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WILL HITLER COMMIT MILITARY SUICIDE THIS YEAR?

A NOTED MILITARY EXPERT TELLS OF GERMANY'S MAJOR WAR
PLANS. DOUBTS THERE CAN BE PEACE THIS SPRING



Pondering war maps while his military experts explain them is the man who is generally credited with the dubious honor of plunging Europe into the second great conflict of this troubled century. Although the maps show several theoretical courses open to Hitler's armies, practical warfare narrows down the possible paths they may follow. Does Hitler really believe he is destined to become the master of Europe? Or will he sacrifice Germany and himself in a mad gesture of defiance? The world awaits the answer.

By GENERAL
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AS THE war moves out of the dank inactivity of winter months on the Western front into the ominous breezes of early Spring, a war-stricken world strains in a fever of anxiety for conclusive indications of Hitler's 1940 major war plans.

Will Hitler:

(a) Attempt some face-saving formula under which the nations at war can find new hope of peaceful settlement? Or—

(b) Press the war at all costs towards the goal of a German victory?

Those two major questions break down into numerous queries of how the Fuehrer will proceed in carrying out either determination.

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Searching peace moves against the pattern of past German war activity, it can be set down as unlikely that Hitler will consider, during this year, any peace plan that fails to leave Germany in the place of vantage, and Hitler the hero.

Since there are no present indications that the Allies are willing to accept any such peace as that, peace moves this Spring may be European war propaganda.

If he decides to fight on, will Hitler

(1) Hurl his armies against the Maginot line in a vast-scale offensive intended to crush the French and British armies?

(2) Speed his highly mobile armies through Belgium and Holland in an attempt to break the little Maginot line and cut the British off from the French, at the same time establishing submarine and air bases on the North Sea for further attacks on the British Isles?

(3) Attack through Switzerland in the region of Basle to turn the French right flank? Attack at the same time through Italy, with Italian support?

(4) Continue to operate with Russia in adventures of conquest among the Scandinavian and Balkan countries?

(5) Sit tight defensively behind his Siegfried line while consolidating and digesting conquered regions, at the same time vigorously pressing submarine and bombing assaults on Britain's sea power?

(6) Attack England with the full might of the German air forces in a series of massed blows?

Let us weigh, in the order named above, those principal courses open to Hitler as the war approaches its second year:

(1) Attack the Maginot line? He might launch attacks to feel out the Maginot line, but unless there are some undisclosed weaknesses in that line, or unless Hitler has some new surprise weapon, it would cost a million men, or more, to break through. The cost of half a million lives did not yield Verdun to the Kaiser in the first World War. A mass attack on the Maginot line for the purpose of seeking a military decision on the French western front is unlikely this Spring.

(2) Attacks through Belgium or Holland? The German army broke its back trying to cut the British off from the French in the first World War, when there was no little Maginot line to break. If Belgium or Holland is crushed this Spring, it will be with the object of establishing bases on the North Sea. The advantages to be gained against England do not appear to warrant

all that effort at this time.

(3) Through Switzerland or Italy? The terrain north of the Swiss frontier, which the writer has observed in detail from Basle north through the Vosges, does not invite such an envelopment. Even if Italy would permit it, an invasion of France through Italy does not offer rich military dividends.

(4) Co-operate with Russia in further conquests? Despite current predictions of the Russian complication, the German ego will be little inclined seriously to fear Russia. In World War I, Russia's great armies fought Germany on the eastern front. Now Russia is useful. In victory, with her conquered domains consolidated, Germany could figure on dealing with Russia in future years. Therefore, if the Russian advance, after running its course in Finland, moves deeper and deeper in to the Scandinavian group or cuts far into Rumania, it all analyzes out into water on the Hitler wheel, even though the great Russian ambition is a warm water sea outlet and eventual world dominion.

(5) Sit tight? Hitler, with exception of colonies, has regained the principal land lost in the World War. Germany has yet to digest these gains. Therefore Hitler's most logical course, if the Allies leave the war initiative in his hands, is to sit tight behind the Siegfried lines as long as possible, the while he hammers at British seapower with his submarines and bombers and consolidates conquered

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lands. If, by this course, he seriously cripples Britain's

Navy and merchant marine and strangles Britain's supply, the Allies ultimately will be forced into taking the offensive or seeking peace on Hitler's terms. Meanwhile, more intensive warfare would be delayed.

(6) Attack with his vast air armadas? Attacks so far on England's navy yards and vital installations have been by relatively small forces in contrast with his furious assaults on Poland by thousands of bombers. Hitler may strike more and more furiously with his air fleets, marking Britain off into a war checkerboard and hurling vast flights in simultaneous assaults on critical points and installations. In the red ledger of war, success here would pay Hitler heavy dividends against Germany's dominant foe—Great Britain.

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