The Second World War

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THE Gathering Storm

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The Locust Years[1]

1931–1935

The MacDonald-Baldwin Coalition — The Indian Collapse — All Germany Astir — Hindenburg and Hitler — Schleicher Fails as a Stopgap — Hitler Becomes Chancellor — The Burning of the Reichstag, February 27, 1933 — Hitler Wins a Majority at the Elections — The New Master — Qualitative Disarmament — 1932 in Germany — British Air Estimates of 1933 — Equality of Status in Armaments — "The MacDonald Plan" — "Thank God for the French Army" — Hitler Quits the League of Nations — A New York Adventure — Peace at Chartwell — Some Wise Friends — The Marlborough Battlefields — "Putzi" — The Attitude of the Conservative Party — Dangers in the Far East — Japan Attacks China — Accountability.

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT which resulted from the general election of 1931 was in appearance one of the strongest, and in fact one of the weakest, in British records. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the Prime Minister, had severed himself, with the utmost bitterness on both sides, from the Socialist Party which it had been his life's work to create. Henceforward he brooded supinely at the head of an administration which, though nominally National, was in fact overwhelmingly Conservative. Mr. Baldwin preferred the substance to the form of power, and reigned placidly in the background. The Foreign Office was

1 Four years later, Sir Thomas Inskip, Minister for Co-ordination of Defence, who was well-versed in the Bible, used the expressive phrase about this dismal period, of which he was the heir: "The years that the locust hath eaten." — Joel, 2:25.

filled by Sir John Simon, one of the leaders of the Liberal contingent. The main work of the Administration at home was done by Mr. Neville Chamberlain, who soon succeeded Mr. Snowden as Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Labour Party, blamed for its failure in the financial crisis and sorely stricken at the polls, was led by the extreme pacifist, Mr. George Lansbury. During the period of almost five years of this Administration, from January, 1931, to November, 1935, the entire situation on the Continent of Europe was reversed.

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On the first return of the new Parliament, the Government demanded a vote of confidence upon their Indian policy. To this I moved an amendment as follows:

Provided that nothing in the said policy shall commit this House to the establishment in India of a Dominion Constitution as defined by the Statute of Westminster. . . . And that no question of self-government in India at this juncture shall impair the ultimate responsibility of Parliament for the peace, order, and good government of the Indian Empire.

On this occasion I spoke for as much as an hour and a half, and was heard with attention. But on this issue, as later on upon defence, nothing that one could say made the slightest difference. We have now along this subsidiary Eastern road also reached our horrible consummation in the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of poor people who only sought to earn their living under conditions of peace and justice. I ventured to tell the ignorant Members of all parties:

As the British authority passes for a time into collapse, the old hatreds between the Moslems and the Hindus revive and acquire new life and malignancy. We cannot easily conceive what these hatreds are. There are in India mobs of neighbours, people who have dwelt together in the closest propinquity all their lives, who when held and dominated by these passions will tear each other to pieces, men, women, and children, with their fingers. Not for a hundred years have the relations between Moslems and Hindus been so poisoned as they have been since England was deemed to

be losing her grip, and was believed to be ready to quit the scene if told to go.

We mustered little more than forty in the lobby against all the three parties in the House of Commons. This must be noted as a sad milestone on the downward path.

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Meanwhile, all Germany was astir and great events marched forward.

Much had happened in the year which followed the fall of the Bruening Cabinet in May, 1932. Papen and the political general, Schleicher, had hitherto attempted to govern Germany by cleverness and intrigue. The time for these had now passed. Papen, who succeeded Bruening as Chancellor, hoped to rule with the support of the entourage of President Hindenburg and of the extreme Nationalist group in the Reichstag. On July 20, a decisive step was taken. The Socialist Government in Prussia was forcibly ousted from office. The question put to the Prime Minister of Prussia when he said he would only yield to physical force was: "How much force do you require?" He was then carried away from his desk. But Papen's rival was eager for power. In Schleicher's calculations the instrument lay in the dark hidden forces storming into German politics behind the rising power and name of Adolf Hitler. He hoped to make the Hitler Movement a docile servant of the Reichswehr, and in so doing to gain the control of both himself. The contacts between Schleicher and Roehm, the leader of the Nazi Storm Troopers, which had begun in 1931, were extended in the following year to more precise relations between Schleicher and Hitler himself. The road to power for both men seemed to be obstructed only by Papen and by the confidence displayed by Hindenburg in him.

In August, 1932, Hitler came to Berlin on a private summons from the President. The moment for a forward step seemed at hand. Thirteen million German voters stood behind the Fuehrer. A vital share of office must be his for the asking. He was now in somewhat the position of Mussolini on the eve of

the march on Rome. But Papen did not care about recent Italian history. He had the support of Hindenburg and had no intention of resigning. The old Marshal saw Hitler. He was not impressed. "*That* man for Chancellor? I'll make him a postmaster and he can lick stamps with my head on them." In palace circles Hitler had not the influence of his competitors.

In the country the vast electorate was restless and adrift. In November, 1932, for the fifth time in a year, elections were held throughout Germany. The Nazis lost ground and their 230 seats were reduced to 196, the Communists gaining the balance. The bargaining power of the Fuehrer was thus weakened. Perhaps General Schleicher would be able to do without him after all. The General gained favour in the circle of Hindenburg's advisers. On November 17, Papen resigned and Schleicher became Chancellor in his stead. But the new Chancellor was found to have been more apt at pulling wires behind the scenes than at the open summit of power. He had quarrelled with too many people. Hitler together with Papen and the Nationalists now ranged themselves against him; and the Communists, fighting the Nazis in the streets and the Government by their strikes, helped to make his rule impossible. Papen brought his personal influence to bear on President Hindenburg. Would not after all the best solution be to placate Hitler by thrusting upon him the responsibilities and burdens of office? Hindenburg at last reluctantly consented. On January 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler took office as Chancellor of Germany.

The hand of the Master was soon felt upon all who would or might oppose the New Order. On February 2, all meetings or demonstrations of the German Communist Party were forbidden, and throughout Germany a round-up of secret arms belonging to the Communists began. The climax came on the evening of February 27, 1933. The building of the Reichstag broke into flames. Brown Shirts, Black Shirts, and their auxiliary formations were called out. Four thousand arrests, including the Central Committee of the Communist Party, were made overnight. These measures were entrusted to Goering,

now Minister of the Interior of Prussia. They formed the preliminary to the forthcoming elections and secured the defeat of the Communists, the most formidable opponents of the new régime. The organising of the electoral campaign was the task of Goebbels, and he lacked neither skill nor zeal.

But there were still many forces in Germany reluctant, obstinate, or actively hostile to Hitlerism. The Communists, and many who in their perplexity and distress voted with them, obtained 81 seats; the Socialists 118; and the Nationalists of Papen and Hugenberg 52. Against these Hitler secured a Nazi vote of 17,300,000 votes with 288 seats. Thus, and thus only, did Hitler obtain by hook and crook a majority vote from the German people. He had 288 against the other parties numbering 251; a majority of 37 only. Under the ordinary processes of civilised parliamentary government, so large a minority would have had great influence and due consideration in the State. But in the new Nazi Germany minorities were now to learn that they had no rights.

On March 21, 1933, Hitler opened, in the garrison church at Potsdam, hard-by the tomb of Frederick the Great, the First Reichstag of the Third Reich. In the body of the church sat the representatives of the Reichswehr, the symbol of the continuity of German might, and the senior officers of the S.A. and S.S., the new figures of resurgent Germany. On March 24, the majority of the Reichstag, overbearing or overaweing all opponents, confirmed by 441 votes to 94 complete emergency powers to Chancellor Hitler for four years. As the result was announced, Hitler turned to the benches of the Socialists and cried, "And now I have no further need of you."

Amid the excitement of the election the exultant column of the National Socialist Party filed past their leader in the pagan homage of a torchlight procession through the streets of Berlin. It had been a long struggle, difficult for foreigners, especially those who had not known the pangs of defeat, to comprehend. Adolf Hitler had at last arrived; but he was not alone. He had called from the depths of defeat the dark and savage furies latent in the most numerous, most serviceable,

ruthless, contradictory, and ill-starred race in Europe. He had conjured up the fearful idol of an all-devouring Moloch of which he was the priest and incarnation. It is not within my scope to describe the inconceivable brutality and villainy by which this apparatus of hatred and tyranny had been fashioned and was now to be perfected. It is necessary, for the purpose of this account, only to present to the reader the new and fearful fact which had broken upon the still-unwitting world: GERMANY UNDER HITLER, AND GERMANY ARMING.

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While these deadly changes were taking place in Germany, the MacDonald-Baldwin Government felt bound to enforce for some time the severe reductions and restrictions which the financial crisis had imposed upon our already modest armaments, and steadfastly closed their eyes and ears to the disquieting symptoms in Europe. In vehement efforts to procure a disarmament of the victors equal to that which had been enforced upon the vanquished by the Treaty of Versailles, Mr. MacDonald and his Conservative and Liberal colleagues pressed a series of proposals forward in the League of Nations and through every other channel that was open. The French, although their political affairs still remained in constant flux and in motion without particular significance, clung tenaciously to the French Army as the centre and prop of the life of France and of all her alliances. This attitude earned them rebukes both in Britain and in the United States. The opinions of the press and public were in no way founded upon reality; but the adverse tide was strong.

When in May, 1932, the virtues of disarmament were extolled in the House of Commons by all parties, the Foreign Secretary opened a new line in the classification of weapons which should be allowed or discouraged. He called this "qualitative disarmament." It was easier to expose the fallacy than to convince the Members. I said:

The Foreign Secretary told us that it was difficult to divide weapons into offensive and defensive categories. It certainly is,

air has revolutionised our position. We are not the same kind of country we used to be when we were an island, only twenty years ago.

I then asked for three definite decisions to be taken without delay. For the Army: the reorganisation of our civil factories, so that they could be turned over rapidly to war purposes, should be begun in Britain, as all over Europe. For the Navy we should regain freedom of design. We should get rid of this London Treaty which had crippled us in building the kind of ships we wanted, and had stopped the United States from building a great battleship which she probably needed, and to which we should not have had the slightest reason to object. We should be helped in doing this by the fact that another of the parties to the Treaty [1] was resolved to regain her freedom too. Thirdly, the air. We ought to have an air force as strong as the air force of France or Germany, whichever was the stronger. The Government commanded overwhelming majorities in both branches of the Legislature, and nothing would be denied to them. They had only to make their proposals with confidence and conviction for the safety of the country, and their countrymen would sustain them.

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There was at this moment a flicker of European unity against the German menace. On February 17, 1934, the British, French, and Italian Governments made a common declaration upon the maintenance of Austrian independence. On March 14, I spoke again in Parliament:

> The awful danger of our present foreign policy is that we go on perpetually asking the French to weaken themselves. And what do we say is the inducement? We say, "Weaken yourselves," and we always hold out the hope that if they do it and get into trouble, we will then in some way or other go to their aid, although we have nothing with which to go to their aid. I cannot imagine a more dangerous policy. There is something to be said for isolation; there is something to be said for alliances. But there is nothing to be said for weakening the Power on the Continent with whom you would be in alliance, and then involving yourself more [deeply] in Continental tangles in order to make it up to them. In that way you have neither the one thing nor the other; you have the worst of both worlds.
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> The Romans had a maxim, "Shorten your weapons and lengthen your frontiers." But our maxim seems to be, "Diminish your weapons and increase your obligations." Aye, and diminish the weapons of your friends.

[1] Japan.

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Italy now made a final attempt to carry out the aforesaid Roman maxim. On March 17, Italy, Hungary, and Austria signed the so-called Rome Protocols, providing for mutual consultation in the event of a threat to any of the three parties. But Hitler was growing steadily stronger, and in May and June subversive activities increased throughout Austria. Dollfuss immediately sent reports on these terrorist acts to Suvich with a note deploring their depressive effect upon Austrian trade and tourists.

It was with this dossier in his hand that Mussolini went to Venice on June 14 to meet Hitler for the first time. The German Chancellor stepped from his airplane in a brown mackintosh and Homburg hat into an array of sparkling Fascist uniforms, with a resplendent and portly Duce at their head. As Mussolini caught sight of his guest, he murmured to his aide, "Non mi piace." ("I don't like the look of him.") At this strange meeting, only a general exchange of ideas took place, with mutual lectures upon the virtues of dictatorship on the German and Italian models. Mussolini was clearly perplexed both by the personality and language of his guest. He summed up his final impression in these words, "A garrulous monk." He did, however, extract some assurances of relaxation of German pressure upon Dollfuss. Ciano told the journalists after the meeting, "You'll see. Nothing more will happen."

But the pause in German activities which followed was due not to Mussolini's appeal, but to Hitler's own internal preoccupations.

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The acquisition of power had opened a deep divergence between the Fuehrer and many of those who had borne him forward. Under Roehm's leadership the S.A. increasingly represented the more revolutionary elements of the party. There were senior members of the party, such as Gregor Strasser, ardent for social revolution, who feared that Hitler in arriving at the first place would simply be taken over by the existing hierarchy, the Reichswehr, the bankers, and the industrialists. He would not have been the first revolutionary leader to kick down the ladder by which he had risen to exalted heights. To the rank and file of the S.A. (Brown Shirts) the triumph of January, 1933, was meant to carry with it the freedom to pillage, not only the Jews and profiteers, but also the well-to-do, established classes of society. Rumours of a great betrayal by their Leader soon began to spread in certain circles of the party. Chief-of-Staff Roehm acted on this impulse with energy. In January, 1933, the S.A. had been four hundred thousand strong. By the spring of 1934, he had recruited and organised nearly three million men. Hitler in his new situation was uneasy at the growth of this mammoth machine, which, while professing fervent loyalty to his name, and being for the most part deeply attached to him, was beginning to slip from his own personal control. Hitherto he had possessed a private army. Now he had the national army. He did not intend to exchange the one for the other. He wanted both, and to use each, as events required, to control the other. He had now, therefore, to deal with Roehm. "I am resolved," he declared to the leaders of the S.A. in these days, "to repress severely any attempt to overturn the existing order. I will oppose with the sternest energy a second revolutionary wave, for it would bring with it inevitable chaos. Whoever raises his head against the established authority of the State will be severely treated, whatever his position."

In spite of his misgivings Hitler was not easily convinced of the disloyalty of his comrade of the Munich *Putsch,* who, for the last seven years, had been the Chief of Staff of his Brown Shirt Army. When, in December, 1933, the unity of the party

with the State had been proclaimed, Roehm became a member of the German Cabinet. One of the consequences of the union of the party with the State was to be the merging of the Brown Shirts with the Reichswehr. The rapid progress of national rearmament forced the issue of the status and control of all the German armed forces into the forefront of politics. In February, 1934, Mr. Eden arrived in Berlin, and in the course of conversation, Hitler agreed provisionally to give certain assurances about the non-military character of the S.A. Roehm was already in constant friction with General von Blomberg, the Chief of the General Staff. He now feared the sacrifice of the party army he had taken so many years to build, and in spite of warnings of the gravity of his conduct, he published on April 18 an unmistakable challenge:

> The Revolution we have made is not a national revolution, but a National-*Socialist* Revolution. We would even underline this last word, "Socialist." The only rampart which exists against reaction is represented by our assault groups, for they are the absolute incarnation of the revolutionary idea. The militant in the Brown Shirt from the first day pledged himself to the path of revolution, and he will not deviate by a hairbreadth until our ultimate goal has been achieved.

He omitted, on this occasion, the "Heil Hitler!" which had been the invariable conclusion of Brown Shirt harangues.

During the course of April and May, Blomberg continually complained to Hitler about the insolence and activities of the S.A. The Fuehrer had to choose between the generals who hated him and the Brown Shirt thugs to whom he owed so much. He chose the generals. At the beginning of June, Hitler, in a five-hour conversation, made a last effort to conciliate and come to terms with Roehm. But with this abnormal fanatic, devoured by ambition, no compromise was possible. The mystic hierarchic Greater Germany, of which Hitler dreamed, and the Proletarian Republic of the People's Army, desired by Roehm, were separated by an impassable gulf.

Within the framework of the Brown Shirts, there had been formed a small and highly trained élite, wearing black uniforms

and known as the S.S., or later as Black Shirts. These units were intended for the personal protection of the Fuehrer and for special and confidential tasks. They were commanded by an ex-unsuccessful poultry farmer, Heinrich Himmler. Foreseeing the impending clash between Hitler and the Army on the one hand, and Roehm and the Brown Shirts on the other, Himmler took care to carry the S.S. into Hitler's camp. On the other hand, Roehm had supporters of great influence within the party, who, like Gregor Strasser, saw their ferocious plans for social revolution being cast aside. The Reichswehr also had its rebels. Ex-Chancellor von Schleicher had never forgiven his disgrace in January, 1933, and the failure of the Army Chiefs to choose him as successor to Hindenburg. In a clash between Roehm and Hitler, Schleicher saw an opportunity. He was imprudent enough to drop hints to the French Ambassador in Berlin that the fall of Hitler was not far off. This repeated the action he had taken in the case of Bruening. But the times had become more dangerous.

It will long be disputed in Germany whether Hitler was forced to strike by the imminence of the Roehm plot, or whether he and the generals, fearing what might be coming, resolved on a clean-cut liquidation while they had the power. Hitler's interest and that of the victorious faction was plainly to establish the case for a plot. It is improbable that Roehm and the Brown Shirts had actually got as far as this. They were a menacing movement rather than a plot, but at any moment this line might have been crossed. It is certain they were drawing up their forces. It is also certain they were forestalled.

Events now moved rapidly. On June 25, the Reichswehr was confined to barracks, and ammunition was issued to the Black Shirts. On the opposite side the Brown Shirts were ordered to stand in readiness, and Roehm with Hitler's consent called a meeting for June 30 of all their senior leaders to meet at Wiessee in the Bavarian Lakes. Hitler received warning of grave danger on the twenty-ninth. He flew to Godesberg, where he was joined by Goebbels who brought alarming news of impending mutiny in Berlin. According to Goebbels,

Roehm's adjutant, Karl Ernst, had been given orders to attempt a rising. This seems unlikely. Ernst was actually at Bremen, about to embark from that port on his honeymoon.

On this information, true or false, Hitler took instant decisions. He ordered Goering to take control in Berlin. He boarded his airplane for Munich, resolved to arrest his main opponents personally. In this life-or-death climax, as it had now become, he showed himself a terrible personality. Plunged in dark thought, he sat in the co-pilot's seat throughout the journey. The plane landed at an airfield near Munich at four o'clock in the morning of June 30. Hitler had with him, besides Goebbels, about a dozen of his personal bodyguard. He drove to the Brown House in Munich, summoned the leaders of the local S.A. to his presence, and placed them under arrest. At six o'clock, with Goebbels and his small escort only, he motored to Wiessee.

Roehm was ill in the summer of 1934 and had gone to Wiessee to take a cure. The establishment he had selected was a small châlet belonging to the doctor in charge of his case. No worse headquarters could have been chosen from which to organise an immediate revolt. The châlet stands at the end of a narrow cul-de-sac lane. All arrivals and departures could be easily noted. There was no room large enough to hold the alleged impending meeting of Brown Shirt leaders. There was only one telephone. This ill accords with the theory of an imminent uprising. If Roehm and his followers were about to revolt, they were certainly careless.

At seven o'clock the Fuehrer's procession of cars arrived in front of Roehm's châlet. Alone and unarmed Hitler mounted the stairs and entered Roehm's bedroom. What passed between the two men will never be known. Roehm was taken completely by surprise, and he and his personal staff were arrested without incident. The small party, with its prisoners, now left by road for Munich. It happened that they soon met a column of lorries of armed Brown Shirts on their way to acclaim Roehm at the conference convened at Wiessee for noon. Hitler stepped out of his car, called for the commanding

officer, and, with confident authority, ordered him to take his men home. He was instantly obeyed. If he had been an hour later, or they had been an hour earlier, great events would have taken a different course.

On arrival at Munich, Roehm and his entourage were imprisoned in the same gaol where he and Hitler had been confined together ten years before. That afternoon the executions began. A revolver was placed in Roehm's cell, but, as he disdained the invitation, the cell door was opened within a few minutes, and he was riddled with bullets. All the afternoon the executions proceeded in Munich at brief intervals. The firing parties of eight had to be relieved from time to time on account of the mental stress of the soldiers. But for several hours the recurrent volleys were heard every ten minutes or so.

Meanwhile, in Berlin, Goering, having heard from Hitler, followed a similar procedure. But here, in the capital, the killings spread beyond the hierarchy of the S.A. Schleicher and his wife, who threw herself in front of him, were shot in their house. Gregor Strasser was arrested and put to death. Papen's private secretary and immediate circle were also shot; but for some unknown reason he himself was spared. In the Lichtefelde Barracks in Berlin, Karl Ernst, clawed back from Bremen, met his fate; and here, as in Munich, the volleys of the executioners were heard all day. Throughout Germany, during these twenty-four hours, many men unconnected with the Roehm plot disappeared as the victims of private vengeance, sometimes for very old scores. Otto von Kahr, for instance, who as head of the Bavarian Government had broken the 1923 *Putsch*, was found dead in the woods near Munich. The total number of persons "liquidated" is variously estimated as between five and seven thousand.

Late in the afternoon of this bloody day, Hitler returned by air to Berlin. It was time to put an end to the slaughter, which was spreading every moment. That evening a certain number of the S.S., who through excess of zeal had gone a little far in shooting prisoners, were themselves led out to execution. About one o'clock in the morning of July 1, the sounds of firing ceased.

Later in the day the Fuehrer appeared on the balcony of the Chancellery to receive the acclamations of the Berlin crowds, many of whom thought that he had himself been the victim. Some say he looked haggard, others triumphant. He may well have been both. His promptitude and ruthlessness had saved his purpose and no doubt his life. In that "Night of the Long Knives," as it was called, the unity of National-Socialist Germany had been preserved to carry its curse throughout the world.

A fortnight later the Fuehrer addressed the Reichstag, who sat in loyalty or awe before him. In the course of two hours he delivered a reasoned defence of his action. The speech reveals his knowledge of the German mind and his own undoubted powers of argument. Its climax was:

> The necessity for acting with lightning speed meant that in this decisive hour I had very few men with me. . . . Although only a few days before I had been prepared to exercise clemency, at this hour there was no place for any such consideration. Mutinies are suppressed in accordance with laws of iron which are eternally the same. If anyone reproaches me and asks why I did not resort to the regular courts of justice for conviction of the offenders, then all that I can say to him is this: In this hour I was responsible for the fate of the German people, and thereby I became the Supreme Justiciar of the German people. . . . I did not wish to deliver up the Young Reich to the fate of the Old Reich. I gave the order to shoot those who were the ringleaders in this treason. . . .

Then followed this mixed but expressive metaphor:

> And I further gave the order to burn out down to the raw flesh the ulcers of this poisoning of the wells in our domestic life, and of the poisoning of the outside world.

This massacre, however explicable by the hideous forces at work, showed that the new Master of Germany would stop at nothing, and that conditions in Germany bore no resemblance to those of a civilised state. A dictatorship based upon terror and reeking with blood had confronted the world. Anti-Semitism was ferocious and brazen, and the concentration-camp

system was already in full operation for all obnoxious or politically dissident classes. I was deeply affected by the episode, and the whole process of German rearmament, of which there was now overwhelming evidence, seemed to me invested with a ruthless, lurid tinge. It glittered and it glared.

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We may now return for a moment to the House of Commons. In the course of June, 1934, the Standing Committee of the Disarmament Conference at Geneva was adjourned indefinitely. On July 13, I said:

I am very glad that the Disarmament Conference is passing out of life into history. It is the greatest mistake to mix up disarmament with peace. When you have peace you will have disarmament. But there has been during these recent years a steady deterioration in the relations between different countries, a steady growth of ill-will, and a steady, indeed a rapid increase in armaments that has gone on through all these years in spite of the endless flow of oratory, of perorations, of well-meaning sentiments, of banquets, which have marked this epoch.

Europe will be secure when nations no longer feel themselves in great danger, as many of them do now. Then the pressure and the burden of armaments will fall away automatically, as they ought to have done in a long peace; and it might be quite easy to seal a movement of that character by some general agreement. I hope, indeed, that we have now also reached the end of the period of the Government pressing France — this peaceful France with no militarism — to weaken her armed forces. I rejoice that the French have not taken the advice which has been offered to them so freely from various quarters, and which the leader of the Opposition [Mr. Lansbury] no doubt would strongly endorse.

This is not the only Germany which we shall live to see, but we have to consider that at present two or three men, in what may well be a desperate position, have the whole of that mighty country in their grip, have that wonderful scientific, intelligent, docile, valiant people in their grip, a population of seventy millions; that there is no dynastic interest such as the monarchy bring as a restraint upon policy, because it looks long ahead and has much

to lose; and that there is no public opinion except what is manufactured by those new and terrible engines — broadcasting and a controlled press. Politics in Germany are not as they are over here. There, you do not leave office to go into Opposition. You do not leave the Front Bench to sit below the Gangway. You may well leave your high office at a quarter of an hour's notice to drive to the police station, and you may be conducted thereafter very rapidly to an even graver ordeal.

It seems to me that men in that position might very easily be tempted to do what even a military dictatorship would not do, because a military dictatorship, with all its many faults, at any rate is one that is based on a very accurate study of the real facts; and there is more danger in this kind of dictatorship than there would be in a military dictatorship, because you have men who, to relieve themselves from the great peril which confronts them at home, might easily plunge into a foreign adventure of the most dangerous and catastrophic character to the whole world.

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The first temptation to such an adventure was soon to be revealed.

During the early part of July, 1934, there was much coming and going over the mountain paths leading from Bavaria into Austrian territory. At the end of July, a German courier fell into the hands of the Austrian frontier police. He carried documents, including cipher keys, which showed that a complete plan of revolt was reaching fruition. The organiser of the *coup d'état* was to be Anton von Rintelen, at that time Austrian Minister to Italy. Dollfuss and his Ministers were slow to respond to the warnings of an impending crisis and to the signs of imminent revolt which became apparent in the early hours of July 25. The Nazi adherents in Vienna mobilised during the morning. Just before one o'clock in the afternoon, a party of armed rebels entered the Chancellery, and Dollfuss, hit by two revolver bullets, was left to bleed slowly to death. Another detachment of Nazis seized the broadcasting station and announced the resignation of the Dollfuss Government and the assumption of office by Rintelen.