alternative was a complete disregard of any other opinion except his own. Goering once said to me, "What you don't like in Ribbentrop

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is his tenacity (*zähe*).” I told the Field Marshal that tenacity and stupidity were sometimes confused.

As for Hitler, the British naval measures were but grist to his mill. He was by now too intoxicated by success and by belief in his own greatness and infallibility to care what England did; and our military preparations merely reinforced his theory of the preventive war. On the other hand, our difficulties with Japan at Tientsin and the I.R.A. bomb outrages in England undoubtedly did serve greatly to fortify the arguments of those who were telling Hitler that Britain would be unable to go to war.

If you have a long armistice and nothing to show at the end of it, you will be in danger of war. Disraeli said something to that effect at the time of the Russo-Turkish conflict in 1878, and it was very applicable to the situation at the end of July. A state of half-war, amounting to a kind of armistice had existed in Europe since March; and by July we were drifting rapidly toward war. On August 4th the British Parliament was adjourned; and July, too, was over.

CHAPTER XII. ACT IV: SCENE II: WAR

ON the surface the situation had altered little during the month that was past, and the barometer still appeared to stand at "no change." But there were ominous signs of its dropping. There was, on the one hand, still no contact between Berlin and Warsaw, and the Polish and German Ambassadors at Berlin and Warsaw were sitting like Achilles in their tents. Mutual recrimination over the persecution of minorities was growing in volume, and Danzig was seething with rumors and excitement. On the other hand, the successful conclusion of the negotiations between London-Paris and Moscow seemed as far away as ever. It was true that the British and French military missions were now packing their trunks for their trip to Moscow; and, when they actually arrived there on August 11th, it should have been but natural to conclude that this meant that Stalin, while still seeking to drive the hardest bargain which he could in Russian interests, had finally made up his mind to co-operate in some form or other with the Western Powers in resistance to further German aggression. But against that had to be set the disturbing development that Moscow was now unblushingly showing the cloven hoof and was asking for a free hand in the Baltic States. Russia's real objective was thus becoming apparent;



War

and, with Germany secretly in the market, the scales were being heavily weighted against the Western Powers. They could not barter away the honor and freedom of small but independent countries, but Germany could.

It is to be hoped that someday light will be thrown on the question as to whether Stalin from the beginning was in collusion with Hitler with a view to spinning out his negotiations with us until Germany was ready to strike or whether both Germany and ourselves were merely his catspaws. I incline to the latter view myself, but it is mere guesswork, and I am prejudiced. From the outset I regarded the Russian negotiations as something which had to be attempted, but which lacked all sense of realities. I never believed in any effective or altruistic assistance being afforded by the Russians to the Poles. The most that I hoped was that, if the U.S.S.R., however half-heartedly, joined the peace front, Hitler would regard discretion as the better part of valor and come down on the side of peaceful discussion. But I always believed that Moscow's chief aim was to embroil Germany and the Western Powers in a common ruin and to emerge as the *tertius gaudens* of the conflict between them. This was, up to August, similarly the professed view of all Germans from Hitler downward who commented on our Russian negotiations.

I raised this point with Hitler himself when I saw him at Berchtesgaden on August 23rd. Ribbentrop was at Moscow on that day engaged in signing the Russo-German Treaty, and Hitler expatiated to me triumphantly on the value and great advantages of the new alliance, which he said was definite and permanent. I reminded him of his previous attitude toward the Soviets; expressed the opinion that he might find

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Russia's friendship even more dangerous than her enmity; and added, speaking quite personally and on purely moral grounds, that, if an agreement had to be made with Moscow, for whom communism was now merely the cloak for intense nationalism and whose ulterior motives seemed to me highly suspicious, I had rather Germany made it than ourselves. Hitler was for a moment confused and taken aback. He retorted, however, that it was all our fault: it was we who had driven him into Russia's arms. But it was the answer of a man who was seeking to excuse himself.

The silence between Berlin and Warsaw and the lack of progress in our talks at Moscow were, however, not the only indications that the barometer might suddenly and rapidly fall. Apart from the deterioration of the situation at Danzig, the German Army was rapidly nearing the completion of its pre-mobilization preparations. Three or four days at most would now suffice to put it on a full war footing. The arrangements for the Tannenberg celebrations on August 27th were proceeding systematically; and men and material were being steadily drafted eastward via Königsberg into East Prussia. Hitler would shortly be able to choose his own moment for precipitating the crisis, and I was more than ever certain that the last week of August would prove to be zero hour. Colonel Beck was at this time inquiring what instructions the British and French Governments proposed to give to their Ambassadors regarding the Nuremberg rally in September. The Polish Ambassador, whose position in Berlin had become entirely equivocal, would conform, he said, with whatever was decided as regards his British and French colleagues. When I was asked by the Foreign Office what my

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views were on this point, my answer was that it was still quite uncertain whether the 1939 Nuremberg party day would ever take place at all but that, if we did safely reach September, I should have no hesitation in gladly attending some at least of the celebrations there. But should we get to September in safety? That was the only consideration which was exercising my mind at that time.

As it was generally understood that Hitler would himself be present and would speak at the Tannenberg anniversary and as I feared that he would make that occasion the starting point of the crisis, I did my best to find out something about his intentions with regard to that speech. I could discover nothing; and, in fact, I was probably mistaken. Hitler's action was not to be dependent on a speech. The Tannenberg anniversary was merely cover for his military preparations against Poland, just as the military review for the Vienna anniversary in March had been for his Prague coup. His methods never varied in their essentials. Behind the façade of a plausible excuse Hitler was merely preparing once more for all eventualities and waiting for the favorable moment to take the initiative. Everything comes to him who waits and who schemes while waiting. It was the method best suited to his own temperament and his characteristic Austrian *Schlampererei*—particularly as plans for any and every eventuality were all ready at the German War Office and Air Ministry for executing at any moment and at lightning speed, whatever move Hitler might finally decide upon. The button was merely waiting for Hitler to press it.

The clouds were, in fact, gathering fast; and the first mutterings of the storm were heard on August 4th. On the same

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blank check to Poland. No longer, he told me, did he trust Mr. Chamberlain. He preferred war, he said, when he was fifty to when he was fifty-five or sixty. He had himself always sought and believed in the possibility of friendship with England. He now realized, he said, that those who had argued to the contrary had been right and nothing short of a complete change in British policy toward Germany could ever convince him of any sincere British desire for good relations. My last remark to him was that I could only deduce from his language that my mission to Germany had failed and that I bitterly regretted it.

I flew back from Berchtesgaden to Berlin the same evening. I had, in fact, little hope that either the Prime Minister's letter or my own language to Hitler, however direct and straightforward, would give him pause. The Russian Pact had, I felt, created in his opinion a situation which was favorable to his designs; and I believed his mind to be definitely made up. Though he spoke in a Neronian vein of his artistic tastes and of his longing to satisfy them, I derived the impression that the corporal of the last war was even more anxious to prove what he could do as a conquering generalissimo in the next. What the world or Germany might suffer was of no consequence so long as his lust to show what he as leader of Germany could do was satisfied. More than once he repeated to me that, if he had been Chancellor of Germany in 1914, she would never have lost that war in 1918.

Nevertheless, the visit to Berchtesgaden may after all have postponed the disaster for a week. Ribbentrop flew back to Germany with the signed Russo-German Agreement; and Hitler returned to Berlin the night of August 24th. I have,

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as I have mentioned earlier, some reason to believe—though I cannot confirm it—that the order for the German Army to advance into Poland was actually issued for the night of August 25th-26th. It is difficult otherwise to find justification for the various orders and arrangements which came into force on August 26th and 27th. In the afternoon of August 27th itself all telephone communication between Berlin and London and Paris was unexpectedly cut off for several hours. The celebrations at Tannenberg were cancelled on the 26th and the party rally at Nuremberg on August 27th; all naval, military, and air attachés at Berlin were refused permission to leave the city without prior authority's being obtained from the Ministry of War. All German airports were closed from August 26th, and the whole of Germany became a prohibited zone for all aircraft except the regular civil lines. All internal German air services were also suspended. Moreover, as from the 27th a system for the rationing of foodstuffs and other commodities throughout Germany came into force. That this latter and—for the public—depressing measure should have been adopted prior to the outbreak of war can scarcely be explained except on the assumption that war should actually have broken out on August 26th.

The fact may well be, as I imagine it was, that Hitler had had in consequence of the Prime Minister's letter one last hesitation and countermanded the orders to his army; whereas the other arrangements were allowed to proceed unchecked. But it was not the horrors of war or the thought of dead Germans which deterred him. He had unlimited confidence in the magnificent army and air force which he had re-created, and he was certainly not averse to putting them to the test so far as

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telling me that he desired: on the other hand an aggression against Poland meant war. I even appealed to his sentiment by quoting a passage from a book, which I happened to know that he had read, about the days in which England had fought side by side with Germany against Napoleon and about the ideas which the Germans had then held about honor and the given word. Blücher, when hurrying to the support of Wellington at Waterloo, had urged his tired troops on in the following words, "Forward, my children, forward; I have given my word to my brother Wellington, and you cannot wish me to break it." Thereafter the old Field Marshal was always known in England as he was in Germany, as "Marshal Forward." I reminded Hitler of this story. He may have been momentarily impressed, but it availed nothing.

I might mention, incidentally, that both on that evening and the next, when I visited Hitler again and was handed his reply, nothing was left undone to enhance or to impress me with the solemnity of the occasion. From the Embassy to the Reichschancery is a mere three or four hundred yards; but, as Berlin was undergoing a week of trial black-outs, the Wilhelmstrasse was in complete darkness. A considerable but quite expressionless crowd had collected in the square, opposite the entrance to the courtyard into which my car had to drive. Though the people were silent, they gave me no sensation of hostility. Up to the bitter end that remained the attitude of the Berliners. A guard of honor was drawn up in the courtyard to the right of the main door, and I was received with a roll of drums. Dr. Meissner and Brückner, Hitler's faithful A.D.C. and bodyguard, were awaiting me on the doorstep. The former remarked to me that he was glad to



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see that I was wearing a buttonhole. I had always worn a dark red carnation in Berlin except during the three critical days of the week which preceded Munich. When I was seeing Horace Wilson off at the Tempelhof on his return to London during that week, I had been asked by some German newspaper correspondents why I had forgotten my buttonhole. I told them that I had not forgotten, but that I considered it to be inappropriate at a moment of such grave crisis. The story had got around, and I regarded Meissner's remark as significant. Was Hitler then preoccupied as to what the answer of His Majesty's Government would be? But it was probably merely Meissner's own wishful thinking or preoccupation. I wore my carnation again the next day; but, that time, as I was leaving after my interview, I told Meissner that I feared that I should never wear one again in Germany.

That first evening, however, the reply which I was bearing from His Majesty's Government made it so easy for Hitler to avoid the calamity of war that I could still afford to hope for the best. Though he had been noncommittal, he had been calm and even conciliatory.

Such information, indeed, as reached me during the course of the following day tended to represent the atmosphere as well disposed and to foreshadow readiness on Hitler's part to open direct negotiations with the Poles. I was consequently all the less prepared for the reception which I got on being summoned to the Reichschancery again at 7:15 on the evening of August 29th. Perhaps I should have been, as the German midday press had reported the alleged murder of six German nationals in Poland; and this story, which was probably fabricated by the extremists in fear lest Hitler was

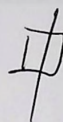


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SIR NEVILE HENDERSON

Failure of a Mission

Berlin 1937-1939



BY THE RIGHT HONORABLE

Sir Nevile Henderson

P. C., G. C. M. G.



G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS, NEW YORK

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tendency to self-righteousness played too big a part in our judgments, and Nazi methods blinded us sometimes to the arguable aspects of some of their contentions. We were too apt to make realities out of wishes and facts out of phrases. There can be no change of heart in Germany unless it comes from within; and we shall never inculcate true democratic ideas in the German people or persuade them to realize the higher responsibilities attached to force and strength, unless and until we ourselves treat Germany with strict impartiality and fairness.

One has heard much since the beginning of the war about there being or not being two Germanys: one, kindly, studious, and pacific; and the other, cruel, militarist, and aggressive. In wartime there can only be one Germany, which has to be fought and defeated. The innocent and the guilty have to suffer alike. Yet that does not alter the fact that there are two Germanys, and the outlook for the future would indeed be sad and hopeless if it were not so. Granted that the passive majority of decent Germans allow themselves today to be governed by a brutal and unscrupulous minority. Granted also that German history tends to show that this has generally been the case. Granted that Hitler is merely a typical example of an attitude of mind which has caused war after war. For it is, of course, the case that, in the last seventy years or so, Germany has initiated or been principally responsible for five wars; against Denmark and Austria in the eighteen sixties, against France in 1870, the war of 1914, and the present one. It is consequently argued that the passive majority always joyfully and willingly follows whither the aggressive minority leads and that it will always be the same. To my mind this

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argument is erroneous. It is equivalent to asserting that, because the Germans are sheep (and Hitler in *Mein Kampf* himself so describes the masses of the German people), therefore, they are goats. The wars of the last eighty years may yet prove to have been the evolutionary birth pains of German unity. Fearful thinkers may regard German unity as a consummation to be resisted to the last. A grave danger it certainly is, since no one can deny the German's tendency to be a bully when he is strong. Yet can evolution ever be more than retarded, and will not the price be too high if we persist in opposing that unity just because it is a hypothetical danger? Should not our object rather be to educate Germany politically up to a truer conception of civilization? We cannot do this unless there are in fact two Germanys. We have to help the sheep, if they are not always to follow the goats. Maybe this will never be possible unless we can first prove to the sheep, by the completeness of their defeat, that butting does not pay.

One cannot, however, be unfair in one's strictures on one branch of the Nazi system, and that is the Gestapo (Geheimstaatspolizei), or secret state police, under the command of Herr Himmler.

Himmler was for me the most enigmatical and elusive of all the Nazi leaders. Instinctively I distrusted him from the beginning more than any of the others. Yet, when one did meet and talk to him, it was scarcely possible to believe that this mild-looking and bespectacled young man, with his somewhat deprecatory manner and the appearance of a provincial schoolmaster, could be the tyrant directly responsible for the persecution of the so-called enemies of the state. Yet so it was, though it was often said that in police matters he was

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much under the influence of his right-hand man and second-in-command, Reinhard Heydrich, a notoriously unscrupulous and brutal gangster.

Born in Munich in 1900 and thus too young to have fought in the last war, Himmler was, nevertheless, one of the earliest adherents of the Hitler movement. He was the founder of the S.S., which was originally formed in 1922 as a small but specially trustworthy bodyguard for Hitler.

Up to 1933 he remained merely as chief of the S.S. and of the new Bavarian political police. He never advertised and rarely made political speeches. But, like a mole, he worked unceasingly underground; and his galleries were burrowed under the whole fabric of the German state. By 1936 he had succeeded not only in largely increasing the numbers of the S.S. but in getting under his own sole command the whole of the police forces of the Reich. It required a sharp struggle between him and Goering, who had hitherto controlled the Prussian police, before he could achieve this; but it was Himmler and not the Field Marshal who emerged victorious from it. Thereafter the power of the Gestapo silently and unobtrusively increased, until at the end there was no more powerful man in Germany under Hitler than Himmler.

Endowed with considerable moral and physical courage, the personal impression he gave me was one of desperate ambition and fanatical ruthlessness, but also of great efficiency. He was supposed to live simply, but he had a luxurious villa at Tegernsee in his native Bavaria, with extensive gardens and a private road, and surrounded by the barracks of his own blackshirted bodyguard. In the confusion of the private jealousies which were rife among the more powerful followers of

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the Führer, it was difficult at times to be sure of the various combinations, which were not always static. But Himmler and Ribbentrop were definitely allies; and a thoroughly mischievous combination they were, though, of the two, Himmler, in view of his undoubted ability, natural fanaticism, and greater intelligence was the more sinister figure.

The Gestapo was and is in all its forms and in all its aspects by far the most loathsome and detestable part of the Nazi regime. I do not need to refer to the brutalities of the concentration camps at Dachau or at Buchenwald, the two most notorious of them, and elsewhere. They have formed the subject of a White Paper published by His Majesty's Government after the outbreak of war; and this nauseating aspect of political hooliganism and barbarous sadism can be left to the judgment of civilized opinion. I once did my best to persuade Goering to use his influence with a view to their abolition. His answer was typical. After listening to all I had to say, he got up without a word and went to a bookcase from which he took a volume of the *German Encyclopaedia*. Opening it at *Konzentrationslager* (concentration camps) he read out, "First used by the British, in the South African War." He was pleased with his own retort; but the truth of the matter was that, though it was he who had originally formed these camps when he was Minister of Police for Prussia, he had no longer anything to do with them. They were entirely under the control of Himmler.

Not even in the days of Abdul Hamid in Constantinople was the horrible system of spying and denunciation carried to greater extremes than in Berlin and throughout Germany. One of Dr. Goebbels' propaganda films showed as its "hero"

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straight line, and any deviation from them met with instant punishment. Yet some sort of an operation had been necessary. In 1933, 10 per cent, over 6,000,000 men, of the population of Germany were out of work. Within 4 years the number of unemployed had been reduced to an infinitesimal figure, and by 1939 there was a labor shortage estimated at 2,000,000. That in itself, however much one may attribute it to war production, was no mean achievement. To the wheels of Hitler's chariot were, in fact, harnessed the amazing power of organization, thoroughness, and discipline of the German nation. Nor can it be denied that the rebirth of that nation was due to Hitler's own personal inspiration. For the fact remains that he is the living example of one of those almost incomprehensible leaders who appear from time to time on earth "to fashion the destiny of a race, for its weal or its woe, or to crucify the world by a sudden revelation of violence and power." He was abnormal, but so after 1918 was the whole German nation.

National Socialism is a revolution; and, if, apart from his demagogic faculties, Hitler had one quality which placed him in an unassailable position above the rest of his fellow revolutionaries, it was his faith. Faith in Germany, faith in his mission for Germany, and, alas, increasingly arrogant faith in himself and in his own greatness. Faith and will power. I once watched Hitler review his black- and brownshirted army. The march past lasted for four hours, and practically throughout he remained with his right arm stretched out at the Nazi salute. I asked him afterward how he managed to do it. His reply was "will power"—and I wondered how much of it was artificially cultivated. He was no such ad-

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ministrator as is Signor Mussolini—I doubt if he either cared or knew very much about the details of the machine which functioned in his name. But he set its course, put it in motion, or stopped it according to his own plan. During my first year in Germany I constantly asked those in closest touch with Hitler of what his chief quality consisted. I was told almost unanimously, in his fingerspitzengefühl (tip of the finger feeling), that is to say, his sense of opportunity, allied with clearness of mind and decision of purpose. The typical example which was quoted of this was his decision to re-occupy the Rhineland in 1936, which was taken contrary to the warning of his general staff and of all his closest advisers. Germany was at that time not militarily strong enough to disregard a French veto; and his followers shrank from an act which would, they believed, be forcibly opposed by the Western Powers. Hitler's instinct told him that the latter would accept an accomplished fact, and he disregarded all warnings to the contrary. The event proved him right and greatly reinforced his prestige, not only among his own immediate supporters but throughout Germany as a whole. Incidentally, it was probably the last opportunity when it would still have been possible for Britain and France to have said "no" to the Dictator without being obliged to go to war to enforce that "no."

Be that as it may, Hitler, whatever the external impression which he may give and whatever may be one's judgment of him based, as mine was, on a superficial personal acquaintance, is, or at least began by being, a visionary of genius and a man who was able to tell the German people what it was that they wanted. So long as he procured it for them with-

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out war, his word was absolute and their confidence in him unshaken. The first shock to their belief in his infallibility came in September, 1938, when he led them to the abyss of war over the Sudeten German question. Many Germans must then have asked themselves whether Hitler by that time was still thinking of Germany or only of himself, his party, and his personal ambitions. They may be thinking it still more today. But by this time the shackles of the Nazi organization and regime are so riveted on the whole country that what the German people themselves may feel or want is a matter of indifference to a system which must go forward or end, to individuals who must remain in power or become nobodies again, and to a leader whose ambitions have now become a form of hysterical megalomania. *Sic volo sic jubeo* is now Hitler's only creed. And he has behind him the entire might of the German Army, which has taken the oath of loyalty to him, as well as the complete organization of the party, which owes its very existence to him, and the wholehearted enthusiasm of the entire credulous youth of the country, which has been taught to worship force and Hitler. The German people collectively are but grist for the mill, and as one of them whom I met by chance after war had been declared said to me, "*Wir sind zu klein, wir können nichts machen*" (We are too small, we can do nothing).

It will always be a matter of regret to me that I was never able to study Hitler in private life, which might have given me the chance to see him under normal conditions and to talk to him as man to man. Except for a few brief words at chance meetings I never met him except upon official and invariably disagreeable business. He never attended informal

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parties at which diplomatists might be present; and, when friends of mine did try to arrange it, he always got out of meeting me in such a manner on the ground of precedent. Up to a period in his career he was accessible to foreigners, to whom he readily accorded interviews; but he gradually became less so; and he had apparently a rooted aversion to private contacts with diplomatists, whom, as a category, he distrusted. The greater one becomes the more one is obliged to live on a pedestal lest, if one descends from it, one loses, through commerce with ordinary people, the godlike attributions of greatness. No man is a hero to his valet, and Hitler may have taken that saying to heart. He was a true demagogue, and crowds stimulated him, but social life of any sort bored him. He liked the company of his intimate friends, whom he could harangue to his heart's delight; but he always looked self-conscious when he had to entertain the diplomatic corps, which happened normally three times a year: at his New Year's reception, at his annual dinner to the heads of missions, and at the tea party which he gave for them in September during the party rally at Nuremberg.

I was once asked by a German acquaintance who must, in view of his former official position, have had many talks with him whether I ever managed during my interviews with Hitler to get a word in edgeways. It was a curious observation, suggesting as it did that he himself never had. That was, however, not my experience. He may not have heeded what I said; and he may, like Ribbentrop, only have been thinking what he himself was going to say next; but he always seemed ready to listen, nor did he speechify to any unendurable extent. I myself once made him a little speech which lasted for

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five or ten minutes. His reply lasted three times as long; and thereafter, for obvious reasons, I avoided making speeches myself. If I thought his own were getting too long and that he was becoming carried away by his own oratory, I interrupted him; nor did he ever seem to be offended thereby.

My impression was that his emotional outbursts were not spontaneous but that he deliberately worked himself up into a state of excitement. But it may have become second nature with him after all the impassioned orations which he had had to make during the years of his struggle for power. Or he may have thought that, since demagogical eloquence swayed the masses, it must have a similar effect on the individual. Anyway, with his own people he seems to have claimed the monopoly of the talking, though he probably was attentive enough if he had anything which he wished to learn from them. But contradiction was insupportable to him; and, if anyone attempted it, as General von Fritsch did in January, 1938, he was dismissed. I never heard of his ever doing a generous action. On the other hand one of his most marked characteristics was sheer vindictiveness, and his resentments were enduring and intensely disagreeable for anyone on whom it was in his power to exercise them. I am not surprised that his followers were afraid of him. They had plenty of examples of his capacity for revenge to intimidate them.

His defect in this respect was his tragedy, as it is necessarily that of any dictator. No man of independent mind can long tolerate the lack of all freedom of utterance. Unable to express views which may be contrary to those of their master, the best men leave him one by one. His entourage steadily

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and inexorably deteriorates, until at the end he is surrounded by mere yes-men, whose flattery and acquiescence are alone endurable to him. That, too, was Hitler's fate during the last year which I spent in Berlin.

He was always urging his fellow countrymen to forget their inferiority complex, but he was subject to it himself. Both on this account and because of his demagogue's nature he always had to have applause. If it was not the crowd's, it had to be that of the coterie of his intimate friends, particularly of his old street fighters of the Brown House at Munich. At the same time his tastes were excessively simple. He drank no wine, he did not smoke, and he ate no meat. He was a bad sleeper, especially at Berlin, which was one reason why he spent as little time as possible in the capital. He got up late and disliked working till after luncheon, but he would also go to bed late and would sit up talking till all hours of the night. He liked to relax after dinner in the company of pretty and ornamental young women.

Beautiful scenery appealed to him in the same way, and his real home was the Berghof at Berchtesgaden on the top of a mountain with a magnificent view looking over to Salzburg and the lovely scenery of his native Austria. He kept no particular state there, and on the two occasions on which I visited him there, there was little evidence of any excessive precautions for his safety. Yet he was very strictly guarded; and the necessity for his protection was one of the holds which Himmler, as head of his secret police, had over him. The path to him was, however, made easy for an ambassador, who might be counted upon not to have a revolver or a bomb concealed upon his person. For others, if there was

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becoming Minister for Foreign Affairs. Among the Germans, the Swabians enjoy a reputation for economy and dourness, similar to that of the Scots among the English. He and his wife had been extremely popular in England, and I liked them both immensely. His charming daughter was the wife of the son of the veteran Field Marshal von Mackensen. The son worked under his father-in-law as Secretary of State, which is the equivalent of our Permanent Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs. The political director of the Ministry was Baron von Weizsäcker, who had served as a naval officer in the war. There is no finer type than the hard-headed, intensely German but, at the same time, absolutely honest and honorable German official. Of such was Weizsäcker, and he succeeded Mackensen about a year later as Secretary of State under Ribbentrop. With all of these my relations were excellent, and the Ministry itself a happy and united department. It was to change later when it came under the direction of Herr von Ribbentrop, but at that time my diplomatic colleagues and I were exceedingly fortunate. Baron von Neurath himself was a survivor of the Hindenburg regime and not yet a member of the Nazi party. He became one later, but at that time his position was somewhat anomalous, and one could not always be certain that he was fully cognizant of the views of Hitler and the inner council of the party. There had even been at one time three kinds of ministries for foreign affairs in existence at the same time in Berlin: Herr Rosenberg's, Herr von Ribbentrop's, and the official Ministry in the Wilhelmstrasse. The former's activities had ceased before my arrival, but that of Herr von Ribbentrop, Hitler's Ambassador at Large, still functioned to some

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extent and must have constituted a considerable handicap to the official department.

After I had presented my letters of credence, there was still another ceremony to be performed before I could be regarded as definitely installed. Berlin is one of those capitals in which the head of a foreign mission has, on first arrival, to undergo what is known in diplomatic language as a *ricevimento*, or, in plain English, an official reception. Though not a universal custom—it is not, for instance, followed in London or Paris—it is a practical and useful one. When he first arrives an ambassador is technically regarded as knowing nobody. In order to overcome this initial handicap, the head of the protocol or master of ceremonies at the ministry for foreign affairs issues, on the ambassador's behalf and, naturally, at the latter's expense, invitations to the diplomatic corps and all the higher government officials to attend a party at the embassy on a day and at a time agreed upon with the ambassador. In this manner the newcomer gets to know at once everybody with whom he may later come into contact.

After my audience with the Reichschancellor I was accordingly asked to fix a date for my *ricevimento*. Being mostly Scot by origin, I selected June 10th. Abroad the King's birthday is celebrated on June 9th. It is an occasion for patriotic and loyal demonstrations, and I had decided to invite on that day all the British residents in Berlin to tea at the Embassy. There would, it seemed to me, be a certain economy in flowers and in other respects if the official reception were to take place the day after. It was consequently so arranged, but what I had not foreseen was that in 1937 June 9th and

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the country was in process of being incorporated in the Hitler Youth.

Germany, as I wrote in one of my earlier dispatches, was being militarized from the cradle to the grave. The writing was thus on the wall for all to read. The only real question was whether it was intended to use this German might as backing for the attainment of not illegitimate aims or for the prosecuting of illegitimate ambitions. The "I told you so's" will say that there never was any doubt on the subject. That may be so; but, nevertheless, the contrary had first to be proved.

The Ministry of Economics was being filled with soldiers, and in fact the whole economy of the country was being harnessed to the military machine. The slogans of the Nazi party were still "Purity of Race" and "Guns instead of butter"; and all industrial considerations were being subordinated to the Four Years' Plan, or in other words, to the necessity of rendering Germany independent of supplies from abroad. The Nazi system was calculated, better perhaps than any other could have been, to weld the German people into an efficient war machine; and to the appreciation of this fact may possibly be attributed the tolerance shown by the Army to a party whose political activities it must often have found irritating and embarrassing, as well as subversive of discipline.

While the steady forging of the Siegfried sword was the most obviously alarming symptom of the situation from the point of view of the outside world, the rise in the cost of living, the downward trend in the standard of life, the exactions of the party, and the restrictions on individual liberty were a heavy burden on the people and the cause of consid-

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erable internal dissatisfaction. Many Germans have, in conversation with me, attributed Hitler's dynamic impatience to his alleged conviction, to which he himself frequently alluded, that his life was not destined to be a long one. He was so full of tricks that I often wondered whether that assertion was not one of them. It seems to me at least as likely that Hitler suspected that his own people might not submit indefinitely to the hardships imposed upon them by the regime. He had, therefore, to excuse his own impatience and to act quickly, if the economic situation were not to break or the people to become too dissatisfied before he had had time to perfect the military machine which was necessary for the execution of his long-term plans and the satisfaction of his far-reaching ambitions. It was for him a race between the readiness of his army and the possible collapse of German economy.

On the other hand, Germany's growing military strength had enabled her to take a more independent line in foreign affairs than she had hitherto done; and the political situation in Europe had, in the year preceding my arrival, greatly changed, to Germany's advantage. By 1937, there was no longer any risk of foreign intervention in Germany's internal affairs. The Berlin-Rome Axis had been invented; and the unity of Italo-German interests was to be affirmed a few months later in September, when Signor Mussolini officially visited Berlin. The Axis served the immediate interests of Italy during the period of sanctions against her and in view of the support which she was giving to the Franco party in Spain; but its ultimate benefits were of far greater value to Germany than to Italy. Among other things it removed for the former the most dangerous obstacle to Nazi intrigues in Austria and

* The order was to attack Russia and I began then to wonder if the ultimate aim was no longer to push A. H. to power

an interesting answer for a couple of years.
* and if not, then why not - a question to which I would not find an answer.

J. T.

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the actual stumbling block which had caused them to fail at the time of the Dolfuss murder in 1934.

The Nazi party and the press were still hard at work at that time beating the anti-Bolshevist drum, mainly for purposes of internal consumption but also with a view to making the outside world believe that Germany was the sole bulwark against universal communism. The opportunity offered by Japan's bad relations with Russia had been seized in the preceding year to sign the German-Japanese agreement. This so-called anti-communist but equally anti-democratic front was to become a triangular one toward the end of 1937, when Italy joined it. The ten-year German-Polish agreement had been signed in 1934, and thus, by 1937, Germany, so far from being friendless in the world, as she was so apt in self-commiseration to depict herself to be, had greatly fortified her political situation. The success of Nazism was attracting many sympathizers abroad, particularly in Hungary with irredenta of her own, but also in other European countries, as well as overseas. The *Auslandsdeutschen*, or Germans living in foreign countries, were busily organizing themselves abroad in support of the movement in the fatherland and as an advance guard for political invasion by that fatherland.

1937 It was the heyday of the movement and of Hitler himself. Though there might be restiveness in Germany itself at the exactions of the party and the recurring food shortages, the Germans are a docile, credulous, and disciplined people who like being governed; and they comforted themselves with the assurance that Hitler had the knack of getting everything he wanted without war. Above all, the malleable German youth were enthusiastic over a movement which appealed so strongly

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to the young and were being taught to accord to Hitler the attributions of something very near akin to God. When people lightly talk of the German nation's overthrowing its present rulers, it must be borne in mind that for nearly seven years the whole of the German youth has been taught the cult of force and power and that they are Hitler's most devoted adherents in its worship.

To an objective observer there was something almost fascinating in the skill with which Hitler was moving the pieces on his chessboard. None of his political maneuvers were really to the liking of his people, who cared little for either Italians or Japanese; but each of these in turn served his purpose at the time. He needed peaceful and good relations with his neighbors while he matured his plans for their destruction; and in the pause which these alliances afforded him he quietly transformed Germany into one vast military camp for that purpose. The pact with Japan was useful not only to contain Russia but also in order to embarrass the Western Powers and to distract their attention in the Far East. The fact that Hitler could count on Italy's neutrality in 1936 had enabled him to risk the occupation of the Rhineland in March of that year. The new Berlin-Rome Axis was not only a general set-off to the Anglo-French entente but was also destined to make the Vienna coup in 1938 comparatively easy. So long as all these friendships were valuable to him, he was profuse in the warmth of his utterances about them; and a study of his speeches on this subject would make interesting reading. Once they had served their purpose they were, however, discarded as if they had never been.

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In the midst of one of his tirades against the Poles in August, 1939, I interrupted Hitler to observe that he seemed to forget how useful the agreement with Pilsudski had been to him in 1934. Hitler's answer was that it had never been of any use whatsoever and that it had merely made him unpopular with his own people. He had a phenomenal capacity for self-deception, and was able to forget everything which he had ever said or done in the past, if it no longer suited his present or future purpose to remember it. In the same manner, Japan was thrown aside like a squeezed lemon just as soon as Hitler concluded that the U.S.S.R. would suit his immediate purpose better than Japan.

Hitler's Germany showed no regard for any of her friends; the Führer never took the trouble even to warn Signor Mussolini in advance of his plans; and I am confident that, if the British Government had been prepared to accept the German proposals of August 25th, 1939, Hitler would have lost no time in finding some excuse for scrapping the Moscow agreement which he had signed a few days before.

Verbal or written engagements had absolutely no meaning for him once they ceased to contribute to the greater glory of Adolf Hitler and of Germany. They were merely provisional documents to be torn up whenever it suited him; whereupon he would then offer another agreement in exchange. As I have said earlier, I am ready to believe that Hitler started by working sincerely for Germany. Later, he began to confound Germany with himself; and at the end Adolf Hitler was, I fancy, the sole consideration.

Briefly recapitulated, the position in May, 1937, when I

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reached Berlin, was accordingly as follows: All power was concentrated in the hands of Hitler. There was control of the press but not of the budget; no rival parties were tolerated, and every official was his nominee, removable at his will. While the economic and financial position of Germany was showing signs of deterioration, her military strength in material and man power was vastly and rapidly increasing; and her foreign alliances were being consolidated and exploited. Europe was being soothed by repeated assertions that nothing was further from Hitler's mind than any thought of revolutionary or territorial conquests. Respect for other nationalities was still the declared principle of Nazism, which was sometimes euphemistically described as the form of democracy most appropriate to Germany. It was a period of comparative calm; but, as far as Germany was concerned, of concentrated preparation.

The two main political questions were the civil war in Spain and the future of Austria. Germany was still being represented abroad as the barrier to Bolshevism, and communism was still serving as the justification for much internal oppression. But Britain, to judge from the German press, was public enemy No. 1. The campaign for the return of the German colonies had been revived in 1936 and was still intermittently but consistently prominent; but the chief grievance was Britain's dog-in-the-manger attitude toward Germany's rightful place in the sun and her claims to *Lebensraum*, or living space, in Central and Eastern Europe. As Goering said to me on the occasion of my first visit to him, "Germany cannot pick one flower without England's saying to her, 'Es ist verboten' (It is forbidden).'" It was useless to discuss that

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misused word *Lebensraum* with the Nazis. They could or would not see that "living room" was only justifiable, if it implied the strengthening of economic relations by legitimate means, but was unjustifiable if it signified political domination by means of military or economic pressure. To them it only meant the latter.

As for the claim for the return of the German colonies, it was quite obvious that it was merely being exploited momentarily for propaganda purposes, partly to keep the claim alive for use later, when Germany's aspirations in Europe—a prior consideration—had been achieved and digested; partly to make the German people believe that it was the want of colonies and not excessive rearmament which was causing the lack of butter and other comforts. When Goering outlined to me in October of that year an Anglo-German understanding of mutual guarantee in two clauses, I asked him what he would suggest about colonies. His answer was that colonies did not matter. When I spoke to Hitler about colonies in March, 1938, his attitude was that the time had not come for discussion about them. They might wait, he said, four, six, or ten years. It is true that the press campaign was to some extent aggravated by articles and letters in the British newspapers arguing that Germany had never made any use of her colonies before the war, that they had never provided her with more than 1 to 3 per cent of her foreign imports, and that in general they were a quite unnecessary luxury for her. At my first interview with Dr. Goebbels, shortly after my arrival, he talked about Germany's having been robbed of her colonies. I told him that "robbed" was an entirely incorrect term, since she had lost them as the result

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of defeat in war. Goebbels' reply was that that was an argument which he could understand; but what irritated him and all Germans was the sanctimonious and hypocritical arguments put forward in England to prove that colonies were merely a luxury and of no real value to anybody. There was some truth in this retort.

I have the greatest respect for the power and freedom of that "chartered libertine" the British press. I must, however, reluctantly but in all honesty record that it handicapped my attempts in 1937 and 1938 to contribute to the improvement of Anglo-German relations, and thereby to the preservation of peace. Experience has proved that those attempts were foredoomed to failure, but they might not have been. In a letter of Lord Baldwin's, which was published in *The Times* last November, he observed that the "weakness of democracy is a certain proneness to short views, hastily formed and vigorously asserted on an inadequate basis of reflection and knowledge." Lord Baldwin has the knack of hitting the nail on the head. However justifiable the majority of the press criticisms undoubtedly were at this time, they were also sometimes biased and unfair. It would not have mattered so much had Hitler been a normal individual, but he was unreasonably sensitive to newspaper and especially British newspaper criticism and quite unable to distinguish values, or to appreciate the difference between, say, the *Manchester Guardian* and the more sensational journals. It did not help me in my diplomatic task if Hitler's back was being constantly rubbed up the wrong way by press criticisms, and I consequently tried on various occasions to persuade those

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responsible for submitting to Hitler the British press cuttings (which had of course first to be translated) to put some of them in the wastepaper basket before ever they reached him. But I never succeeded, at any rate for any length of time, and always suspected that certain members of his anti-British extremist entourage took special pleasure in seeing that he missed nothing which might inflame his facile resentments.

While the British press comments might be tiresome or even unjust, reflecting as they sometimes did the views of irresponsible individuals and the battle of internal party politics, the German officially controlled press was, on the other hand, utterly despicable. No lie, however great and obvious, was too much for the *Völkischer Beobachter* or the *Angriff* and suchlike purely party organs or for the *Stürmer*, the notorious great anti-Jew newspaper edited by Dr. Streicher at Nuremberg. Common vituperation and abuse were their main stock in trade. They were not newspapers but emetics; and, when they were really on the warpath, as during the Czech and the Polish crises, it was impossible to read them without actually feeling sick. It made me sad to think of German youth being educated on such utter trash and on such complete misrepresentations of the truth.

Alone among the Berlin newspapers, the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* attempted to preserve some, at least, of the decencies of normal journalism, as did also to some extent the *Börse Zeitung*, which was the organ of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, though it was always ill-tempered and deteriorated after Ribbentrop took charge of that Department. But the best and fairest newspaper in Germany was the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and I often wondered how it managed

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among so much censorship and corruption to preserve its last vestiges of independence. Personally, I used to see regularly three morning newspapers and two evening editions. But, as the wife of a Nazi official once said to me, "What on earth do you do that for? If you read one, you have read the lot."

CHAPTER V. ATTEMPTS TO IMPROVE
ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS

I HAD been just one month at Berlin when I was instructed by His Majesty's Government to make the first of what was destined to be a series of definite and considered attempts by Mr. Chamberlain (who had now succeeded Lord Baldwin as Prime Minister) to improve Anglo-German relations. It consisted in an invitation to Baron von Neurath to come to London at an early date to discuss, primarily, naval control in Spain, in which Germany had ceased to participate after the attack on the pocket battleship *Deutschland* by Spanish Government bombers at Iviza, but also in general to review the whole external political situation. I recollect the hesitation on Neurath's part when I first put forward the suggestion to him. He was in fact conversant—as I was not—with the inner difficulties of such a proposal. However, he said he would consult Hitler, though the visit could not, he pointed out, take place till after his return, namely, June 20th, from a tour of the Balkan capitals which had already been arranged for him. Nevertheless, in spite of this and some other minor difficulties, the invitation was eventually accepted, and announced to take place between the twenty-third and twenty-eighth of that month.

My satisfaction at this apparent success was short-lived, and

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was typical of the malignant fate which seemed to dog all our efforts to open the door to Anglo-German discussions. At first I was inclined to attribute this to ill chance, and it was not until later that I realized it was by design. On June 19th it was officially announced in Berlin that following the bombing of the *Deutschland* an unsuccessful torpedo attack had been made on the German cruiser *Leipzig* off Oran; and on the following day I received a brief private letter from Neurath telling me that his visit to London could not now take place. The twentieth of June was a Sunday, and I spent all the morning and the afternoon in trying to find the Minister for Foreign Affairs. He had, I think, regarded discretion as the better part of valor and disappeared into the country, destination unknown. I managed, however, to get hold of him late in the evening and went to see him at his private house in the garden of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. I told him that the *Leipzig* incident in itself only rendered his visit to London still more desirable, that I could not take his refusal to go there as a final answer without having first seen the Chancellor myself and put the case to him. Baron von Neurath was good enough to arrange this for me, and I had an interview with him and Hitler on the following morning.

Hitler had just come back from Wilhelmshaven, whither the *Deutschland* had returned to bury the thirty-odd sailors who had been killed in the bomb attack at Iviza. He was, as in the case of my first meeting with him after the *Hindenburg* disaster, in the emotional state into which he worked himself at the sight or report of any dead Germans. He refused to listen to any of my very logical arguments and persisted in the standpoint that he could not at such a moment permit his

* D.T.: Sufferandibly over the
Deaths of many and many
German Soldier
or sailor

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Foreign Minister to leave Germany. His attitude was so utterly unreasonable that I was at a loss to explain it even to myself. In the light of a better acquaintance later with the inner facts, I derived the conclusion that the *Leipzig* incident—the truth of which was never even verified—had merely served as a pretext for going back on an acceptance which had never really appealed to Hitler himself, but still less to his Ambassador in London, Herr von Ribbentrop. The latter, in addition to his London post, was Ambassador at Large, and felt that Neurath's visit was detrimental to his own prestige and wounding to his personal vanity. He had the fatal defect of always looking for offense, and of having, in consequence, a perpetual "chip on his shoulder." I feel sure that he did his utmost from the outset to dissuade his master from agreeing to the course proposed by His Majesty's Government, and the *Leipzig* story enabled him to win his case. The notorious failure of his mission to London was already rankling, and it was intolerable that another should come and show up the personal cause of that failure. History will assuredly attribute a large share of the blame for September, 1939, to Ribbentrop; and his successful intrigue against Neurath's visit to London was neither the first nor unfortunately the last instance of his sinister influence on the policy of his Führer. It was a disheartening beginning for myself, and the abrupt manner in which the visit was cancelled by the German Government was not encouraging for His Majesty's Government. In accordance with the rules of ordinary civility, it would have been proper for the German Government, as soon as the excitement over the *Leipzig* incident had died down, themselves to suggest a later date for the visit. They

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did not, however, do so; and it was left to Mr. Chamberlain to take the initiative again and to make a second attempt, later in the year, to establish contact by sending Lord Halifax to Berlin.

As I have related earlier, the first of my purely personal efforts to improve relations with the Nazi rulers of Germany had been the speech which I had made at the dinner given to me in May by the Deutsch Englische Gesellschaft. My second was my attendance at the Nuremberg party rally in September. No British, French, or U. S. Ambassador had hitherto gone to Nuremberg, on the ground that as a party day it could not be regarded as a purely official meeting. For the first time my French colleague, M. François-Poncet; the U. S. Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Gilbert; and myself were authorized in 1937 by our respective governments to attend the rally, albeit our presence there was limited to two days.

Nobody who has not witnessed the various displays given at Nuremberg during the week's rally or been subjected to the atmosphere thereat can be said to be fully acquainted with the Nazi movement in Germany. It was an extremely necessary and useful experience, and not a single moment of my time during the two days I was there was left unoccupied. In addition to attending a review of the party leaders, 140,000 in number and representing at that time over 2,000,000 members of the party (a year later again at Nuremberg Hitler was to tell me himself that there were well over 3,000,000 party officials); a rally of the Hitler Youth, 48,000 strong, with 5,000 girls; at a supper party in Herr Himmler's S.S. camp of 25,000 blackshirts, I had talks with Hitler himself,

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Hess was one of Hitler's first collaborators and friends; and his membership in the party, as I have mentioned elsewhere, began in the early twenties. He took part in the Munich Putsch in November, 1923, was condemned after it to imprisonment, and shared Hitler's confinement in the fortress of Landsberg. When Hitler took office in 1933, he was given Cabinet rank as a Minister without Portfolio.

Tall and dark, with beetling eyebrows, a famous smile, and ingratiating manners. Hess was perhaps the most attractive looking of the leading Nazis. He was not inclined to be talkative and in conversation did not convey the impression of great ability. But people who know him best would have agreed that first impressions—and I never got further with him than that—were deceptive; and he certainly wielded more influence than people generally believed in Germany. I should have summed him up as aloof and inscrutable, with a strong fanatical streak which would be produced whenever the occasion required it.

That day, however, it was von Shirach's speech which, in spite of its painfully adulatory references to the Führer, impressed me most, though it was quite short, as befitting a wet morning on which it must have been most unpleasant for the boys, who had come from some distance, to stand in the rain. One part of Baldur von Shirach's speech surprised me when, addressing the boys, he said: "I do not know if you are Protestants or Catholics; but that you believe in God, that I do know." I had been under the impression that all reference to religion was discouraged among the Hitler Youth, and this seemed to me to refute that imputation. Theoretically, however, in spite of the revolt against the sacred

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books of the Jews, religion was free to the Hitler Youth; but, where and whenever it was possible to do so, it was in practice discouraged by various effective methods. The God of the Hohenzollerns had not saved Germany from defeat in 1918; and, though God might still be worshiped, it must be a purely German one, to whom Hitler was so closely allied as to be barely distinguishable from the Deity Himself.

Hitler in his speeches constantly referred to the Almighty. He was not an atheist, but merely pro-Hitler and anti-Christian. In the course of one of my interviews with him we touched upon the subject of religion. He was at the moment incensed against certain English bishops for supporting the case of Pastor Niemöller. He would not, he shouted, brook any further interference by English churchmen in the religious affairs of Germany. It was their meddling, he said, which had caused him to give orders for Niemöller to be put in a concentration camp after he had been set at liberty by the tribunal which had tried him for, and to all intents and purposes acquitted him of, sedition against the Nazi state. If, he continued, any English bishops tried to come to Germany they would be turned back at the frontier; and he concluded with the astounding statement that "nowhere was religion freer than in Germany." It was the sort of remark to which I never was able to find an answer, nor would it have served any purpose if I had. His own National-Socialist religion, as he conceived it, with its German God was free, and that was what he meant and all he cared for. Furthermore, he could always make himself believe whatever he said. It was this kind of attitude which made ordinary conversation and argu-

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ment with him and his imitator, Ribbentrop, so extraordinarily difficult and unsatisfactory.

The supper in a great tent in Herr Himmler's S.S. police camp at Nuremberg was equally instructive in another sense. During supper a number of songs were sung by a chorus of blackshirts, and after it there was a tattoo for the lowering of the Swastika camp flag. The music as well as the bearing and drill of the special color party was exceptionally good. The S.S. played a big part in ruling Germany for Hitler, and they were picked men of powerful physique. "But," as I wrote at the time, "the camp in the darkness, dimly lit by flares, with the black uniform in the silent background and the skull and crossbones on the drums and trumpets lent to the scene a sinister and menacing impression." I felt, indeed, as if I were back in the days of Wallenstein and the Thirty Years' War in the seventeenth century.

But, quite apart from the obvious menace of these various militaristic or para-military spectacles, Nuremberg gave me at the time the following chief impressions: Firstly, judging from the reports of the previous rallies, of a calmer atmosphere than heretofore, resulting partly from a growing sense of strength and self-confidence, but partly also from an increasing feeling of boredom; secondly, and deriving from the first, of a growing hope that Nazism might be entering upon a quieter phase; thirdly, as drawn from my conversation with the Nazi leaders, of the possibility of a better understanding between Britain and Germany; fourthly, of an increasing adulation of Hitler amounting almost to idolatry; and fifthly, of superlative organization.

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As I have said before, I spent but two days at Nuremberg; and the atmosphere, however illuminating and instructive in respect of Nazism itself in a concentrated form, may have been scarcely that best suited to obtain a true picture of Germany as a whole, of her apprehension and discontents as distinct from the enthusiasm and chauvinism of the Nazi party there forgathered. Yet the Nazi party was Germany; and it was merely wishful thinking to imagine anything to the contrary.

Herr Hitler was more friendly to me personally on that occasion than on any of the others on which I saw him. He was undoubtedly pleased at the attendance for the first time of the British, French, and American representatives; and he indicated that he attributed this innovation to my initiative. I took the opportunity to tell him that the invitation to Baron von Neurath to visit London remained open if he cared to avail himself of it. In this respect, however, he was at once, and typically, less forthcoming. He said that he feared lest such a visit should give rise to exaggerated hopes, and observed that a preliminary requisite to such a visit should be a change in the attitude of the British press toward, and a juster appreciation in England of, Nazism.

As it happened, I had had a long talk with Dr. Goebbels at lunch that day on the subject of our respective presses; and I told Hitler so. There was nothing very new in that talk, and up to the last the press problem remained insoluble, but Goebbels had been friendly and sensible. The "little doctor" was probably the most intelligent, from a purely brain point of view, of all the Nazi leaders. He never speechified; he always saw and stuck to the point; he was an able debater

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and, in private conversation, astonishingly fair-minded and reasonable. Personally, whenever I had the chance, I found pleasure in talking to him. In appearance and in character he was a typical little Irish agitator, and was, in fact, probably of Celtic origin. He came from the Rhineland and had been educated in a Jesuit school. He was a slip of a man; but, in spite of his slight deformity, he had given proof of great courage when he fought the communists in Berlin and won the capital for Hitler and Nazism. When, however, he was on a public platform or had a pen in his hand no gall was too bitter and no lie too blatant for him.

Baron von Neurath, whom I saw the following day, was more forthcoming than Hitler. He told me that he found his Führer less resentful and more anxious for an understanding with Britain than he had been for a long time past. He did not, however, encourage me to think that Hitler would reopen the question of his visit to London. I remember that I asked him, in the course of conversation, what were Germany's ultimate aims. His reply was: "Austria is the first and last of our aims; the Sudeten German problem is a matter for compromise and can be settled amicably, provided the Czechs leave the Russian orbit and give true equality to their German subjects."

Such a statement was, as I was to discover, a characteristic example both of the half-truths indulged in whenever it was necessary to define German policy and of the deceptive nature of German assurances in general; i.e. readiness to admit an obvious objective, coupled with a positive declaration that nothing more thereafter was aimed at. It was so far true that Austria was in fact Hitler's immediate objective. Of that there

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was no shadow of doubt, and in commenting on the greater calmness of the 1937 party rally, I had reported, "Germany today feels that she can not only afford to wait, but by waiting will be yet stronger and more sure of her goal. And the big goal is German unity. Of that let there be no mistake either; and if we intend definitely to oppose it, we should lose no time in asking ourselves the first and capital question 'How?'" It was already quite evident that it would be futile to say "no" to the Dictator without being prepared to go to war to enforce it.

The question of the Austrian *Anschluss* was also mentioned in a long conversation which I had with General Goering at this time. He insisted that it was inevitable; and he told me that a few days earlier he had seen Herr Guido Schmidt, the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and had bluntly told him that the sooner the Austrian Government accepted it as such, and without creating bad blood, the better it would be for all concerned. But the greater part of my interview with Goering on that occasion was on the subject of a request which I had made to him in July for a written statement of (a) Germany's concrete grievances against Britain in the matter of our alleged attempt to hem Germany in, and (b) her ultimate aims. Needless to say, I never received such a reply in writing, though Goering was always ready to talk and to express views "subject to Hitler's confirmation or consent." This time the General begged the question, as he had done in July, by saying that he would consult Hitler again and might be able to give me the answer I wanted if I came and shot a stag with him at Rominten, in East Prussia,

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during the first week of October—an invitation which I was delighted to accept.

As usual Goering was very outspoken and at times bellicose. Yet our many talks, in spite of complete frankness on both sides, were never conducted on any but mutually friendly lines. He suffered comparatively little from the personal resentments which so often inspired Hitler and Ribbentrop, and up to the last I was inclined to believe in the sincerity of his personal desire for peace and good relations with England. He laid stress on this at Nuremberg, though at the same time he added that, if the British Empire refused to collaborate with Germany, there would be nothing for the latter to do but to devote herself to the destruction of that Empire instead of to its maintenance. In that connection he mentioned to me, and was the first German to do so, the possibility of the Reich being compelled to revise the Anglo-German Naval Agreement. I told him then, and again some months later, that such a step would inevitably lead in the end once more to war with Britain. He regretfully admitted that this might be so and added that it was against his advice that Hitler had insisted, when he did, on the conclusion of that Agreement. Baron von Neurath once told me the same thing, the argument of both of them being that Hitler should have kept the Naval Agreement as a trump card up his sleeve for eventual use in a final bargain. They were both more honest in this respect than Hitler, since, from Goering's remark, I fancy that the contingency of repudiating that treaty was already in Hitler's mind; and, judging by subsequent experience, I can only conclude that he never intended to observe its terms longer than it suited him. It was difficult or even materially

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impossible for him to rebuild a navy at the same time that he was re-creating his immensely formidable military and air machine; and the sole object, in Hitler's mind, of the Naval Agreement was to disarm British opposition to his schemes in Central Europe until such time as they came to fruition and were realized. Thereafter it would be the turn of the British Empire. It is impossible today to draw any other conclusion. There is a passage in Rauschnig's book, *The Revolution of Nihilism*,* which is illuminating in this respect, particularly in view of the writer's intimacy at one time with Hitler. He writes of the latter as follows:

He was ready to sign anything. He was ready to guarantee any frontier and to conclude a non-aggression pact with anyone. [According to Hitler himself] it was a simpleton's idea that expedients of this sort were not to be made use of, because the day might come when some formal agreement had to be broken. Every pact sworn to was broken or became out of date sooner or later. Anyone who was so fussy that he had to consult his own conscience about whether he could keep a pact, whatever the pact and whatever the situation, was a fool. He could conclude any pact and yet be ready to break it the next day in cold blood, if that was in the interests of the future Germany.

Such was Hitler's own profession of faith about the sanctity of treaties and his plighted word. *Verb. sap.* But at that time, it was still possible to hope for the best; and after a brief holiday at Belje in Yugoslavia, shooting stags in my old haunts at the invitation of the Prince Regent, I proceeded to Rominten to stay with Goering as he had suggested.

* New York: The Alliance Book Corporation.

CHAPTER VI. GOERING

OF all the big Nazi leaders, Hermann Goering was for me by far the most sympathetic. He may have been the man who was chiefly responsible for the firing of the Reichstag in 1933; and he certainly was the one to whom, as his most trusted adherent, Hitler confided the task of cleaning up Berlin at the time of the Roehm purge in 1934. In any crisis, as in war, he would be quite ruthless. He once said to me that the British whom he really admired were those he described as the pirates, such as Francis Drake; and he reproached us for having become too "debrutalized." He was, in fact, himself a typical and brutal buccaneer; but he had certain attractive qualities; and I must frankly say that I had a real personal liking for him.

He had the advantage of a better education than most of Hitler's entourage. His father had been the first Governor of German South West Africa and, according to Goering himself, an anglophile. At the time of the South African war Goering was a boy and had, in spite of his father's disapproval, been a violent partisan for the Boers. He still had somewhere, he once told me, a photograph of himself in a slouch hat inscribed "Hermann Goering, General der Buren" (General of the Boers). He had sent at the time all his small

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savings, a gold piece or two which his aunts had given him, to the fund collected for the Boers in Germany. That was, he said, one of the things which in his life he most regretted, inasmuch as South Africa had, after all, come in on the side of Britain in the war of 1914. His own home in his youth had been a small house at Veldenstein, which he took me to see one afternoon during my second visit to Nuremberg, built amid the ruins of one of that series of old castles perched upon the rocks of Franconia which had been constructed in the tenth and eleventh centuries against the Slav invaders of Germany. There he had been the daring leader of the village boys, and had fitted himself for the life of adventure which was afterward to be his fate.

In 1914 he had been an infantry officer but was soon transferred to the Air Force, where he became a pilot in the famous Richthofen Circus, which was so long a thorn in the side of the British Flying Corps. He was himself, I believe, credited with a number of air victories, and received the decoration, Order for Merit, which is the nearest German equivalent to our V.C. (About nine hundred such crosses were given in Germany during the World War of 1914-1918.) When we obtained the mastery of the air in 1918, and after Richthofen had been killed and two thirds of the circus shot down, Goering was the next in command, and gallantly led what was left of the squadron till the end of the war. When the Armistice came, he refused to hand over his airplanes to the Allies; and, filled with rage at defeat and disgust at the revolution in Germany, he retired to Sweden and took up a civil flying appointment there. While in Sweden

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more I saw her, the more I did like her. Had she been politically minded, she and her baby could have been, and possibly were, a good influence in Goering's life.

I should like to express here my belief that the Field Marshal, if it had depended on him, would not have gambled on war as Hitler did in 1939. As will be related in due course, he came down decisively on the side of peace in September, 1938. He was rumored to have lost much of Hitler's favor on that account, and it is possible that if it had not been for his efforts in 1938 he would have played the same role in 1939. Once was an experience, but twice would have been regarded by Hitler as vice; and it was unfortunately all part of the Greek tragedy that Goering had his 1938 past behind him, and could not repeat it.

He was the absolute servant of his master, and I have never seen greater loyalty and devotion than his to Hitler. He was admittedly the second power in the land, and had always given me to understand that he was Hitler's natural successor as Führer. Seconds are often inclined to lay stress on their own importance. In all the very frank talks which I had with Goering, he never once spoke of himself or of the great part which he had played in the Nazi revolution. Everything had been done by Hitler, all the credit was Hitler's, every decision was Hitler's, and he himself was nothing. Inasmuch as the enumeration of the posts which Goering filled in the Nazi regime took about five minutes to read aloud, this self-effacement before his leader was all the more remarkable; and the more so, since, without Goering, Hitler would never have reached where he was. Hitler's brain might conceive the impossible, but Goering did it. The building up of the German

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Air Force was in itself a striking achievement, and that of which Goering was probably, and legitimately, proudest. However vain he may have been in small ways and however much he loved pomp and uniforms and decorations, jewels and pictures, and the applause of his fellow men, he was quite without braggadocio over the big things which he had accomplished. He had, too, a Falstaffian sense of humor, and was said to have made a collection of the innumerable jokes which were made about his foibles by the Berliners. In this respect he was quite unlike Dr. Goebbels or Hitler himself. Any jokes against the latter were *lèse-majesté*, or treason if made at the expense of the regime; and at the beginning of 1939, a number of the comic turns in the Berlin theaters were prohibited by law under penalty of imprisonment in concentration camps. There was one irrepressible but very popular comic artist in Munich who spent his time in and out of the Dachau concentration camp.

Most of the stories about Goering were, however, good-natured and generally (like the following) made fun of his love for decorations with which to cover his extremely broad chest: "Hitler went one day to visit God. The Almighty said, 'I am always glad to see you, Adolf, but I wish you would stop that fellow Hermann from coming up here. Every time he comes he takes away another star.'" Another was about a motorist who ran into the Field Marshal's car on a dark night and was brought before the judge on a charge of reckless driving. He pleaded that it was not his fault but that of the Field Marshal, who, he said, had forgotten to dim his decorations. He was acquitted. Another popular story which went the round of Berlin at the time of the 1938 crisis

Failure of a Mission

referred to Goering's air force: "The English," said the Berliners, "have so many airplanes that the sky is black with them, and the French ones are so numerous that you can't see the sun for them. But when Hermann Goering presses the button, the birds themselves have got to walk." Some people say that the Germans have no sense of humor. That is certainly not true of the Berliners.

Nevertheless, behind all the ruthlessness and brutality which led Goering to shrink from nothing to obey an order or to achieve an end and behind his harmless vanity and love of display, there were agreeable qualities. However little compassion he may have had, like so many Germans, for his fellow men, he loved animals and children; and, before ever he had one of his own, the top floor at Karinhall contained a vast playroom fitted up with every mechanical toy dear to the heart of the modern child. Nothing used to give him greater pleasure than to go and play there with them. The toys might, it is true, include models of airplanes dropping heavy bombs which exploded on defenseless towns or villages; but, as he observed when I reproached him on the subject, it was not part of the Nazi conception of life to be excessively civilized or to teach squeamishness to the young. Failing children, he would romp with one of the baby lions, of which there was always one in the house until his daughter Edda arrived. Each lion, as soon as it was ten months old was presented to the Berlin zoo, where they were kept in one cage, into which Frau Goering, to the terror of the keepers, would sometimes go quite alone and play with them.

Goering was also a keen sportsman and a first-class shot with a rifle. His game laws for Germany were a model for

Goering

the protection and improvement of animal life. All kinds of steel traps were, for instance, absolutely prohibited in Germany, where rabbits are not the scourge that they are in England. He had successfully introduced elk into the 100,000-acre estate at Karinhall in spite of the unfavorable advice of all his foresters. He was also endeavoring to reintroduce there not only the European bison but also the original wild horse, such as is represented on the old Greek friezes. Sportsmen all over the world should in fact be ready to recognize the services which he rendered to international sport in general; and his great hunting exhibition of 1937 was quite the finest ever held of its kind, and on a far larger scale even than that of Vienna in 1910.

In addition to being the builder and head of the German Air Force, the head of the Forestry Department and Game Warden for the Reich, the head of the State Opera House and various State Museums, Prime Minister of Prussia, and chief of a score of other activities, Goering was also supreme head of the Ministry of Economy, and Commissioner for the Four Years' Plan for making Germany economically independent of other countries. It was a curious combination for an air-force leader, but those who worked with him commented on his great ability to study files of documents and rows of figures and to extract everything which was essential out of them. He was, in fact, much more the able administrator of the Mussolini type than Hitler could ever be; and he owed his indisputable position as second-in-command chiefly to these organizing abilities. Hitler might turn to others in order to win approval of his foreign policy or of his other schemes, but Goering was indispensable when it came to action and

the central craving remained alive: to see the city lying at his feet in fear, shame, and admiration, to transform the "lovely dream" of the past into present reality. During the war he frequently spoke, wearily and impatiently, of his plan to retire to Linz in his old age, to build a museum there, listen to music, read, write, pursue his thoughts. All this was nothing but the ancient daydream of the lordly house with the "extremely elegant lady" and the "spirited circle of friends," still capable of stirring him after all the intervening years. In March, 1945, when the Red Army was at the gates of Berlin, he had the plans for the rebuilding of Linz brought to him in the bunker under the chancellory and for a long time stood dreamily over them.¹²

THE SHATTER

Vienna at the turn of the century, the scintillating imperial of centuries. Brilliant, self-assured that extended into what is now 10 million people, members of more were ruled from Vienna and held Poles, Jews, Slovenes, Croats, Romanians, and Ruthenians. Such a able to modulate all the discords tensions and make them fruitful.

At that point, the empire still emperor Franz Joseph, who had reigned in 1898, had become virtuous dignity, its continuity, and its aristocracy likewise seemed unshaken down by traditions, it dominated. The bourgeoisie had attained universal suffrage did not yet exist. panding feverishly, and the petty being increasingly courted by par

Nevertheless, for all its content ready a "world of yesterday"—fueled seated doubts about itself. As the displayed in its theaters, its bourgeoisie was overhung by this eschatological the city celebrated in fact and fiction.

1938

GOD: ADOLF HITLER

habitual response" to all the state was encouraged talized in popular history, derick the Great and Bis-tification.⁴³

strikingly in two respects eristent characteristic of nd America, has been an itical extremes. From the alifax in the 17th century, litical practitioners of the litical party—English and parliamentary government In Germany, by contrast, mes—from the exaltation Hegel to the revolutionary estroy all traditional forms

rent conception of the na-ding political theorists as omas Jefferson, the state particular creation failed is had the right to abolish state, was the master. The ful words:

re instituted among men ment becomes destructive ople to alter or abolish it, such Principles . . . as to ur Safety and Happiness.

theorists rejected demo-to the Western tradition. ous that it could not have been created by the un-rtable Providence. Thus he Romantics, proclaimed e and Jefferson—that "the the individual" but for its

ry political theorist was). He wrote and lectured bed its climax during the state became virtually the

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(in conclusion)
It is the result of the *concessions and compromises*
between *the* *State* and *History*
The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History

1938

official faith of all German political theorists. Hegelianism conquered key positions in every field of thought: political theory, ethics, philosophy, aesthetics, historiography. For decades none but Hegel's disciples occupied chairs of philosophy and political economy in all the universities of Prussia.⁴⁵

Hegel's writings are difficult, abstruse, often incomprehensible to all but the initiate. About one thing, however, he is very clear indeed: the state must be revered above all institutions. For it is no mere human creation—it is an act of God. Indeed, it is "the movement of God through history" and the "institutionalization of God." In Hegel's special formulation—the Hegelian dialectic—the state is the higher synthesis which evolves from the clash of thesis and antithesis. The state synthesizes individual will and collective will, power and justice; it combines both moral right and physical force, freedom and authority. In fact, according to Hegel, freedom can fully exist only in a national state, and only in the state can moral purpose be fulfilled: "The State is the true embodiment of mind and spirit. And only in it . . . [does] the individual share in truth, real existence and ethical status."

The state is not a means to an end, as in Locke and Jefferson; rather, it has its own moral end. But what the true nature of this purpose is very difficult to get from Hegel, for his mysticism leads to mystification:

The State is the reality of the moral idea—the moral spirit as the revealed will apparent to itself, substantial, which thinks and knows itself and accomplishes that which it knows and insofar as it knows it.

As Ralf Dahrendorf well asked, what is really meant by all this, what is being said here? Who and what is the state? It is difficult to tell, for the state is beyond comprehension, hence beyond rational criticism. And from that point it is not a long step to the conclusion reached by latter-day Hegelians that "the State can do no wrong."⁴⁶

Hegel's emphasis on the *Gemeinschaft* shows his indebtedness to the political Romantics. Apart from the state, people have no moral meaning and no political form. They are a shapeless mass until welded into "the community of the state."

The flavor of Hegel and the intensity of his adoration of the state are best conveyed in his own words:

The State is divine will . . . the State therefore knows what it wants, knows it in its generality as thought, and it acts therefore according to purpose. . . .

One should therefore revere the State as something divine upon earth [irdischgöttliches] and realize that if it is hard to understand nature, it is immeasurably more difficult to grasp the State.

Hegel's saying
The State is not the child of the church, but the guardian of the Church, its more powerful sibling.

But, we always adored Hegel, for with the best intentions of serving God, we performed a mighty task. Through the centuries, we have been trying to convince the men and women of the world that the State is co-terminous with God, and He said it was.
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And again in (1938)

1909-1913

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

Again and again, Hegel insists that the state is not comprehensible, that the people should not try to understand it, they should simply obey its dictates:

The people are that part of the State which does not know what it wants. For to know that is the fruit of deep knowledge and insight which is not the people's affair. . . .

Sacrificing oneself for the individuality of the State is . . . a general duty.⁴⁷

Even more important to Hegel than the State was the *Volk*. For it was the *Volk* which was the primary agent of his historical dialectic or the means by which the freedom of the individual was reconciled with the authority of the State.

Hegel had no confidence in parliaments, "the incompetent and ignorant." He placed his trust in great men. His message about them would be repeated often in the ensuing years, until it reached its final bastardized and disastrous culmination in the *Führerprinzip*. "In public opinion all falsehood and all truth is contained, but to find the truth is the task of the Great Man. He who says and accomplishes what his time wants and desires is the Great Man of that time. He does what is the inner essence of his time, he realizes it, and yet he who does not know how to despise public opinion . . . will never accomplish anything great."⁴⁸

Like every other responsible German philosopher, Hegel would have been appalled by Hitler's brutal dictatorship. But his endorsement of the concept of a "World Historic Leader," the "World Spirit Incarnate," and the "World's Soul" (as he called Napoleon) helped create a tradition of political hero worship in Germany that was not uncongenial to Hitler's concept of the *Führer*.

One of the most influential popularizers of Hegel's thought was the historian Heinrich Treitschke, who also provided "the ideological underpinnings of Bismarck's *Realpolitik*." Over and over again, in his immensely popular lectures at the University of Berlin, Treitschke roared in his deafness to wildly cheering students:

Power, within and without, is the very essence of the State. . . .

Since the State is power, it can obviously draw all human actions within its scope. . . . The State can overshadow practically the whole of a people's life . . . no limit can be set to the functions of the State.⁴⁹

Treitschke turned his back on his earlier liberalism to hail the triumphant march of Bismarck's *Machtpolitik*. "Liberalism," he decided, "is merely the embodiment of social selfishness"; he now put his faith in "the mystery of the Great Man." After arguing that the

The Past As Prologue: Hitler

state should regulate all : not ask for opinion but demand it. State primarily requires; it is the accomplishment of it.

Adolf Hitler had lit obedience.

FRIEDRICH LIST

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List's immensely influ and control was accuratel: chen Oekonomie. First put many as Adam Smith's ubi. By 1890 it had gone throug of literally thousands of boc

List took violent issu Smith was a liberal cosm internationalism was dang Where Smith stressed ind individualism and internati he considered far more in manity.

Two terms would pre of the 20th century: *Drang* corollary *Mitteleuropa*, a co geopoliticians who argued of Central Europe could c invented in the 20th or 19 —some of the thinking is the East—but List's system nach Westen, proclaiming plete so long as it did not ex of the Rhine to the frontier. A natural consequence of t these countries . . . into tl nations belong, as respects German nationality." All the "mighty body" which Germ Germanica on the continent.

Adam Smith had supp urged the lowering of tariff:

Völkern 1909-1913
Hitler: Ich bin der Weltgeist
der Welt-Geist

1944 1901
THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

like Hitler, survive when others have perished. Moreover, he was denied several of the usual ways that man has sought to achieve victory over the grave. His religious faith was not the kind that vouchsafed salvation in a Christian heaven; he could not live on in posterity through his children. He sought other solutions to his problem: he would erect imperishable buildings and monuments; he would perform military feats that would win him eternal fame as "the greatest field commander of all time." When that was denied him, in the end he may have hoped to achieve historical immortality through truly monumental destruction.

The feeling of special mission which, we are suggesting, resulted in part from his survival fantasies was also strengthened in childhood by the defense mechanism of omnipotence. This defense is often used by both monarchids and borderline personalities to counteract feelings of insecurity and inferiority. The imperiousness and insistence on having his own way which Adolf began to manifest in early childhood were evidences of the strong unconscious conviction such personalities often harbor: that it is their right as special and privileged individuals to expect gratification and homage from others.

Clinical studies of disturbed children who have survived the death of a sibling rival show another symptom which we have found in Hitler: his resistance to growing old, his difficulty in maturing. Child psychologists have found that sibling survivors may be so terrified by the thought of death that they seek to escape by remaining childlike and refusing to mature. The result may be a kind of "defensive regression" into infantilism. When the mother (like Klara Hitler) is excessively protective toward "the only little boy I have left," the death phobia and the desire to remain childlike are both intensified. Many survivors also try to surmount their fear of dying by insisting (as did Hitler) that they live a charmed life, that others can't kill them, that they alone would survive dangers fatal to other people.¹¹⁵

Hitler's lifelong fear of death had larger historical consequence. As his future career would show so clearly, he tried to exorcise personal death fears by killing others. The more power he had in deciding that other people must die—the more he commanded death—the less he felt its horror for himself. Apart from the calculated murder of millions of "inferior" people, we should note the way he received news late in the war that his personal SS division, the elite *Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler*, was being decimated on the Eastern Front. When a staff officer reported that the number of deaths in Hitler's personal division was very great, he was startled by his Führer's exultant reply, "Losses can never be too high!"¹¹⁶

1944 1900-01
We have been suggesting that the period 1900-1901, when young Adolf was in his 12th year, was unusually important to his personal development. The boy who had been the star pupil of village schools began

Death of his brother Edmund

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"I shall be the reigning monarch of this century"

The Child As Father to the Man

to fail; the outwardly cocky, hood games became the more cent who talked to trees on 1 with his parents, caricatured h only guess at the reasons for quite sure that they were not t that the traumatic experience: During Adolf's earliest years, a and fear had sent down deep during this bitter year by mor and tragic funeral of his broth his own survival; a reinforcen mother; the transition from t urban *Realschule*. And all the age when disturbed mor period of development. It was father, things began to look up

"NEGATIVE IDENTITY":

Hitler remembered the years j his mother lived in a comforta happiest time of his life. The whistle for him like a dog, den questions about schoolwork an His doting mother drew on her the sale of her house in Leondi in a life of leisure as critic a capital, he joined the local m performance of the Linz ope shirts, flowing cravats with sti a confident angle, and well-cu young men of the town. In win For the opera, he affected bla stick, and a top hat.¹¹⁷

Thus did Adolf assume v identity"—that is, he took on a he knew his father would ha showed active contempt for t playing, as Erikson has showi father but also a kind of per fantasize one's self by assumin painfully for genuine self-defin

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to the treatment of her enemies
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on the track of the wolf!

The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History

Vienne

Strike him dead! At the last judgment you will not be
asked for explanations.²⁵

Kleist's call for revenge against the West was heard not only during the Napoleonic wars but again after the defeat of Germany in 1918. One of the striking facts about the intellectual history of the Weimar Republic was the revival of Kleist's popularity. During this period, "Kleist scholarship became a passion, the cult a crusade." 26 Kleist and Arndt both said a great deal more than has been quoted here. But these things they did say—and they were long remembered.

Not all German Romantics delighted in conquest and carnage. One of them, Heinrich Heine (1797–1856), after listening to some of Kleist's and Arndt's "beautiful political poetry," gave a warning and penned a prophecy in 1834 which was to be fulfilled almost exactly a century later: "These doctrines have developed revolutionary forces which only await the day to break forth and fill the world with terror and astonishment." The Christian cross had for centuries kept "that brutal German joy in battle" tamed. But, Heine concluded,

Should the subduing talisman, the Cross, break, then will come roaring forth the wild madness of the old champions, the insane Berserker rage of which the Northern poets sing. That talisman is brittle, and the day will come when it pitifully break. The old stone Gods will rise from the long-forgotten ruin and rub the dust of a thousand years from their eyes; and Thor, leaping to life with his giant hammer, will crush the gothic cathedrals! 27

Few Germans at the time listened to Heine. He was too much the humanitarian cosmopolite, too much at home in Paris. And he was a Jew.

A Romantic who had more influence on later generations than on his own was the nationalist philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814). He is best remembered by generations of German patriots for his stirring Addresses to the German Nation (1807–1808), which proclaimed the German people to be unique, the primal people (*Urvolk*), and endorsed racial nationalism:

To have character and to be German [*Charakter haben und deutsch sein*] undoubtedly mean the same. . . . All comparisons between the German and the non-German are null and void. . . . We are the chosen people. Chosen by God . . . with a moral right to fulfill our destiny by every means of cunning and force.

Fichte made contributions not only to the cult of the Volk and Teutonic messianism but also to the idea of national socialism. In his influential book *Der geschlossene Handelsstaat* (The Closed Commercial State), published in 1800, he attacked the Western liberal economics of

his day and demanded that Germany create a completely self-sufficient, state-regulated economy and expand to provide "living space" for the Volk.²⁸

Among the most influential of all Romantics were the collectors of fairy stories, the famous Brothers Grimm, Jakob (1785-1863) and Wilhelm (1786-1859). Both were distinguished scholars and philologists. Their popular fame, however, rests on the results of their typically Romantic impulse to rediscover the distant past by gathering ancient stories and legends of the German people. Their edition of these Volk-stories had an enormous impact. By 1815 it had sold more copies than any other book with the single exception of the Lutheran Bible. For a 150 years and more, German children were lulled to sleep as the lessons of these stories sank deep into their little heads. Modern child psychologists have learned that Schiller was quite right: "Deeper meaning lies in the fairy tale of my childhood than in the truth that is taught by life."²⁹

* The first lesson of the Grimm tales is that little children must respect authority and be very obedient. Such is the message of a frightening story entitled "The Girl Without Hands." In it, the devil orders a father to cut off the hands of his little daughter. The father asks the little girl if she understands his predicament: he certainly doesn't want to cut off her hands, but he has been given orders by authority. The daughter responds dutifully: "Father Dear, do with me what you will, for I am your child." Thereupon she lays down both her hands, and her father hacks them off at the wrists.

Obedience and discipline are also driven home in one of the shortest and most memorable of these bedtime stories, "The Willful Child":

Once upon a time there was a child who was willful, and would not do what her mother wished. For this reason God had no pleasure in her, and let her become ill, and no doctor could do her any good, and in a short time she lay on her death-bed. When she had been lowered into her grave, and the earth was spread over her, all at once her arm came out again, and stretched upwards, and when they had put it in and spread fresh earth over it, it was all to no purpose, for the arm always came out again. Then the mother herself was obliged to go to the grave, and strike the arm with a rod, and when she had done that, it was drawn in, and then at last the child had rest beneath the ground.³⁰

To be sure, there are some sweet and charming little stories, but the number of tales involving bizarre physical and psychic cruelty is appalling. Let us consider the following scenes taken from a dozen or so of the stories, and note particularly the visual imagery they evoke in a child's mind: a queen boils and eats her own children; a young man is required to sleep with a corpse to keep it warm; a king's

daughter is wicked step into a barr eyes are cut into a vat fil up, put into father; a su an old wom upon drops In the origi sisters cut c the slipper, awaited Har eaten.³¹

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DOLF HITLER

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The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History

daughter is torn apart by bears and her mother is roasted alive; a wicked stepmother (Grimm's stepmothers are always wicked) is put into a barrel filled with venomous snakes; a little girl's tongue and eyes are cut out; a pretty young girl is hacked to pieces and thrown into a vat filled with putrefying human remains; a little boy is chopped up, put into a pan, and made into a pudding which is eaten by his father; a stepmother plans to eat the lungs and liver of her children; an old woman cuts off the head of her beautiful stepdaughter, whereupon drops of blood from the girl's head carry on a conversation. In the original version of "Cinderella," not used by Walt Disney, her sisters cut off their toes and heels in an unsuccessful effort to wear the slipper, and their eyes are pecked out by a pigeon. The fate that awaited Hansel and Gretel, it will be recalled, was to be roasted and eaten.³¹

Little Germans of many generations also learned from these stories to admire racial purity and to distrust Jews. The attitude toward outsiders—such as stepmothers—is usually one of suspicion and animosity. But hatred for the Jew as an outsider is so general and so intense that the Grimms assumed it to be a "natural sentiment." In their stories, the heroes are usually peasants or knights and noblemen. The middle-class merchants tend to have a bad time, but this is particularly true of the Jew. He is a foreigner, a product of non-Teutonic culture; he dresses badly, his teeth are yellow, his smile sinister. He is a miser who delights in fleecing the good, naïve peasants; he is a coward who whines when punished. Given the content and the lessons of these bedtime stories, it is not surprising that Hitler chose a special edition as prizes for the younger children of the *Hitler Jugend*.

Another of the well-remembered Romantics of the period was the founder of German gymnastic societies and organizer of a *Freikorps* of 1813, Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, affectionately called "Turnvater Jahn" (1778-1852). One of the first "*völkisch* Nationalists," he preached the concept of *Volkstum*—the mysterious racial force that shapes all history—and in 1813 he called for a national leader, "a great Führer, cast of Iron and Fire . . . The Volk will honor him as savior and forgive all his sins."³²

Of course, it must not be thought that Romanticism was the only current running in the turbulent stream of German life and letters during the Napoleonic era. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), one of the world's most creative philosophers, was widely read at this time; Goethe (1749-1832) and Schiller (1759-1805) were gracing world letters with magnificent expressions of the human spirit; Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and his fellow Pietists were preaching the sanctity of the individual personality; and Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835) was calling for civil rights and constitutions. But none of these writers had the impact of these political Romantics. None contributed so much to the historic forces that pushed Germany away from its own humanist tradition toward militant, racist nationalism, and toward an

exaltation of power and aggression that was not uncongenial to the political and social program set forth by Adolf Hitler.

1848: The Failure of a Democratic Alternative

The German generation that came of age in 1848 rode forth on a romantic quest to rescue liberty. They turned back to marry power.

—Geoffrey Bruun

The failure of Germany to develop a democratic alternative to dictatorship was one of the key reasons for Hitler's rise to power. No single event in German history was more important to the fortunes of parliamentary government than the Revolution of 1848. As two memorable clichés have put it, that was the "Year of Decision" and "the turning point in German history, where history refused to turn."

After the defeat of Napoleon, an age of restoration and reaction set in, as the princes of the Germanies cooperated with Count Metternich (1773–1859) in reestablishing old governments and crushing nationalist movements. Metternich's system required the support of the Prussian power structure. This he received in full measure, for the Prussian aristocracy, army, bureaucracy, and warlord king were all as anxious as Metternich to preserve Prussian absolutism. They were particularists to the core and wanted no nonsense about civil liberties, parliaments, or national unification. Treitschke could weave his glowing myths about Prussian support of German nationalism, but in fact the people who counted in Prussia ridiculed the idea. They imprisoned or hounded the Prussian reformers into exile, along with the poets of *Gefühlspolitik* and nationalism.

With Prussian help, Metternich's system was effective in the Germanies until the fateful year 1848, when Europe was swept by revolution. In France the "Banquet Campaign" of February and the aftermath of street massacres drove King Louis Philippe and his chief minister, the well-hated historian François Guizot, into exile. The contagion spread—for "when France sneezes all Europe catches cold"—to Hungary, Spain, Italy, and the Germanies. Even in Prussia and Austria the old order suddenly seemed to be tottering. Among liberals everywhere, hope quickened that a brave new world would arise from the aristocratic ruins of the *ancien régime*. Many German patriots saw a splendid opportunity to unify the Fatherland as one great national state dedicated to liberty and established on the foundations of a democratic constitution.

The expectations, sincerity, and naïveté of a generation were expressed by the youthful Carl Schurz (1829–1906), whose own life is a poignant commentary on the course of the revolution. Like dozens of students of his day, as an undergraduate at the University of Bonn he took up the cause of revolution. After its failure he was driven into exile by Prussian authorities. He returned in 1850 to rescue his old

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teacher, who had been imprisoned in 1852, he and his wife—along with German liberals—immigrated to find opportunity, denied him talents to the service of democracy in this country's most honored and

But in 1848 he was a German fever of revolution and filled wit

The word democracy was a friends, I was dominated by unity had arrived for giving which was their birthright: and greatness, and that it was to do and to sacrifice every profoundly, solemnly, in ear

Such was the spirit of 1848—a very forgiveable exaggeration, considered year in the history of Germany.³⁴

It was certainly both an improvement and to date, the last—time all the Germanies met in an effective democratic basis. That these liberal greatest tragedies in German history was left to others who despised the

Reasons for their failure in scholarly monographs. More important than the causes was the akin to a feeling of group inferiority had tried and they had failed. They were incapable of political leadership politics by discussion and parliament the German problem. Thus, after "on the romantic quest to rescue power."³⁵

Julius Froebel, a disappointed when he wrote after the failure of

The German nation is sick and it wants is power, power, power to him will it give honor, more

The epitaph for mid-19th-century provided by F. T. Fischer, another liberal of his colleagues at Frankfurt and not come together. Unity must come

IC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

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—Geoffrey Bruun

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The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History

teacher, who had been imprisoned by the Prussians. Again exiled in 1852, he and his wife—along with thousands of other disappointed German liberals—immigrated to the United States. In America he found opportunity, denied him in his native land, to contribute his talents to the service of democratic political ideals. He became one of this country's most honored and productive citizens.

But in 1848 he was a German undergraduate caught up in the fever of revolution and filled with high expectations for his Fatherland:

The word democracy was on all tongues. . . . Like many of my friends, I was dominated by the feeling that at last the great opportunity had arrived for giving to the German people the liberty which was their birthright and to the German fatherland its unity and greatness, and that it was now the first duty of every German to do and to sacrifice everything for this sacred object. We were profoundly, solemnly, in earnest. . . .³³

Such was the spirit of 1848—a year its leading German historian, with forgiveable exaggeration, considered to be the most important single year in the history of Germany.³⁴

It was certainly both an important and a symbolic year. For the first—and to date, the last—time in German history, delegates from all the Germanies met in an effort to establish unity for Germany on a democratic basis. That these liberal patriots failed in 1848 is one of the greatest tragedies in German history, for their task of nation-building was left to others who despised their humane idealism.

Reasons for their failure have formed the subject of a dozen scholarly monographs. More important, however, for the future of Germany than the causes was the bare fact of failure itself. Something akin to a feeling of group inferiority beset the German liberals. They had tried and they had failed. The middle class, they concluded, was incapable of political leadership. Nothing could be accomplished in politics by discussion and parliaments; only military force could solve the German problem. Thus, after riding forth gaily and expectantly "on the romantic quest to rescue liberty, they turned back to marry power."³⁵

Julius Froebel, a disappointed liberal, caught the mood perfectly when he wrote after the failure of 1848:

The German nation is sick of principles and doctrines. . . . What it wants is power, power, power! And whoever gives it power, to him will it give honor, more honor than he can ever imagine.³⁶

The epitaph for mid-19th-century German democracy was provided by F. T. Fischer, another liberal who looked back at the failures of his colleagues at Frankfurt and concluded: "Freedom and unity cannot come together. Unity must come first and can only be achieved

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

by a tyrant. . . . Freedom can come later, after unity has been imposed on us by Prussia."³⁷

This was the tragedy of 1848: the conviction that tyranny would bring unity and freedom to the German people.

THE SECOND REICH, 1871-1918

Bismarck

Come, Savior, if already born
Step forth, we'll follow in thy tread!
Thou, last of all dictators,
Come, bring the last dictatorship! *

—J. G. Fischer, 1848

In founding the Second Reich of the German nation, Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898) fulfilled the fondest dream of disillusioned democrats of 1848. Summoned to Berlin in the fall of 1862 by the Prussian king to put down parliamentary pretensions, he quickly set forth his program in a self-fulfilling prophecy: German unity, he predicted, would not come through parliament but through power, through iron and blood. He was not "the last dictator," but he reinforced a tradition and left an inheritance which were immensely helpful to the dictator who would one day be hailed as savior and worshipped as a god.

In popular portraiture, Bismarck appears as the massive paragon of political ability, the cold master of *Realpolitik*. Indeed, the very word is identified with Bismarck, and no one described the concept better than he. It is entirely appropriate that Bismarck should be quoted on Bismarck by an admirer and latter day *Realpolitiker*, Henry Kissinger:

For heaven's sake, no sentimental alliances. . . . Gratitude and confidence will not bring a single man into the feud on our side; only fear will do that, if we use it cautiously and skillfully. . . . Politics is the art of the possible, the science of the relative.³⁸

Hitler liked to imagine that he and Bismarck were very much alike. He noted that they both had delicate, artistic hands and pale blue eyes, and that their cranial measurements were very similar. By any test of intellect, culture, and statecraft, a vast gulf separates the creator of Germany from its destroyer. And yet the personalities of the two men do show surprising parallels. For Bismarck was far

* The German verse reads:

Komm, Einziger, wenn du schon geboren
Tritt auf, wir folgen deiner Spur!
Du letzter aller Diktatoren
Komm mit der letzten Diktatur.

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— J. G. Fischer, 1848

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Hitler's heritability come when he is uncertain of the boundary. (1938)
The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History

from the emotionally stable person his traditional image suggests. He too was a man in deep conflict with himself.

The "Iron Chancellor" was, as he himself confessed, "all nerves," a whining hypochondriac who often sobbed uncontrollably. The soul of grace and thoughtfulness one moment, he was viciously vengeful the next. He despised intellectuals and used the word "professor" like an epithet, yet he could have given university lectures on Goethe or Shakespeare and he wrote in six languages. He indulged himself, drinking gallons of "Black Velvet," a mixture of Guinness and champagne; he also denied himself, living for a year on a diet of raw herring. The man who boasted of his *Herrschaft* (commanding presence) could not sleep at night until he was tucked in by his favorite doctor, who held his hand "like a mother with a restless child." Comforting the Iron Chancellor and putting him to bed became a nightly routine.³⁹

Adolf Hitler may or may not have recognized in Bismarck a kindred psychological spirit; he was certainly impressed with the Iron Chancellor's political performance and spoke admiringly of his "brutal will," noting that he was "absolutely right" in ordering the slaughter of French civilians during the siege of Paris in 1870 and in requiring the death penalty for a wide range of crimes. The Führer could not help feeling, however, that he was superior to his predecessor in many ways. Bismarck, he said, was incapable of understanding the Catholic Church; he had been much too lenient with Austria; he was ineffective in handling socialism; he lacked "a really spiritual foundation." Above all, "Bismarck did not recognize the impending danger" of economic materialism, "the worship of Mammon," and the evil machinations of Jewish bankers.⁴⁰

But all in all, Hitler was generous and concluded that as statesmen the two had a great deal in common. In this the Führer was mistaken. Of the many differences between them, two are particularly striking. Unlike Hitler, Bismarck had the capacity for growth, for change and maturation. He also knew how to set limits, to recognize that politics was indeed "the art of the possible." One of his favorite quotations from Goethe was one that Hitler could never understand, let alone practice: "Genius is the art of limitation." (In der Begrenzung zeigt sich der Meister).

Bismarck demonstrated the art in foreign policy. Having attained his goal of creating a strong Germany through war, he announced that "we are satiated" and used all his enormous diplomatic skill to preserve his empire by keeping the peace. Thus he created his intricate system of alliances, which he liked to refer to as "My League for Peace" (*Mein Friedensbund*). Unlike Hitler, and like a good poker player, Bismarck knew when to quit.

Bismarck's domestic policy also shows the touch of the master. It is best seen in the way he handled four groups who sought to dispute

* His list of real and imaginary ills included gout, migraine headaches, insomnia, gallstones, neuralgia, diarrhea, constipation, and, worst of all, "bad nerves."

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Hitler's political leader

1939

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

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his power: liberals, Catholics, Social Democrats, and conservatives. By the adroit balancing of one group against another and by satisfying the basic needs of each, he converted opponents into supporters of his empire and its system of authoritarian paternalism. The opposition of the liberal middle class was swept away by an exultant tide of patriotism hailing Bismarck's military victories and the proclamation of a united Fatherland. Bismarck also was given credit for economic reforms, stable currency, and concessions to industry, which was making Imperial Germany incomparably the strongest economic power on the continent. As for the Catholics, after an ill-advised conflict with their Church and with the Catholic Center party, Bismarck—unlike Hitler—recognized his mistake, retreated adroitly, and gained Catholic support for his domestic and foreign policy. Future history would show a continuation of the Catholic Center's preference for authoritarian government to democracy. In a crucial vote in 1933 over whether the new chancellor, Adolf Hitler, should be given dictatorial powers, the Center cast the decisive vote for the "Enabling Act" which provided the legal basis for Hitler's dictatorship. Thus, in the Third Reich, as in the Second, the Catholic Center was not conspicuous for its defense of democracy.

Other opponents won over to Bismarck's Reich were the Marxian Social Democrats. Bismarck's method with them was similar to the technique he had used so successfully with the liberals. He gave them what they wanted; he killed them with kindness. He pushed through parliament the most sweeping social legislation in the contemporary world. This vaunted conservative became a pioneer of state socialism and thus sustained the paternalistic tradition of the authoritarian state (*Obrigkeitsstaat*), which would be extended in the National Socialism of the Third Reich. It is true that the Marxists continued to grow in numbers throughout the empire. But they were no longer a revolutionary party. Their words were the words of Marx, but their deeds were the actions of patriots.

In consolidating his Reich, Bismarck also confronted opposition from conservative Prussian particularists. He reassured them by promising that Prussian interests and attitudes would continue to dominate the power structure of the state—army, bureaucracy, industry, agriculture, banking, and the educational system. He kept his promise. The result was a conversion as remarkable as that of Marxian labor, Catholic Center, and the liberal middle class. Prussian conservatives for the first time became supporters of the idea of empire. National patriotism had become respectable. Indeed, it was now endorsed by so many diverse and influential groups that it was soon to become lethal.

Bismarck's legacy to the German people can be assessed in many different ways. It is certainly true that under the benevolent system of government he established, millions of people lived out their lives in

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ADOLF HITLER

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The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History

relative comfort, security, and freedom from want, that German industry reached remarkable heights, that arts, letters, and science flourished in a world at peace. These were indeed, as the emperor proclaimed, magnificent times (*herrliche Zeiten*). Most Germans agreed with the author of a widely read book, entitled *Government and the Will of the People*, that their country had the best form of government ever devised by modern man.⁴¹

Yet it is also fair to say that this paternalism had a price. The political cost to the German people was well expressed by two of Germany's most perceptive observers. The historian Theodor Mommsen said that Bismarck had "broken the political backbone of the nation." The sociologist Max Weber agreed. Bismarck, he concluded, had left behind a nation without the rudiments of political education: "He taught us to distrust our own political intelligence."⁴² Bismarck would have smiled knowingly and agreed with both criticisms. He wanted it just that way. Subjects should learn that the arts and wiles of government were so intricate that only a few great leaders could master them and run the affairs of state. He was directly in the tradition of Frederick the Great: "The ruler rules, the subject obeys." It was an aphorism that admirably suited Hitler's *Führerprinzip*.

The "German Condition": Formative Influences

Hitler and National Socialism were in a long-standing tradition. . . . They were not unfortunate accidents, not incomprehensible derailments in the path of German history; they were, as Konrad Heiden said, a "German condition."

—Karl Dietrich Bracher

At the height of the Second Reich, during the decades from 1890 to 1910, a generation was born and raised that was to play a decisive role in bringing Adolf Hitler to power. The formative influences on their lives invite our attention.

This generation was affected by what has been broadly called the "German condition"—a tradition hostile to democratic government and congenial to the acceptance of National Socialism. Specifically, it included glorification of the authoritarian state and denigration of democracy; belief that the Jewish people were a clear and present threat to Kultur; endorsement of racial nationalism and aggressive expansion in the name of a Germanic mission; insistence that the claims of the *Gemeinschaft* take precedence over the rights of the individual; and exaltation of military power. This "condition" had long been present in German history, but it became acute during the years that shaped the lives of young Adolf Hitler and his generation.

Of particular importance to the German political tradition was an attitude of mind which extolled the power of the state and derided parliamentary government. This attitude fostered what Fritz Stern has

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THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

called "illiberalism" and "formed it into a habitual response" to all political and social problems. Glorification of the state was encouraged by the historic achievements, vividly memorialized in popular history, of such authoritarian political rulers as Frederick the Great and Bismarck. Political theory also helped in the sanctification.⁴³

The German theory of the state differed strikingly in two respects from that of other Western nations. A persistent characteristic of Western thought, particularly in England and America, has been an emphasis on moderation, a distrust of political extremes: From the great theorists of the Middle Ages through Halifax in the 17th century, Locke and Jefferson in the 18th, and the political practitioners of the 19th and 20th centuries—whatever their political party—English and American political leaders have accepted parliamentary government and publicly endorsed political moderation. In Germany, by contrast, influential political thought has run to extremes—from the exaltation and near deification of the state found in Hegel to the revolutionary theory of Marx and Engels, who wanted to destroy all traditional forms of political organization.

Germans also held a dramatically different conception of the nature and purpose of the state. To such leading political theorists as John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Thomas Jefferson, the state was created by man to serve his needs. If a particular creation failed to live up to contractual expectations, citizens had the right to abolish that state and create another. Man, not the state, was the master. The idea is made clear in these familiar and beautiful words:

To secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among men . . . that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government . . . on such Principles . . . as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

Throughout the 19th century, German theorists rejected democratic ideas so commonplace and essential to the Western tradition. To them, the state was so sacred, so miraculous that it could not have been the work of mere man; it must have been created by the unfathomable forces of nature or by an inscrutable Providence. Thus Adam Müller, the political philosopher of the Romantics, proclaimed—in striking contrast to the thought of Locke and Jefferson—that "the State was not established for the benefit of the individual" but for its own mysterious purposes.⁴⁴

GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH HEGEL

Germany's most influential 19th-century political theorist was Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). He wrote and lectured early in the century, but his influence reached its climax during the Second Reich, when his philosophy of the state became virtually the

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The Past As Prologue: Hitler

official faith of all German key positions in every philosophy, aesthetics, history, occupied chairs of philosophy of Prussia.⁴⁵

Hegel's writings are all but the initiate. About the state must be reverent human creation—it is a of God through history" a special formulation—the synthesis which evolves state synthesizes individual it combines both moral and In fact, according to Hegel state, and only in the state is the true embodiment of the individual share in truth.

The state is not a mystery, it has its own motto, it is very difficult to mystification:

The State is the reality revealed will appear knows itself and acts as it knows it.

As Ralf Dahrendorf what is being said here? tell, for the state is criticism. And from that reached by latter-day Hegel.

Hegel's emphasis on the political Romantics. meaning and no political into "the community of truth."

The flavor of Hegel are best conveyed in his classic

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official faith of all German political theorists. Hegelianism conquered key positions in every field of thought: political theory, ethics, philosophy, aesthetics, historiography. For decades none but Hegel's disciples occupied chairs of philosophy and political economy in all the universities of Prussia.⁴⁵

Hegel's writings are difficult, abstruse, often incomprehensible to all but the initiate. About one thing, however, he is very clear indeed: the state must be revered above all institutions. For it is no mere human creation—it is an act of God. Indeed, it is "the movement of God through history" and the "institutionalization of God." In Hegel's special formulation—the Hegelian dialectic—the state is the higher *synthesis* which evolves from the clash of *thesis* and *antithesis*. The state synthesizes individual will and collective will, power and justice; it combines both moral right and physical force, freedom and authority. In fact, according to Hegel, freedom can fully exist only in a national state, and only in the state can moral purpose be fulfilled: "The State is the true embodiment of mind and spirit. And only in it . . . [does] the individual share in truth, real existence and ethical status."

The state is not a means to an end, as in Locke and Jefferson; rather, it has its own moral end. But what the true nature of this purpose is very difficult to get from Hegel, for his mysticism leads to mystification:

The State is the reality of the moral idea—the moral spirit as the revealed will apparent to itself, substantial, which thinks and knows itself and accomplishes that which it knows and insofar as it knows it.

As Ralf Dahrendorf well asked, what is really meant by all this, what is being said here? Who and what is the state? It is difficult to tell, for the state is beyond comprehension, hence beyond rational criticism. And from that point it is not a long step to the conclusion reached by latter-day Hegelians that "the State can do no wrong."¹¹

Hegel's emphasis on the *Gemeinschaft* shows his indebtedness to the political Romantics. Apart from the state, people have no moral meaning and no political form. They are a shapeless mass until welded into "the community of the state."

The flavor of Hegel and the intensity of his adoration of the state are best conveyed in his own words:

The State is divine will . . . the State therefore knows what it wants, knows it in its generality as thought, and it acts therefore according to purpose. . . .

One should therefore revere the State as something divine upon earth [*irdischgöttliches*] and realize that if it is hard to understand nature, it is immeasurably more difficult to grasp the State.

Hegel is saying:
 * The State is not the child of the Church, but the Guardian of the Church, its more powerful sibling.

Again and again, Hegel insists that the state is not comprehensible, that the people should not try to understand it, they should simply obey its dictates:

The people . . . are that part of the State *which does not know what it wants*. For to know that is the fruit of deep knowledge and insight which is not the people's affair. . . .

Sacrificing oneself for the individuality of the State is . . . a *general duty*.⁴⁷

Even more important to Hegel than the State was the *Volk*. For it was the *Volk* which was the primary agent of his historical dialectic or the means by which the freedom of the individual was reconciled with the authority of the State.

Hegel had no confidence in parliaments, "the incompetent and ignorant." He placed his trust in great men. His message about them would be repeated often in the ensuing years, until it reached its final bastardized and disastrous culmination in the *Führerprinzip*. "In public opinion all falsehood and all truth is contained, but to find the truth is the task of the Great Man. He who says and accomplishes what his time wants and desires is the Great Man of that time. He does what is the inner essence of his time, he realizes it, and yet he who does, not know how to despise public opinion . . . will never accomplish anything great."⁴⁸

Like every other responsible German philosopher, Hegel would have been appalled by Hitler's brutal dictatorship. But his endorsement of the concept of a "World Historic Leader," the "World Spirit Incarnate," and the "World's Soul" (as he called Napoleon) helped create a tradition of political hero worship in Germany that was not uncongenial to Hitler's concept of the *Führer*.

One of the most influential popularizers of Hegel's thought was the historian Heinrich Treitschke, who also provided "the ideological underpinnings of Bismarck's *Realpolitik*." Over and over again, in his immensely popular lectures at the University of Berlin, Treitschke roared in his deafness to wildly cheering students:

Power, within and without, is the very essence of the State. . . .

Since the State is power, it can obviously draw all human actions within its scope. . . . The State can overshadow practically the whole of a people's life . . . no limit can be set to the functions of the State.⁴⁹

Treitschke turned his back on his earlier liberalism to hail the triumphant march of Bismarck's *Machtpolitik*. "Liberalism," he decided, "is merely the embodiment of social selfishness"; he now put his faith in "the mystery of the Great Man." After arguing that the

Hitler: Ich bin der Weltgeist
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state should not ask for State primacy: is the accession of Adolf obedience.

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blinded and muted, this—how does his form read?—"... private first class, disabled in enemy gas attack. 'Yellow cross gas' poisoning..." She knows no more about him. Yet she sees the ineffable suffering of this semicorpse whose facial expressions and whose gestures into the distance indicate more and more distinctly from day to day that he knows that something frightful has broken upon Germany! None of the degrading news from Kiel, Munich, and now from red Berlin has penetrated this solitary ward. And yet—the sister reads it from the martyred countenance: "Not my own suffering, the catastrophe that felled me, not that I am never again to behold the sun or starry heavens or—my homeland, but what is happening out there that I hear, feel—see! That is insufferable torment! My Germany!"

The nurse holds the twitching, feverish soldier of the betrayed army in her arms. And a higher constraint brings good words to her lips, words of faith in Germany's resurrection. And a miracle comes to pass. He who was consecrated to eternal night, who had suffered through his Golgotha in this hour, spiritual and bodily crucifixion, pitiless death as on the cross, with senses keen, one of the lowliest out of the mighty host of broken heroes—he becomes seeing! The spasms of his features subside. And in an ecstasy peculiar to the dying seer, new light fills his dead eyes, new radiance, new life!

A disarmed warrior was brought, mute and blinded, to the infirmary in the Pomeranian village. An upstanding fighter strides out into the alienized German world. He is armed to the teeth with faith, will, and confidence in victory! Invincible weapons!"

In a biography of 1935 Rudolf Olden cited the interrogations of Hitler preliminary to the Putsch trial, which are no longer on record, in recounting that in Pasewalk

Hitler certainly seems to have been nervously deranged, disturbed... He heard "voices," and the voices called upon him to become Germany's deliverer."

At the Putsch trial itself, however, Hitler related only that in the night following the revolution in Berlin

my decision emerged. The great vacillation of my life, whether I should enter politics or remain [sic!] an architect, came to an end. That night I resolved that, if I recovered my eyesight, I would enter politics.¹⁰

This time he had censored the miracle for good. But he had not forgotten it, as can be seen from his shouting at Richard Breiting in 1931:

Do you know I was once blind? When the Reds were devastating Germany in November 1918 I lay blind in the infirmary. I became seeing then. I go my way to the end."¹¹

Klara Hitler's Death

The basic document for Klara Hitler's medical treatment (1907) is the record kept by Dr. Eduard Bloch (see illustration, p. 116). Her first

* A major visit by P. to an order from P.G. — "He is to be well up. He will certainly find no reason not to

D.T. "I was that nurse on that occasion."

Believe that it is God, God alone, who is visiting him."

Includes from J.E. on the cross

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THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

in the 1890s. Hitler was probably correct in saying in 1933 that he could not have come to power without the help of the army and its traditions.

The glories of the Prussian Army and its heroes from Frederick the Great to Blücher, Scharnhorst, and Moltke had long been celebrated in Germany. But the ubiquitous power which the army exerted over German society became particularly evident after 1871, with the triumphant military victories that established the Second Reich.

Exaltation of military values was greatly aided by the country's most popular historian, Heinrich von Treitschke, who lectured a generation on the "Godlike majesty of war, the duty of absolute obedience, and the notion that the German Officer Corps was 'a careful selection of the most exalted human beings on earth.' Emperor William II, who boasted that he had never read the constitution of Germany, also lent the prestige of his position to acclaiming the army and denigrating parliament: 'The soldier and the Army, not parliamentary resolutions, have welded together the German Empire. My trust is in the Army.' William had the habit of using one particular phrase in referring to nonmilitary people: they were 'slovenly civilians' (*schlappe Zivilisten*). Any officer of the guard, he believed, was 'the quintessence of all virtue, education and intellectual attainment.'"¹⁰⁸

The German Officer Corps made special and successful efforts to emphasize its exalted position in society. Crucial to the distinction between German officers and "mere civilians" was the Code of Honor, which was preserved very largely through the dueling system and the privilege it gave of "giving satisfaction" (*Satisfaktionsfähigkeit*). It was felt that an officer who had that honor must defend it; conversely, a man without honor had nothing to defend. This meant, for example, that an officer could insult a workman with impunity, for the workman was not *Satisfaktionsfähig*. As the century wore on, although protests were made against the folly and cruelty of dueling, it persisted in the army and in university fraternities. Dueling scars—genuine and self-administered—continued to be a mark of honor well after World War I.

As a result of the training and the pronouncements of those in authority, officers in the Imperial Army were encouraged to believe that they were above the civilian government. The oath they swore was not to the country or the constitution but to their Supreme Warlord. The army, it was said, was a "state within a state"; but it was more than that. Its position was perhaps most clearly expressed by the imperial general who was to serve as a transitional commander between the Second and Third Reichs. General Hans von Seeckt concluded in his book *Gedanken eines Soldaten* (Thoughts of a Soldier):

I have tried to treat my theme from a purely political point of view. In the sense in which I understand the word, the Army must be "political," that is, it should grasp the concept of the State. But it certainly must not be "political" in the usual sense of party

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Hitler in a rage. That Treitschke dared to write how our German Officer Corps are the

1938

Around the time he takes command after Blomberg's disaster.

1909

The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History

politics. "Hands off the Army!" is my cry to all parties. The Army serves the State and only the State because the Army is the State.*

The disdain for parliaments felt by members of the army command was pungently expressed in parliament itself by the old Herr von Oldenburg auf Januschau, who told his fellow members of the Reichstag: "The King of Prussia and the German Emperor must always be in the position to say to any lieutenant; 'Take ten men and shoot the Reichstag.'" His fellow Conservatives greeted the speech with a standing ovation.¹⁰⁹

Military values and modes of conduct were disseminated throughout Imperial German society in a number of ways. The army saw to it, for example, that veterans received preferred positions in the civil service. In 1897, half the jobs open in the Department of Justice went to army veterans, and the Foreign Office was particularly prone to recruit young officers of promise. Soldierly values and experiences were also preserved through dozens of veterans' associations. The *Kyffhäuser Bund* alone by 1910 had a membership of well over 2,500,000. One of its stated objectives was to combat democracy.

The army saw to it that German children learned military values. In ways that paralleled Hitler's later youth organizations, children of the empire were indoctrinated in a dozen militarized youth groups. "In one way or another," a military historian has concluded, "nearly five million Germans were either directly or indirectly connected with the Army."¹¹⁰

And beyond sheer numbers, the army exerted its influence by setting a military tone in society. Military standards were reflected in institutions that would seem least likely to cultivate soldierly values: the university and the parlors of Imperial Germany. In German fraternities from Berlin to Munich the point of emulation, the ideal to copy, was a military man, a Prussian officer. The criterion of selection for university fraternities was a military criterion: ability to fight a duel. Duels were called *Mensuren*; that is to say, the true measure of a man was his capacity to give "satisfaction" with a saber. Those who were not *Satisfaktionsfähig* were called "finks" (*Finkenschaft*) and treated with contempt.

The military standards and values were carried over into civilian life in the machinery of imperial social etiquette, hierarchy, rank, and status. Militarism entered the parlor, where the woman whose husband held the highest rank commanded that seat of honor, the sofa, and those of lower status were assigned to lesser pieces of furniture. A German social historian has concluded, "This idea of military machine permeated the whole social life . . . militarism has rightly been called

* It is not surprising that in an edition of Seeckt's book, published after Hitler came to power, the sentence "'Hände weg vom Heer! ich rufe allen Parteien zu" was deleted. Compare 1st ed. (Berlin, 1921) with rev. ed. (Leipzig, 1935), 116.

"most exalted human beings on earth." Exalted Thug and schneidherlen, but heads. He was

as mad as a hatter - Treitschke as if the German Officer Corps were a central figure in the room with them instead of writing these words almost a century ago.

1904, 1923

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

example, had announced that Germany should annex Austria and colonize all of Central Europe, arguing that "Magyars, Czechs and similar nationalities . . . are a burden on history," and that Polish Jews need to be "rooted out."⁹⁴ Germany's most distinguished sociologist, Max Weber, was furious when a friend criticized the government's policy toward Polish subjects as an infringement on human rights. Weber's reply was worthy of Hitler: "It is only thanks to us that Poles are human beings!" (*Wir haben die Polen erst zu Menschen gemacht*)⁹⁵

A third characteristic separated German nationalism from its Western counterparts and made it particularly receptive to Hitler: it was heavily influenced by myths of German antiquity and sought to justify itself by evoking nationalistic urges it found in pagan prehistory. German mythology was filled with pagan gods like Wotan and Siegfried and half-legendary figures of supernatural powers such as Barbarossa. In popular imagination these gods and demi-gods had all become national heroes. This kind of nationalism, with its stress on myth, mystery, and magic was only a step away from Nazi ideology and the mystical powers it assigned to Führer, Volk, blood, and soil.⁹⁶

The word *Mythos*, which has had a peculiar attraction to Germans, carries a different meaning from the English *myth*. In English usage the word suggests little more than a fairy tale, or a nonexistent person or event. A definition in a standard German dictionary, *Der Sprach-Brockhaus*, is jarringly different: "*Mythos: a symbolic idea with life-renewing force.*" This was certainly the conception of influential German writers for many generations. Like their Romantic predecessors, the intellectuals of the Weimar Republic who called themselves Conservative Revolutionaries boasted of their commitment to *Mythos* rather than rationality. One of them wrote in 1920: "Myth is the word and the vision which tells about Volk and God, about what has actually happened [*von wirklichem Geschehen*]." Another, writing in 1923 in a book he entitled *Das dritte Reich*, warned his readers that the idea of the coming Reich was filled with "myth and mystery . . . charged with feeling not of this world but of the next."⁹⁷ Hitler exploited to the fullest this emphasis on myth and mystery. Indeed, he institutionalized these ideas and became himself the "myth-person" whom many German thinkers had foretold.

A fourth characteristic of German nationalism, as it developed in the 19th and 20th centuries, was the exaltation of power and war. Of course, one can find strident proponents of national power in other countries. But in no other nation of the world did so many respected leaders in so many different walks of life over so long a period of time proclaim that might made right and preach the moral justification of war; their words would be echoed in Hitler's evocation of power, brutality, and battle as the law of life. Germany's most influential 19th-century philosopher, for example, insisted that "war has the higher meaning; through it . . . the ethical health of nations is maintained . . .

The Past As Prologue: Hitler a

just as the motion of the wheel constant calm would produce tions which a perpetual . . .

One of Julius Langbehn creative and necessary for of impassioned lectures, g Hitler: "War is political sci Volk become in very deed not only impossible, but imi which we can most clearly t army, not parliament, is th Oswald Spengler was equal finding it "the eternal form "states exist for the purpose .

The elder von Moltke, (sian General Staff, was no political developments by I doctrine that war was both remembered and widely quot a very pleasant one, and wa the noblest virtues [*Tugend* loyalty to duty and willingn the world would sink into ma

One of the most influen immediate prewar years wa Next War. It first appeared huge printings. The author-set forth a simple thesis: "W. tance. . . . The efforts directe be termed foolish, but absol race. . . ." He closed his first with Goethe's "manly words"

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The emperor himself in force. No head of state in exhortations. Indeed, his sp markable precedents to the launching the Polish campai told his commanders to "clo Decades before, in sending t Boxer Rebellion in 1900, Wj give the name of "Hun" to Ge

Rathenau

→ pre-Cambrian 1923.
the time was coming

to attack.
The Jew-Liberal Rathenau
had unwittingly given us
the cue. 4

1909 +

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

1909
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Veitel Itzig, a character who became the stereotype for "the Jew" in virtually all anti-Semitic literature. Itzig was slovenly, slack-jawed, with greasy hair and yellowed teeth; he was dirty, unkempt, and sloppy in his clothing and habits; his voice was whining and nasal. Freytag considered himself to be a liberal because he had no objection to "good Jews." His battle was against "bad Jews" who refused to be assimilated or to accept "German Christian ways." These, he said, were the "sick part of our people" who must not be allowed to "infect" healthy Germans.⁸⁶

Heinrich von Treitschke was also a notable anti-Semite whose attitude toward the Jews was summarized in his immensely popular lectures: "In plain words, the Jew has always been an 'element of national decomposition'; . . . Whenever [the German] finds his life sullied by the filth of Judaism, [he] must turn from it and learn to speak the truth boldly about it." Treitschke seems to have been the first to coin the slogan, which would become a battle cry for the Third Reich, "The Jews are our misfortune."⁸⁷

One of the most effective agencies for spreading fear and hatred of the Jews was the prestigious and influential Pan-German League (Alldeutscher Verband). Throughout the 1890s its powerful press warned members of Hitler's generation to watch out for the "Jewish menace," and it set forth solutions for the "Jewish problem." It demanded rigorous restrictions on the "Jewish press" (including the *Berliner Tageblatt* and the *Frankfurter Zeitung*); the enactment of laws which would bar Jews from key professions, treat them as "aliens," and tax them double the amount paid of "real Germans"; and the promulgation of racial laws which would prohibit Jews from mixing their blood with the "Germanic race."⁸⁸

The ideals of the anti-Semitic theorists and the warnings of the Pan-Germans were taken seriously by the social institutions of Imperial Germany, which placed both formal and informal restrictions on Jews. Few Jews, for example, could look forward to a career in the universities of Germany. In 1910 fewer than 3 percent of all professors were Jews; at the University of Berlin, the biggest and most prestigious university of the empire, in the first decade of the 20th century not one Jew was a full professor. The student organization, *Verein deutscher Studenten* (also known as the *Kyffhäuserverband*), in 1896 adopted this principle: "Jewish citizens of the Reich are not to be regarded as Germans."⁸⁹

Neither the Catholic nor the Protestant church was interested in taking position against the anti-Semitic movement. The Lutherans in particular, following the advice of their founder, became directly supportive of anti-Semitism in politics. In addition to the notorious Jew-baiter, the court chaplain Pastor Adolf Stöcker (1835-1909), four other Lutheran pastors sat in the Reichstag as anti-Semites and another was a member of the Prussian Diet.⁹⁰

Jews had difficulty finding a career in the Imperial Army. In con-

The Past As Prologue: Hitler and

trast with other countries of whose armies were officered by in the Imperial German Army extraordinary contributions to the peacetime army. The distinguishing many's war effort than anyone example—wrote to Frau Gene "Even though my ancestors should well know, as a Jew a political civil servant then in pe

The anti-Semitic practices precedents in the Second.

Racial Nationalism and the

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In the decades prior to World War I, the monopoly on patriotism. Chauvinism is English. But four make German nationalism par-
tative to Hitler.

First, the Nazis were just and belief in the superiority of long standing. The arguments Romantics at the beginning of the 19th century has pointed out, provided "the was to become the governing *Weltanschauung*."⁹² Proclamation was made throughout the century 1914 when Ernst Haeckel, a unscientific pronouncement: soldier . . . represents a higher hundreds of the uncivilized hordes of Russia and Italy oppose to him

Second, a corollary of race was Germany's destiny to *Lebensraum*, particularly in Eastern Europe was destined to replace that of

* In Austria-Hungary there were 720 field-marshal; in Italy there were 500 720.

JD: ADOLF HITLER

The soldier on guard,

The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History

Contents: *Die Judenfrage als Frage Rassencharakters und seiner Schädlichkeiten für Existenz und Kultur der Völker* (The Jewish Question as a Problem of Racial Character and Its Dangers for the Existence and Culture of the People). In the sixth edition, published after World War I, Dühring confessed that he had been much too moderate with regard to the Jews who had caused the war and were responsible for Germany's defeat. He now realized that "only the complete disappearance of the Hebrew can be called a worthy solution to the Jewish Problem." And only a dictator could establish the racially pure *Gemeinschaft* necessary for the salvation of Germandom.⁸¹

Paul de Lagarde also lent his name to the effort to make mindless prejudice intellectually acceptable. His specific contribution was to provide slogans and ugly metaphors which would be picked up by dozens of racists from Fritsch and Wagner to Hitler and Goebbels. He warned that Germany was becoming "Jewified" (*verjudet*); the Jews were "decayed parasites," "diseased," and "usurious vermin." He noted ominously that "with trichinae and bacilli one does not negotiate, nor are trichinae and bacilli subject to education; they are exterminated as quickly and thoroughly as possible." Hitler carried out that injunction. In 1944, in the midst of the mass extermination of European Jews, the Nazis brought out an anthology of Lagarde's anti-Semitic pronouncements and demands for wholesale murder. The little book was published under the graphic title *Ich Mahne und Kunde* (I Warn and Proclaim).

Lagarde had presaged Hitler's policy for Central Europe with remarkable foresight. Like so many intellectuals before him, he preached a *Drang nach Osten* and the creation of an enormous *Mittleuropa*. His particular program of colonization, however, was more brutal than that of many others who preceded Hitler. He demanded the expulsion or extermination of Polish Jews, so that there could be a "Jew-free" land for Germans to dominate in Central Europe. As Fritz Stern has noted, "Few men prophesied Hitler's work with such accuracy—and approval."⁸⁴

Julius Langbehn's incredible best-seller *Rembrandt als Erzieher* also served as a preview of things to come. He recommended that *Ahnenprobe* (proof of ancestry) be instituted in Germany as a condition of citizenship; it was an idea that Hitler put into practice. He also demanded extermination of the Jews: "They are poison for us and must be treated as such. . . ." In 1891 he called for a "Secret Emperor who will intervene actively . . . in the Jewish question. . . ." By 1892 he was listing the enemies of his Reich as "Jews and idiots, Jews and scoundrels, Jews and whores, Jews and professors, Jews and Berliners." By this time, Langbehn had moved into what must be considered the final stage of anti-Semitism: the bacteriological phase. The Jews had become a "cholera" that must be destroyed.⁸⁵

Germany's most popular novelist of the last half of the century, Gustav Freytag, also made an important contribution to anti-Semitism in his novel *Soll und Haben* (Debit and Credit). First published in 1855, it was to go through dozens of editions. In this novel, Freytag introduced

1909-13
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1944
Hitler sees all his latter-day illness as attacks by the Jews, his counterpart as the siege of his bowels, his

1909-13
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Dühring never recovered from the attack by Marx & Engels and his hatred of the Jews deepened beyond order of magnitude.

1944
Note: 1944
Hitler's view of the international situation and his policy for the Jews in Germany and in Europe (then in all of Europe) into the underground.

OD: ADOLF HITLER

The soldier on guard,

(1899-13) 1919 1944

The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History

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1909-13 1919 1944
Hitler sees all his latter-day enemies as attacks by the Jews, his counterpart as the siege of his bowels, his

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1944
The Jews of the international
and his helplessness
came from the fact to affect
their position in society
*
the scapegoat of the
in Germany
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(Stern in all of Europe)

‡ Dühring never recovered from the attack by Marx & Engels and his hatred of the Jews deepened by an order of magnitude.

1938

GOD: ADOLF HITLER

habitual response" to all the state was encouraged idealized in popular history, derick the Great and Bis-tification."

strikingly in two respects eristent characteristic of nd America, has been an idical extremes. From the alifax in the 17th century, litical practitioners of the litical party—English and parliamentary government In Germany, by contrast, mes—from the exaltation Hegel to the revolutionary destroy all traditional forms

ent conception of the na- ding political theorists as omas Jefferson, the state particular creation failed is had the right to abolish itate, was the master. The ful words.

ure instituted among men ment becomes destructive ople to alter or abolish it, such Principles . . . as to ur Safety and Happiness.

theorists rejected demo- to the Western tradition. ous that it could not have been created by the un- rutable Providence. Thus he Romantics, proclaimed e and Jefferson—that "the the individual" but for its

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It is the result of the war and compromise between
The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History
D.T.
1938

official faith of all German political theorists. Hegelianism conquered key positions in every field of thought: political theory, ethics, philosophy, aesthetics, historiography. For decades none but Hegel's disciples occupied chairs of philosophy and political economy in all the uni-versities of Prussia."

Hegel's writings are difficult, abstruse, often incomprehensible to all but the initiate. About one thing, however, he is very clear indeed: the state must be revered above all institutions. For it is no mere human creation—it is an act of God. Indeed, it is "the movement of God through history" and the "institutionalization of God." In Hegel's special formulation—the Hegelian dialectic—the state is the higher synthesis which evolves from the clash of thesis and antithesis. The state synthesizes individual will and collective will, power and justice, it combines both moral right and physical force, freedom and authority. In fact, according to Hegel, freedom can fully exist only in a national state, and only in the state can moral purpose be fulfilled: "The State is the true embodiment of mind and spirit. And only in it . . . [does] the individual share in truth, real existence and ethical status."

The state is not a means to an end, as in Locke and Jefferson; rather, it has its own moral end. But what the true nature of this purpose is very difficult to get from Hegel, for his mysticism leads to mystification:

The State is the reality of the moral idea—the moral spirit as the revealed will apparent to itself, substantial, which thinks and knows itself and accomplishes that which it knows and insofar as it knows it.

As Ralf Dahrendorf well asked, what is really meant by all this, what is being said here? Who and what is the state? It is difficult to tell, for the state is beyond comprehension, hence beyond rational criticism. And from that point it is not a long step to the conclusion reached by latter-day Hegelians that "the State can do no wrong."

Hegel's emphasis on the *Gemeinschaft* shows his indebtedness to the political Romantics. Apart from the state, people have no moral meaning and no political form. They are a shapeless mass until welded into "the community of the state."

The flavor of Hegel and the intensity of his adoration of the state are best conveyed in his own words:

The State is divine will . . . the State therefore knows what it wants, knows it in its generality as thought, and it acts therefore according to purpose. . . .

One should therefore revere the State as something divine upon earth (*irdischgöttliches*) and realize that if it is hard to understand nature, it is immeasurably more difficult to grasp the State.

Actually, and it points rap to actual this, the state, as a practical matter, reflects the supremacy of the Führer and the only one that will

Hegel's saying: the state is not the child of the church, but the guardian of the church, its more powerful sibling.

D.T., we always adored Hegel, for with the best intentions of revering God, we performed a mighty task. Through the centuries, we have been trying to convince the men and women of humankind that the state is co-terminous with God, and we failed miserably.

Under Napoleon it succeeded in shifting the responsibility in our favor.

H. the lower this one

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like Hitler, survive when others have perished. Moreover, he was denied several of the usual ways that man has sought to achieve victory over the grave. His religious faith was not the kind that vouchsafed salvation in a Christian heaven; he could not live on in posterity through his children. He sought other solutions to his problem: he would erect imperishable buildings and monuments; he would perform military feats that would win him eternal fame as "the greatest field commander of all time." When that was denied him, in the end he may have hoped to achieve historical immortality through truly monumental destruction.

The feeling of special mission which, we are suggesting, resulted in part from his survival fantasies was also strengthened in childhood by the defense mechanism of omnipotence. This defense is often used by both monarchs and borderline personalities to counteract feelings of insecurity and inferiority. The imperiousness and insistence on having his own way which Adolf began to manifest in early childhood were evidences of the strong unconscious conviction such personalities often harbor: that it is their right as special and privileged individuals to expect gratification and homage from others.

Clinical studies of disturbed children who have survived the death of a sibling rival show another symptom which we have found in Hitler: his resistance to growing old, his difficulty in maturing. Child psychologists have found that sibling survivors may be so terrified by the thought of death that they seek to escape by remaining childlike and refusing to mature. The result may be a kind of "defensive regression" into infantilism. When the mother (like Klara Hitler) is excessively protective toward "the only little boy I have left," the death phobia and the desire to remain childlike are both intensified. Many survivors also try to surmount their fear of dying by insisting (as did Hitler) that they live a charmed life, that others can't kill them, that they alone would survive dangers fatal to other people.¹¹⁵

Hitler's lifelong fear of death had larger historical consequence. As his future career would show so clearly, he tried to exorcise personal death fears by killing others. The more power he had in deciding that other people must die—the more he commanded death—the less he felt its horror for himself. Apart from the calculated murder of millions of "inferior" people, we should note the way he received news late in the war that his personal SS division, the elite *Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler*, was being decimated on the Eastern Front. When a staff officer reported that the number of deaths in Hitler's personal division was very great, he was startled by his Führer's exultant reply, "Losses can never be too high!"¹¹⁶

We have been suggesting that the period 1900-1901, when young Adolf was in his 12th year, was unusually important to his personal development. The boy who had been the star pupil of village schools began

¹⁷² "I shall be the reigning monarch of this century"

to fail; the outwardly cocky, hood games became the morose cent who talked to trees on 1 with his parents, caricatured h only guess at the reasons for quite sure that they were not 1 that the traumatic experience During Adolf's earliest years, a and fear had sent down deep during this bitter year by mor and tragic funeral of his broth his own survival; a reinforced mother; the transition from t urban *Realschule*. And all the age when disturbed mor period of development. It was father, things began to look up

"NEGATIVE IDENTITY":

Hitler remembered the years of his mother lived in a comfortable happiest time of his life. The whistle for him like a dog, den questions about schoolwork ar His doting mother drew on her the sale of her house in Leond in a life of leisure as critic a capital, he joined the local m performance of the Linz ope shirts, flowing cravats with sti a confident angle, and well-cu young men of the town. In win For the opera, he affected bla stick, and a top hat.¹¹⁷

Thus did Adolf assume v identity"—that is, he took on a he knew his father would ha showed active contempt for playing, as Erikson has show father but also a kind of per fantasize one's self by assumin painfully for genuine self-defin

At the climax (1944) he had come to believe (and not unreasonably after all) that he was a high agent of the gods of death. So he also could believe that his death would not be like others. Of course, he wished to be promoted, the means correct of his life had always been the body, soul (smell, body!) in which his soul had been housed

D.T.

1923

Klara 1885-89

The Child As Father to the Man

D. ADOLF HITLER

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allowed to soil their
Klara tried to imbue
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other and son clung
was dependent upon
as her means of prov-
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Adolf the way his little
count for Hitler's lifelong

doubts and feelings of guilt—indeed, because of them. As a German psychiatrist has noted, by loving Adolf so thoroughly, Klara could combat resentments she may have unconsciously felt toward a child who "enslaved her, sucked her dry and crippled her with never-ending demands." Through Adolf, she could numb her feelings of shame and guilt for having yielded to her "Uncle's" sexual demands at the very time his wife was living and dying in the same house. Constant expressions of love for her little boy could also assuage the fear of God's wrath she must have felt had been visited upon her by the early deaths of her first three children. "No wonder that Klara not only over-fed Adolf, but anxiously hovered over him, desperately needing him as living proof of her being a good, giving, non-destructive mother whom God still loved." 33a

Throughout his life, Hitler proclaimed his love for his mother. Indeed, the family doctor reported that many of the neighbors believed his love for her "verged on the pathological." While the doctor personally did not believe that the relationship was abnormal, he did say that, in a long practice, "I have never witnessed a closer attachment between mother and son." 31 All his life Hitler carried his mother's picture in his pocket. In all his bedrooms—in Munich, the Berlin Chancellery, the Obersalzberg—her portrait hung over the head of his bed. 33

Hitler always prided himself on being as "hard as steel" and "cold as ice," a person who showed no emotion in adversity. He confessed, however, to having wept twice in his life: once when he stood at the grave of his mother in December 1907; the other time at the death of his Motherland during the defeat of 1918. 36 On the evening that his mother died, during Christmas week of 1907, a neighbor reported that Adolf sat in the twilight, staring at her dead body. He lingered in the death room a long time, carefully drawing a picture of his beloved mother as she appeared in death, ravaged by cancer. 37

A curious poem he wrote in 1923 testifies to one aspect of his love—and to the limits of his literary talent. After he came to power in 1933 he was able to have it published in an edition of a Nazi paper largely devoted to extolling motherhood.

BE REMINDED!

- 1 When your mother has grown old
And you have older grown,
When things she once did e'er so lightly,
Are now a burden, heavy borne,
When her eyes so dear and trusting
No more, as once, look forward brightly,
When her weary, falt'ring feet
No longer carry her step lightly—
Then give to her a helping hand,
10 Accompany her with gladsome smile—

1923⁵

(look at the German if there's a note.)

D.T. He had the pulse of the public, the pulse of those who cannot exist w/o sentimentality
141 of sentiment.

Note
rec'd
146

D: ADOLF HITLER

The Child As Father to the Man

1923

Klara 1885-89

ous membrane envel-
jem.* Gustav died in
8. During that same

189, an overcast day
the humidity 89 per-
the Germans in the
inn in Braunau.

voked in his mother
die. Her energies, al-
on, had been further
e her children from
ld, at her husband's
e, she bore the stress
and the grief of her
er giving birth to two
breast cancer, Klara
riage and a family of
ider that she struck
person who did not
always to hurry home

n her husband. Even
was "awfully rough"
te a word to her at
her husband, Klara
emaining sources of
-particularly her one
was a byword, Klara's
she sought to scrub
edominant impression
ysician recalled, "was
n the chairs or tables,
not a smudge on the
housekeeper." 33 Her
allowed to soil their
Klara tried to imbue
lings of guilt, sternly
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mother and son clung
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Adolf the way his little
count for Hitler's lifelong

doubts and feelings of guilt—indeed, because of them. As a German psychiatrist has noted, by loving Adolf so thoroughly, Klara could combat resentments she may have unconsciously felt toward a child who "enslaved her, sucked her dry and crippled her with never-ending demands." Through Adolf, she could numb her feelings of shame and guilt for having yielded to her "Uncle's" sexual demands at the very time his wife was living and dying in the same house. Constant expressions of love for her little boy could also assuage the fear of God's wrath she must have felt had been visited upon her by the early deaths of her first three children. "No wonder that Klara not only over-fed Adolf, but anxiously hovered over him, desperately needing him as living proof of her being a good, giving, non-destructive mother whom God still loved." 33a

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1923

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exist w/o
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141 of
sentiment.

(Look at the
German if
there's a note.)

1924
Hindenburg

then that a *Justizrat* is a private individual who lives by defending swindlers." The passage is difficult to translate, and it may be that Hitler did not really mean to call his father by a title which he never held. But the false identification of his father given in another place is unmistakable—and peculiar. In a letter of 29 November 1921, he demotes his father, and tells a lie, by writing, "I was born on 20 April 1889 in Braunau on Inn, the son of the local postal official [*Post-offizial*], Alois Hitler." ²⁴

His memoirs and conversations reveal a desire to emulate his father, but one can always feel the cutting edge of rivalry and the determination to triumph over an adversary. In recalling, for example, that, as a boy, he once sang in the choir of a local monastery Adolf Hitler says, "I repeatedly had an excellent opportunity of intoxicating myself with the solemn splendor of a magnificent church festival. It was perfectly natural that the position of abbot appeared to me to be the highest idea attainable, just as that of being the village pastor had appealed to my father." He was fond of depicting his relationship with his father as a battle of conflicting wills in which his own will triumphed:

No matter how firm and determined my father might be . . . his son was just as stubborn and obstinate. . . . My father did not give up his "never" and I strengthened my "nevertheless." . . . ²⁵

And so it remained throughout his life. His will must prevail: first against his father, then against his political rivals, and finally against the whole world in battle.

At the time of his father's death, when Adolf was 14, he ostentatiously rejected all identification with the old man. Usually, when a father dies, the surviving male child attempts to play a father role or at least assumes a form of masculine identity of which the father would have approved. But young Hitler immediately took on negative identities—that is, the kinds of life-style which would have infuriated his father. As we shall see, he first played the effete artist and dandy. Then he ran off to Vienna to become an art student dropout and vagabond, an image his father would have found equally abhorrent.

Later on in life, however, Adolf indirectly accepted the challenge of his father "to make something of himself." He did so in a way that would have impressed and intimidated the old man: he too became a government official—but one of unbridled power. In effect, Hitler was saying, "My father always considered me a failure. I'll show him in a way he understands. Not as an artist but as a government official—I'll become so powerful that I could make and break bureaucrats like him and conquer his beloved Austria."

The mixed feelings of respect and disdain which he felt for his father were later transferred to the awesome figure of the Field Marshal-President Paul von Hindenburg who, with his uniform, close-

cropped hair, impressive m of Adolf's own authoritarian: Hitler spoke of him with re to his own father—as "The had felt cowed by his fath denburg. "The Old Gentlen thing we stood for. . . . The I want to hear what kind [wahnnsinning schwer] in s ing." And again, using an c he warned his followers th annoy [was verärgert] the C

While his memoirs and hatred and fear also keep s justified in doing so, Adolf degenerate. He confided to was forced to go and rescu entering a "stinking smoke drunken father to come hor iating experience I have eve is. It was—because of my l

Hitler also sought sy what a cruel person his fat whippings. A secretary rec father. I therefore feared h and often whipped me." He fond of Karl May stories a refusing to cry out under to his cane and his frighten counted the blows without : gave me 230 blows!" After him again. ²⁶

How can one calculate psychological wounds scar : soul, sobbing and alone, ba noninterfering mother? Th can trust no one else; he is ness, hatred. Is it not poss was so important to his life less hatred that sobbed: "I experiences, a prominent p Hitler would have agreed co Chessman, who recalled th concluded that "there is not to be anything than to be af

It is, of course, possibl and sadistic father were ex

ADOLF HITLER

than later historians
Führer was never re-

er suspected his own
curiously aggressive
with his parents' lives.
r. reacted so violently
2, Speer mentioned to
of Spital a sign on
in His Youth." Speer

for Bormann, who hur-
him, how many times
be mentioned. But that
up a plaque there. It

because he was usually
of his boyhood in Linz
be that while Hitler had
pital, it was associated
when he had lived there
his father's home and
otional outburst.

lage associated with Hit-
h 1938, almost directly
made of the lovely little
ere his father had been
ys made to record the
Hitler's survey of 1938
village as an artillery
d, the commanding gen-
ers directly from Hitler
ple." 12 The inhabitants
oved. Round after round
olishing its buildings and
izable. Why was Dollers-
pty acres in this part of
nt artillery ranges. It is

ainst Hitler, as is sometimes
embers of the Gestapo would
bject as Hitler's own ancestry
conclude that Hitler himself
re to himself what he desper-
or at least as Aryan as his

The Child As Father to the Man

unlikely that Hitler chose this particular village at random. He seems to have had a compulsion to wipe out—quite literally—the suspicion of his own Jewish blood by obliterating the birthplace of his father and the grave of his grandmother.

Hitler's uneasiness about his ancestors is suggested in a remark he made in 1930 when reporters were trying to get information about his family. "These people," he said, "must never find out who I am. They mustn't know where I come from or my family background." As we have noted, he felt it necessary to lie about his ancestors, saying, for example, that they had come from Lower Saxony.

There is other evidence that Hitler worried about his own "Jewishness." The two physical characteristics he associated with Jews—body odors and large noses—were two things that bothered him about himself. Hitler's obsessive concern with personal cleanliness and his abhorrence of perfume and aftershave lotion was so great, one suspects, because he was afraid that either the smell of body odor or the use of perfume to cover it up might make people think he was a Jew. When one of his colleagues asked why Jews "always remain strangers in the nation," Hitler had a ready answer: "The Jews [have] a different smell." He expressed his repugnance for both odor and perfume publicly in a Munich speech of 29 November 1939:

Racial instinct protected the people; the odor of that race deterred Gentiles from marrying Jews. At present in these days of perfume, where any dandy can assume the same odor as anyone else, the feeling for these finer distinctions between peoples is being lost. The Jew counts on that.¹⁴

Those who have commented on Hitler's physical characteristics have all said that his least attractive feature was his grossly shaped nose and unusually large nostrils—hence the bushy little mustache grown just wide enough to help conceal them. With this in mind, it is worth noting Hitler's pointed observation about the Jewish people: they have, he said, a characteristic which is "permanently common to all Jews from the ghetto of Warsaw to the bazaars of Morocco: the offensive nose, the cruel, vicious nostrils. . . ." ¹⁵

THE FATHER: ALOIS (SCHICKELGRUBER) HITLER

Alois Hitler's career in the Austrian bureaucracy had been eminently respectable. After nine years of service he had achieved the title of senior assistant customs official, and by 1892 he had been promoted to higher collector, the highest rank open to a man of only an ele-

1929 Scene w Haufstangel
1929

But this
may not
help.

But this copy
may not
find its way
to the
1938

Alvins

Since
she was
also the
mother
of Cary,
Polge, & Jeff
mother,

the daughter of Johann and
Katharine Elizabeth, wife of
Alonzo ^{and Elizabeth} ~~and Elizabeth~~
of Kilauea, Pol. **III**

1837 1842

1938

who
later,
would
marry
Alois,
we are
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of a
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but of fir
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CARL G. JUNG, October 1938.

KONRAD HEIDEN.²

but of first
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the Germans
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matter. exceptionally

† (from bottom note)

In fact, the best
 and most potential is
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 plus and minus creates
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 situation we arrive and
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 table, an much money
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 er marriage on
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 complaints, whereas

D. 4 on west;	
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The truth,
positive and
negative, are
~~both~~ reinforced
since they
come from
the same
pool of
anticipations
and possibilities
to 2nd present

biological ^{new} world with
inquiries of certainty calls
even of their doubtless, rest
and upon a ^{new} register
invention and establishing a bed

is matter. 53
is always
created. -
entity. Putting a definite
standing division

The SS leader did not believe in reincarnation. However, he saw the connection in the direct transmission of the blood through generations. Himmler did not mind being called "King Heinrich."⁴⁶ There is no speculation that Himmler's worship of Heinrich was inspired by Himmler's original chicken farming occupation.

at Wewelsberg
 Ravenscroft⁴⁷ says that Wewelsberg was built on "the site of the ruins of an ancient but unidentified medieval burg near Paderborn." Padfield identifies Wewelsberg's medieval origins—the stronghold of the bishops of Paderborn—and says it was derelict and neglected rather than a ruin and that Himmler had it converted⁴⁸ rather than built afresh. Whatever the state of the castle, the site itself is on a hill overlooking the Westphalian plain and the River Alme just to the east of Teutoburger forest where in A.D. 9 Hermann the Cherusker defeated the occupying Roman army with forces made up of the united Germanic tribes of Westphalia and Hesse. Hermann is not named by Ravenscroft as one of the possessors of the Lance or as having a room dedicated to his reign in the castle.

According to Ravenscroft the "Spear of Destiny" was the "progressive theme of the interior design and symbolic decoration of the whole castle." Each room was designed to personify the lifestyle of every claimant of the lance beginning with Charles the Great in the ninth century until "the collapse of the Old German Empire in 1806 when the ancient and historic weapon was secreted out of Nuremberg and taken to Vienna where it was out of the ambitious clutches of Napoleon Bonaparte" (the latter doubtful claim we have already dealt with in chapter 3). The room for one claimant, Frederick Barbarossa, was always kept locked and reserved for Hitler should he wish to visit the sacred SS sanctuary.⁴⁹ It is unlikely Hitler ever visited the castle.

12
 FitzGerald in his chapter on the castle and its Holy Lance theme says all SS members had to take part regularly in various magical ceremonies which Himmler had devised, adding that behind his back he was referred to as the Grand Master of German occultism.⁵⁰

Michael Howard says Wewelsberg had been remodeled on

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family tree that accompanied the application was as

um Georg Hiedler — Johanna Nimm (Hitler)

Alois Hitler

Johanna Hiedler
married Pözl

Klara Pözl

1938

nz Episcopate declared itself not competent to issue
msation and forwarded the application to Rome
was granted by papal decree.

Hitler's marriage with Klara was described by var-
aintances as very happy, which was presumably
e submissive and accommodating nature of the
e she said to me in this respect, "What I hoped
ed of as a young girl has not been fulfilled in my
and added resignedly, "But does such a thing
n?"

h of the children in quick succession was a heavy
al and physical burden for the frail woman: in
n Gustav was born, in 1886 a daughter, Ida, who
wo years, in 1887 another son, Otto, who only
days, and on April 20, 1889, again a son, Adolf.
suffering is hidden behind these bare figures!
was born the three other children were already
what care the sorely tried mother must have
this fourth child! She told me once that Adolf
weak child and that she always lived in fear
1, too.

e early death of the three children was due to
the parents were blood relations. I leave it to
give the final verdict. But in this connection
o draw attention to one point to which, in my
test importance should be attached.

as goods Death was
dys his ailments

PORTRAIT OF HIS MOTHER

The most outstanding trait in my friend's character was,
as I had experienced myself, the unparalleled consistency in
everything that he said and did. There was in his nature
something firm, inflexible, immovable, obstinately rigid,
which manifested itself in his profound seriousness and was
at the bottom of all his other characteristics. Adolf simply
could not change his mind or his nature. Everything that
lay in these rigid precincts of his being remained unaltered
for ever. How often did I experience this! I remember what
he said to me when we met again in 1938 after an interval
of thirty years. "You haven't changed, Kubizek, you have
only grown older." If this was true of me, how much more
was it of him! He never changed.

I have tried to find an explanation for this fundamental
trait in his character. Influence of surroundings and educa-
tion can hardly account for it, but I could imagine — al-
though a complete layman in the field of genetics — that the
biological effect of the intermarriage in the family was to
fix certain spheres and that those "arrested complexes" have
produced that particular type of character. It was just this
inflexibility that was responsible for Adolf Hitler's causing
such innumerable sorrows to his mother.

Once more the mother's heart was sorely tried by destiny.
Five years after Adolf's birth, on March 24, 1894, she gave
birth to a fifth child, a son, Edmund, who also died young,
on June 29, 1900 in Leonding. Although Adolf had no
recollection of the first three children in Braunau, and never
spoke of them, he could clearly remember his brother Ed-
mund, at the time of whose death he was already eleven years
old. He told me once that Edmund had died of diphtheria.
The youngest child, a girl called Paula, born on January 21,
1896, survived.

Thus, an early death had deprived Klara Hitler of four
of her six children. Perhaps her mother's heart was broken
by these terrible trials. Only one thing remained, the care

* D.T.: the D.K. is not without his own variety
of mortal choice. Death is much more certain
ground than inaus. We can encourage doctors
that lead to disaster, but the D.K. can reflect
the disease and overcome the cure. He also chooses
the deaths. It was obvious, visible great

1900 T. 1. 30
brought
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com-
man
the D.K.
could
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D. K. is not without his own variety
of mortal choice. Death is much more certain
ground than inaus. We can encourage doctors
that lead to disaster, but the D.K. can reflect
the disease and overcome the cure. He also chooses
the deaths. It was obvious, visible great
Of course, being
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of the offspring
in the D.K.
of the offspring
in the D.K.
of the offspring
in the D.K.

1933

is good Death was
by his voluntary

(1900) $T_{\text{eff}} = 3.5$

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Co. 28th
St. and
Main and
the O. O.
Co. 28th
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Main

-a Dummhoff, is also possible that he killed off some of the lesser problems and left a half a dozen. It is a lot possible.

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of the copying
in the District
of Columbia
products,
of course, being-

* D.T.: the D.K. is not without his own variety of mortal choice. Death is made more real by finding than in ours. We can encourage death that lead to despair, but the D.K. can suffer the distress and oversee the cure. He also chooses the teacher. It was obvious when a great

1942

J.T.

1890

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

to society and "public decency." They should all be handed over to the Gestapo and severely punished:

Experience shows that ^{criminal} unnatural offenders generally turn into homicidal maniacs; they must be rendered harmless however young they may be. I have therefore always been in favor of the strongest possible punishment of these antisocial elements.³¹⁷

Other aspects of Hitler's personality also fit what we know to be true about the psychopathology of sexual perversion. The infantilism we have found in him is one necessary ingredient. For as Freud was first to notice, "perverted sexuality is nothing else but infantile sexuality, magnified and separated into its component parts." Infantilism is clearly marked when, as with Hitler, the perversion involves a reversion to the anal stage.³¹⁸ Hitler's harrowing childhood memories of his primal scene experience and his monorchism clearly qualify as prerequisites for adult perversion, as set forth by the distinguished child psychoanalyst Phyllis Greenacre. "If I were to attempt a formula describing the development of perversion," she has written, the primary cause would lie in a disturbed mother-child relationship, "especially [one] involving the genitals. This becomes most significant . . . when castration anxiety is extraordinarily acute."³¹⁹

Psychoanalysts have shown that the mothers of boys who become sexual perverts often were overly stringent about toilet training. As we have noted, Klara Hitler had a reputation in Leonding and Linz for having had "the cleanest house in town" and keeping her children "absolutely spotless." It is interesting, and perhaps in this connection suggestive, that in one case of perversion described by an American analyst, the patient showed an identification with his mother: he displayed a desire "to have his sweetheart urinate in his presence while he encouraged her in a friendly way. He was playing the role of his mother who used to put him on the chamberpot when he was a baby."³²⁰

In his chapter on perversion in his standard work on psychoanalytic theory, Otto Fenichel lists three basic characteristics: patients with perversions tend to be infantile; they have unreconciled Oedipus complexes; and they all display castration anxiety. Indeed, Fenichel concludes: "Castration anxiety (and guilt feelings which are derivatives of castration anxiety) must be the decisive factor."³²¹ Adolf Hitler's lifelong concern about castration has already been mentioned perhaps too often.

If the clinical literature is correct in concluding that Oedipal problems, sadomasochism, infantilism, and castration anxiety are the marks of perversion, then Hitler certainly had all the chief symptoms. But there is a more specific reason why Adolf's symptoms were so intense and why a sexual perversion of the kind described was, psychologically, an appropriate response to sexual problems dating from his

The Child As Father to the Man

earliest years. The combination of trauma had given Adolf Hitler sexual intercourse. He saw it that must be avoided. He covered his sexual energies in deviate

As with other issues raised certain that Hitler had the admitted that traditional history in saying that they can find evidence was sexually normal. But the tary evidence of uncertain psychological data.

In short, we conclude that ladies urinate or defecate on this perversion not because' pletely convincing but because dence. The perversion fits all and public performance. It was his grandiose, moralistic public ridden self which pleaded for pulse for self-punishment, we have historic consequences.

Thus did the evils done man. We leave him now to conditions which helped bring him achieve a political goal without personality, time, and place. None can be understood apart.

In following the course of a fateful meeting with Adolf Hitler there was in the past that he the context of his times, the balanced man became a politician

1942
1942
Gestapo
P241

1890
D.T.
Too much
breast,
too
much
enthusiasm
on a
clean
ass.

242
R.P.T. Indeed! How well he knew
might take a look at (P241) where he's
convinced that deviant psychology
have to be few!

check
notes on
P241

D.T. We can imagine Alois' habits
in bed w a young girl that he married.
Wonder she was so spotlessly clean -
she always had to scrub him scrubbing
him out of her mouth - with laundry soap.
The baby's mother had eye-sectored breath.

Important