

Hitler Proclaims Peace With Equality

“CAN WE TRUST HIM?”

That is the grave question asked by some British and French editors as they consider Chancellor Adolf Hitler's speech on the disarmament question in which, while he firmly champions the German case for equality in armaments, “he broke no diplomatic china.”

But he does demand revision of the Treaty of Versailles.

His internationally awaited utterance was expected to be full of menace. But some think it suffered a toning down in preparation as the result of President Roosevelt's call to fifty-four nations of the world which was given out the day before.

Opinion on the Roosevelt declaration appears in earlier pages of this number of *THE LITERARY DIGEST*. At the same time,



“Smiling Adolf”

Chancellor Hitler, Germany's Führer, rides beside solemn President von Hindenburg on Berlin's first Hitler May Day.

there is no question about Chancellor Hitler's “warm thanks” for President Roosevelt's proposals for the furtherance of political and economic peace in the world.

The feeling of tranquillity established by the moderation of Mr. Hitler's speech, as shown in editorials cabled to *THE LITERARY DIGEST* from the English press, is perhaps most succinctly expressed in the words of the *Manchester Guardian*, that it “furnishes a new basis for negotiations.”

A SPOKESMAN for the British Government, according to a United Press cable, declares that Mr. Hitler's speech has broken the armaments deadlock, but this unnamed representative of Great Britain announced simultaneously that the British are “awaiting a translation of his conciliatory words into action at Geneva.”

Hitler's readiness to transform the Reichswehr into a short-term service Army within five years, we are told, is considered an advance over Germany's previous stubborn attitude. The British, it seems, are willing to meet the Germans half-way, and judge the outlook for the Geneva Conference on Disarmament and the World Economic Conference as encouraging.

Stripping Chancellor Hitler's spectacular display of oratory before the Reichstag, suddenly called into session after it was supposed to have been muted indefinitely, a Berlin correspondent of the Associated Press summarizes his pronouncement:

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"The idea of rendering useful service to other peoples by destroying economically a people of 65,000,000 is so absurd that nobody can dare, to-day, openly to expound it.

"No new European war could replace the present unsatisfactory condition by something better.

"Germany would be ready without further ado to dissolve her whole military establishment and destroy the scanty remnant of arms left her if neighboring nations unreservedly did the same.

"Germany must at least insist on her equality claim.

"Germany is in the main agreed to accept a transitional period of five years for the establishment of her national security, in expectation that after this period Germany's real equalization with other nations will occur.

"Germany has only a single desire, namely, to be able to preserve her independence and protect her borders.

"For President Roosevelt's proposal the German Government is indebted with warm thanks. It is ready immediately to endorse this method of remedying the international crisis because it, too, believes that without a solution of the disarmament question no enduring economic recovery is imaginable.

"The only nation whose fear of invasion can really be justified is Germany.

"Germany is ready at any time to renounce aggressive weapons if the whole world also bans them. Germany is ready to join any solemn non-aggression pact, because she thinks not of attack but of her security.

"The German Government and German people will not, however, under any circumstances, submit to being compelled to affix their signature to anything that would be tantamount to perpetuating Germany's disqualification.

"Each attempt to overpower Germany by means of a mere majority decision in contravention of the clear spirit of treaties could only be dictated by the intention to force us out of the conferences.

"As a nation under a perpetual stigma it would also be difficult for us to remain within the League of Nations."

WITHOUT doubt, says the *London Times* in an editorial cabled to THE LITERARY DIGEST, Chancellor Hitler's speech represents the view of official Germany, which informs the world that "Germany expects to be treated on a footing of complete equality with other Powers, in fact and in practise." This newspaper says further:

"Behind Hitler, the demagog and showman, the world has caught its first glimpse of Hitler the statesman. Without doubt the speech represents the views of official Germany and the German people.

"On the whole, it should create a rather better atmosphere at Geneva, but it must be tested by the conduct of the German delegates there."

The *London Daily Express* thinks that his present speech is more soothing to foreign ears than most of Hitler's previous oratory, and the *Laborite Daily Herald* speaks of it as a "gesture, not of defiance but of conciliation," which "must provide a basis for continued and even hopeful discussions at Geneva." With a plea for trust in Hitler, this Labor organ adds:

"His wild words and worse actions have created such suspicion of Herr Hitler's intentions that there will be a genuine fear that his speech is merely a smoke-screen. If such suspicions are allowed to prevail, there is no possibility of hope. Herr Hitler should be taken at his word. The risk is a minute one compared with the appalling risks of rejecting his offer as insincere."

The *London News-Chronicle* is cheered in its impression that "the assurances of the German Government's pacific intentions are as categorical and sweeping as could well be imagined," while *The Daily Mail* is convinced that "nothing could be more emphatic than Hitler's denunciation of war."

As the *London Morning Post* sees it, "it seems that the chief hope of Europe is that Hitler plainly realizes and tells his own and the World Economic Conference as encouraging.

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people what madness it would be to attempt a new settlement by force of arms." Yet with all the willingness to believe in Germany and trust it, *The Daily Telegraph* confesses its doubt:

"Sentiment in favor of conceding the fairness of Hitler's speech would be overwhelming but for the general militaristic developments in Germany recently. One speech will not wholly restore confidence."

SKEPTICISM about Hitler is revealed also in Warsaw editorials cabled to *THE LITERARY DIGEST*. For instance, the semiofficial *Gazeta Polska* expresses its amazement at the recent saberrattling utterances of von Neurath and von Papen as compared with the peaceful tone of international policy enunciated by Chancellor Hitler, and it asks as if bewildered:

"Whom shall we believe?"

In France, according to a United Press cable to *THE LITERARY DIGEST*, a spokesman at the Foreign Office pointed out that Hitler's speech marks an important change in Germany's foreign policy. Describing the German Chancellor's oration as "pleasing, conciliatory, and supple," this unnamed authority gives it as his belief that the German change of front is due to conversations between President Roosevelt and Hjalmar Schacht, head of the German Reichsbank, who has come to Washington on a diplomatic mission from the Hitler Government. This French observer also gives credit for Mr. Hitler's moderation to "the Roosevelt message to world rulers."

But in the French press there is an obvious note of distrust. Thus, the *Paris Journal* observes that Chancellor Hitler's speech is "superficially moderate," but "actually it is a formidable attack on the Versailles Treaty." And the *Paris Petit Journal* has this to say:

"It is evident that the present mildness of Hitlerism is the result of the Roosevelt note and also of the counsel of Mussolini. Despite Hitler's assertions that there is no connection between the Reichswehr and the Nazis, France has every reason for distrust."

THE *Echo de Paris*, which never expresses any faith in Germany, finds that Chancellor Hitler's address "constitutes acceptance" of the MacDonalld Disarmament Plan, which is summarized on an earlier page of this issue of *THE LITERARY DIGEST*. But this daily adds:

"However, it is apparent that Germany will withdraw from the Geneva Conference unless she gets the fullest satisfaction."

In Germany, as was to be expected, editorial comment on Chancellor Hitler's speech is unanimously laudatory. At the same time there plainly shows in it a line of argument linking up Germany with the United States in the eyes of the world. For instance, the *Boersen Courier* declares:

"The speech was a profession of peace unmatched for charity, honesty, and forthrightness. Hereafter, all wild talk about secret German plots will be ridiculous. The best proof of Germany's good-will is the unreserved acceptance of President Roosevelt's proposals."

Then the *Berliner Tageblatt* asserts that while President Roosevelt indirectly warned the world against disregarding Germany, Chancellor Hitler put the final emphasis on this contention. tance of chic is recognized despite the inadequate salaries for the very high cost of Geneva living. Then, with a sly smile of humor, this woman observer at the League goes on to say:

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"Heil Hitler!"

Brown-shirted Nazi youths pledge their allegiance to Germany's Dictator Chancellor during Labor celebration on May Day, when the Nazi leader address more than 1,000,000 of his followers at Tempelhof Field.

"They have wrestled, apparently successfully, with that problem which is the nightmare of every clever woman who has to work with and under men. . . . How to secure sufficient respect for your brains to be given responsible work, without making the fatal error of letting them see you know as much as they do.

"The women who make that mistake, go! So by a process of elimination, through marriage or promotion, error or just plain revolt, is evolved the Geneva Type, the League-of-Nations Woman.

"Her age is her own affair. She is chic, suave, well-informed, a good colleague to her own sex, able to manage almost any type of male chief, as different from the ideal of the suffragists as from the pet aversion of the 'antis.' Yet, under those perfectly waved heads, some slightly tinged with gray, I have found a passion for world peace which I wish more delegates shared.

"But the overwork of the secretariat, men and women alike, is really ridiculous . . . again the camp atmosphere, the feeling that the peace of the world may depend on some memorandum out-of-date an hour after it is typed."