

Hitler will Lose This War

BY FRITZ THYSSEN



Hitler's youthful victims venerate the Führer almost as a deity.

★ **IN** declaring war on Poland, Hitler had not foreseen that this time France and Great Britain would take up the glove. Afterward, he hoped to the last moment that he would be able to manipulate them by diplomacy and propaganda. But when he realized the futility of his efforts, he risked all on one stake.

Hitler will lose this war. That is my conviction. And he could have obtained the fulfillment of any reasonable desires if he had pursued a sensible policy. He had only to live and let live. Every one would have agreed that the war of 1914-18 had been the sequel to a series of political faults. But Hitler brutally refused to consider any solution of Germany's problems that was based upon sound policy, and he thrust Europe into this new disaster with his eyes wide open.

The methods of the Hitlerian conquest in Poland, as described in the official documents, were the first confirmation of a rebirth of the barbaric ages in the twentieth century. The aggression against Denmark, Norway, Poland, Belgium, and Luxemburg afforded further proof, if it was needed, that in the exercise of the "right of the stronger," Hitler's Germany is in no wise restrained by respect for its own given word or for law, and is prepared to brave the indignation and the contempt of all civilized peoples. Since then the German army, under Hitler's leadership, has overpowered countries which count among the oldest and the most highly developed in Europe, which possess the finest and the most venerable spiritual traditions. All this has been menaced by

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the total war, and the menace extends to my Rhenish home.

Peace Terms: There Must Be No Third Pan-German Menace

That the thrust of the barbaric hordes to the west will eventually prove to have been futile is my conviction. But the peace terms must be such as to make any further aggression westward impossible. None of the countries attacked harbored expansionist designs or menaced the existence of the German Empire. The England of today is no longer the colonial conqueror of earlier times. She is now a country like other countries, at the head of a commonwealth of free peoples in all parts of the world. She has never dreamed of abusing her technical force to terrorize her neighbors. France had definitely renounced any ideas of conquest. Hitler's behavior is one more proof that an evildoer invariably credits others with his own intentions.

Under Hitler, a Great Germany has again emerged as a peril to the life of the free peoples of Europe. It would be folly to run the risk of such a dangerous adventure for a third time. Without, as within, the Hitlerian regime, as demonstrated by Hermann Rauschning, is nothing but total nihilism. The peace that will follow Hitler's defeat must guarantee Europe against a renewal of such a policy.

Within Germany, the Hitlerian regime has attempted to ensnare in its nihilism souls and consciences. A deep gulf has once more been opened between the real Germany, that of the west, and the Prussian Germany of the east. At the present moment the Catholic populations of the west are not in a position to rebel. But they will never forget the outrages committed upon their religion, their priests, their most sacred feelings. The abyss between the two Germanys can never be bridged.

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How to Salvage a True Germany from Nihilism and Prussia

What must be saved is the true Germany, that of the west. It must continue to play its part in a civilization to which it has largely contributed in the past and will do so in the future. The Germans of the west must be guaranteed those fundamental rights which are the patrimony of all peoples of the west; in the first place, that of freedom of conscience. They must also be able to defend themselves against a resurgence of foreign tyranny.

After the anti-Catholic excesses of the Nazis, which were supported by Prussia proper, I can but see one solution and but one safeguard—namely, that Catholic Germany should become a Catholic monarchy.

What a Catholic Monarchy Would Mean to Western Europe

A return to a monarchical system would not merely be an attempt to renew a respectable historical tradition. Since the last war, the German people have shown that they are incapable of adjusting themselves to democratic institutions. They do not know how to utilize them. Moreover, the re-establishment of two German monarchies, one in the west and the other in the east, would enable each to affirm its own policy. Western Germany would quite naturally return to the traditions of its ancestors in the sphere of Christianity. Prussia might once more resume its own special role as a territory of settlement, established by the Brandenburg Electors and their successors, the Kings of Prussia. Who knows? Once freed of its lust for conquest, that country might one day exercise a useful and pacific influence in the east of Europe.

There is nothing utopian in this suggestion. The difference between the two regions of Germany is insufficiently realized abroad. The unity achieved by Bismarck was unnatural, but was finally approved by the populations concerned. The alleged definitive unification of Germany which Hitler claims as his own is, like all the acts of the regime, merely a surface phenomenon. The former German states have disappeared in theory; but to call Austria the Östmark cannot deprive it of its political and regional individuality. And the official elimination of Bavaria as a territory does not mean the disappearance of that country as such.

"The Führer Is Always Right"—but Not in the Rhineland

The modern form of religious intolerance invented by the National Socialists is in complete contradiction to the true German spirit and historical tradition since the sixteenth century. Even in Prussia of the eighteenth century, Frederick II was wont to say: "To every man his own heaven." What is more, the absolutism of the Nazi leaders, their demand for servility, are completely foreign to our Germany of the west, whose people resent as an outrage to their personal dignity the suppression of all human

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rights, of freedom of conscience and of liberty of opinion. The revolt is latent but awaits its opportunity.

In the Germany of the east the population seems to have adjusted itself more easily. The extension to all fields of the Prussian military discipline—"Obey; do not think"—has been quite naturally accepted there. "The Führer is always right"—this is the modernized form of "Obey; do not think." Is this servility an emanation of the Slav character? I am inclined to believe so. Never in western Europe, even before the French Revolution, has there been such contempt for the individual.

What is necessary is merely to retrace the frontier between Europe of the west and Europe of the east. The true Germany, with its western traditions, must be separated from Prussia, which belongs to the east. This task, it is clear, cannot be carried out by the Germans alone. But the solution of the problem on purely military lines would in the long run be as precarious after this war as after the last. The victors could not occupy foreign territory indefinitely. What must be done is to devise a thoroughly effective system, capable of keeping itself going.

This Time, Clear the Way for a Real United States of Europe

Moreover, the Powers should be actuated by a new political spirit. In the Europe of today there can be no permanent supremacy. To believe that a great country can for long be reduced to impotency is a dangerous illusion. The terrible hour of awakening that has struck for Europe is a definite proof of the obsolete character of the Treaty of Versailles. All that must be done is to remove the obstacles to the future constitution of the United States of Europe.

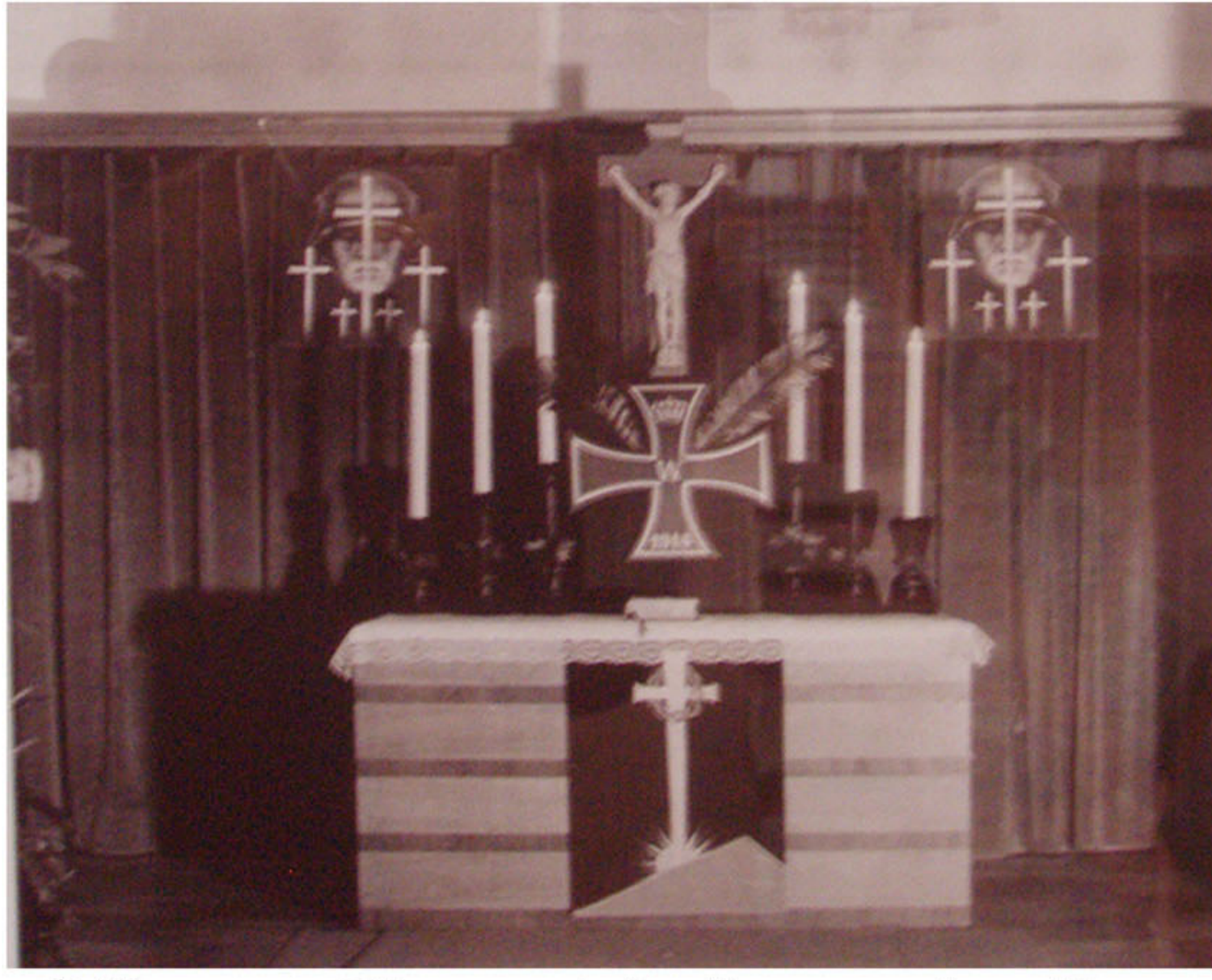
The economic field may perhaps prove the most fertile in new solutions. What, at bottom, is of far more interest to the peoples of Europe than the ruinous dreams of dictators who finally let loose the dogs of war is the building up of a sound economic organization under which all peoples can live, develop, and prosper.

The persecution of the Jews and the attempt to deprive the German Protestants of their freedom of conscience are acts of considerable moral significance. But the former is without serious *political* consequences in the country itself. The Jewish minority was too small and too scattered. The *economic* consequences may be more serious. It is difficult to forecast them at present.

Nazi "German Christianity" and Blood-and-Soil Barbarism

The persecution of the Protestants is less spectacular, but it has a far deeper significance. It was not on religious grounds nor for avowable reasons of state that the Nazi leaders wished to unify German Protestantism by the appointment of a head of the Church, a figurehead really, with the title of "Bishop of the Reich." The object they had in mind was quite

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different. They wished to make German Protestantism into a kind of State religion, despoiled of all Christian principles. To delude the simple-minded, they termed their new religious system "German Christianity." This enterprise foundered on the solid rock of the resistance of the congregations and of clergymen like Martin Niemoeller.

As a matter of fact, National Socialism is not a political system. Rather, it is intended to represent a philosophy and a moral conception. This philosophy is summed up in the phrase *Blut und Boden* (blood and soil). The gist of it is as follows: Blood and the soil have engendered man. Man is a product of Nature, to which he is linked by every fiber. The blood which flows in his veins endows him with a mysterious force—the life of the ancestors whom he reincarnates. He has profound affinities with the soil on which he is born and from which he draws his sustenance. He represents a tiny fraction of world energy. His rule of action must be to exploit this force to the utmost of his power.

What a Blue-Ribbon Sire Adolf Would, if Possible, Have Made!

Thus, for the Nazis, man is degraded to the level of a domestic animal. His studbook must be supervised. It is seriously affirmed that Nietzsche's superman can be produced by careful breeding. The strict rules imposed for the marriage, or rather the mating, of Himmler's SS troops all point this way. Unfortunate for Hitler that he can have no personal part in this matter! What unexpected results might not have been obtained by the carefully studied mating of the Führer of all the Germans!

This conception of man leaves no room for individual morality, for the responsibility of the reasoning being to his own conscience, or for a religion based upon the supernatural.

These are the principles according to which Hitler governs the German people. He has succeeded in contaminating the majority of the younger generation. His youthful victims are capable of courage, obedience, and devotion to the service of the race as a whole, of which they regard themselves as fragments. For them, the race is represented by Germany; its most powerful expression is to be found in the person of the Führer, whom they venerate almost as a deity. To their schoolmasters, in those mediocrally named "Ordensburg" schools where the Nazis educate the future

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elite of the nation—or, at least, to the director of one such school that I visited—man is a machine, and the object of his schooling is simply to get the machine into proper running.

Young Pagan Robots Are Easy to Rule—and to Feed to Cannon

Such a materialism goes much further than the doctrines of Karl Marx. A dictatorship has no use for personality. A nation of robots is easier to govern. This is the underlying meaning of this so-called philosophy of blood and soil. It is simple to realize what a political instrument this may be in the hands of unscrupulous leaders, filled with contempt for the people they rule, in particular the working classes.

In some Protestant regions the Nazis did succeed in persuading many to recant. Practically all the young people forming part of the SS have gone back upon Christianity. So have the chiefs of the young Hitlerite organizations. Many are converts to the new German paganism.

Thyssen Sums Up in His Own Defense: Why He Backed Hitler

As for myself, I have now broken with a long past, with a course of conduct which, in all circumstances, especially after the defeat of 1918, was actuated by the ardent desire to promote the greatness and prosperity of an empire in which I was born two years after its foundation and for which I have worked all my life.

I am not a politician. But in a crisis-ridden state like Germany from 1918 to 1933, an industrialist gravitates, willy-nilly, into the political whirlpool. After 1930, the aspirations of German industry could be summed up as follows: "Sound economy in a strong state." This was, I remember, the password of a meeting of the Ruhr industrialists in 1931. During that winter there were six or seven million unemployed; that is, about one third of the entire German laboring population. The Weimar Republic was torn asunder by strife, and the ship of State was at the foundering point.

I myself approved that password. This was why I was for the restoration of the monarchy. By adhering to Hitler and his party, I believed that I should contribute to the reinstatement of a government and of an order which would enable all branches of activity in the State, business in particular, to function again normally.

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What He Expected of National Socialism, and What He Didn't

But the strong State of which I then dreamed had nothing in common with the totalitarian State, or rather the caricature of a State, realized by Hitler and his minions. As a Catholic, born on the shores of that mighty Rhine where the influence of Western and Roman law had been stronger than in other parts of Germany, where Christianity had been early implanted and which the French Revolution had marked with its seal, I was incapable of believing that it was possible in our time to destroy all the normal conditions of human and political life.

I should have been astonished in 1930 if any one had called me a liberal. But this was in all probability my real conviction. Before the war of 1914-18, the Prussian and Imperial monarchy, absolute in the political and administrative domain, had been liberal in the social and economic field. Notwithstanding certain mistakes, the political personnel of the former regime and, in particular, its very efficient officials, had almost always been able to cope with the demands of their task. Of this system, the very fundamentals were destroyed by the defeat and the revolution of 1918. Instead of straining every nerve toward recovery, Germany was submerged by anarchy and radicalism.

The internal crisis was aggravated by the pressure exercised by the victors. It made itself felt not only in the political field but also in business—which it burdened with a formidable mortgage, the war reparations.

To cope with the pressure from abroad, I organized the passive resistance during the occupation of the Ruhr in 1923. To combat radicalism in the early years of the Weimar Republic, I supported the semi-military patriotic organizations, among which was the National Socialist Party. Later, when the evolution appeared to have resumed a more normal course, I had to return to business. But the modification of the reparations system in 1929 and the acceptance of the Young Plan in 1930 appeared to me as a vital economic mistake. I adhered to the group of those who opposed the Reich's policy of compliance. Like many of the right wing, I was under the impression that Hitler was an active factor in Germany's recovery, and this was why I gave him ever-increasing support.

How It Began to Dawn on Him That All Nazi "Law" Is Illegal

In January, 1933, the National Socialist Party, to which I had been attached for two years, came into office. I thought, like every one else, that it would succeed in restabilizing the situation. I even hoped that it would finally lead to a restoration of the monarchy. My disappointment dates almost from the beginning of the regime. But I was inhibited then by the impression produced by the burning of the Reichstag. Today I know that this alleged Communist crime was engineered by Hitler and Göring as the first step in a colossal political swindle. On the strength of

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it, the Nazi leaders extorted from President Hindenburg a so-called Law of Suspects, authorizing summary execution and enabling them to silence any political opponent.

The same law "for the protection of the people and the State" was adduced by the Gestapo as a pretext for confiscating illegally my own property. It suspended all the fundamental constitutional guaranties of personal liberty, of freedom of conscience and of opinion. These guaranties are still in abeyance. An emergency law has become an instrument of government.

One month later a trembling Reichstag, one hundred of whose members had been imprisoned, voted that law conferring the full powers which lie at the root of all the arbitrary acts of the regime since 1933—revolutionary acts, which observed the forms of legality but were in fact based upon a crime and a lie. All the laws, all the decrees enacted by the National Socialist government are illegal.

How Göring Gulled Him in '33 about the Reichstag Fire

This today is my conviction, but for six years I was inhibited by my illusions. On March 1, 1933, Göring, an officer of the former Imperial army, holder of the *Ordre pour la mérité*, showed me the smoking Reichstag ruins. "This," he said, "is a Communist crime; yesterday I myself nearly arrested one of the criminals." Two months earlier he had telephoned to my house to warn me that a rebellion was about to break out in the Ruhr and that I headed the list of the proposed hostages. He said he had been informed by his spies in the Communist Party. How could I have doubted his word? Instead, I began to collaborate openly with the regime.

That day of June 30, 1934, when Hitler gave orders for the brutal murder of his companions in revolution, revolted and terrified me. There was something absolutely un-German in such a massacre. It was sheer barbarity. Some months after, I went to South America on business for several months. On my return, I found the regime solidly established. It had launched that policy of "pyramid-building" and rearmament which was to lead Schacht to resign. From that moment I entered into conflict with the Nazi Party.

You Can't Reason with Hitler, Either; Thyssen Tried

On September 1, 1939, as I have said, I addressed to the Nazi leaders a formal protest against war. The events that followed have justified this action.

Hitler and his advisers turned the deaf ear. They think that they can force Fate to fight on their side. The atrocity of the war they have unleashed on Europe will fall back upon them and—unfortunately—on their willing tool, the German people.

I firmly believe that the peace which will follow Hitler's downfall will be concluded in the light of the experience gained since 1918. This story of the political error which led me to believe in Hitler and of how I came

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to discard that belief is my contribution to a better future.



Fritz Thyssen

Liberty

Oct. 4, 1941