

# THE HITLER STRATEGY

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DR. H. L. STEWART

(Editorial Note—In answer to many requests from readers we have arranged to publish a report of the broadcast by Dr. H. L. Stewart, of Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S., commenting on world events.)

The German reply to the British Note of more than four months ago has now come in. It is a conspicuous example of that strategic method for which a Roman general, Fabius, once won such renown—the 'Policy of Delay.'

What Hitler has asked, last November, was a quite direct, and it ought to have been found a fairly simple, question. Having by his remilitarisation of the Rhineland rendered the Locarno Pact null and void, what sort of pledge for security did he mean to propose in its place? For it was surely not thinkable that he had acted without any alternative plan at all in mind!

His proposal, held back until every aspect of the European reaction to the crisis had a chance to show itself is this; that Germany will enter into a solemn engagement not to attack France or Belgium, with Great Britain and Italy not only as witnesses but as guarantors of fulfilment, provided France will renounce participation in an anti-German confederacy. This is understood to mean that France must withdraw her promise to Russia of immediate help, automatically forthcoming if Russia should suffer attack. Instead, she must agree to refer any such Russian situation to those other two superintending Powers, Great Britain and Italy, for judgment as to whether Russia has indeed been the victim of unprovoked attack. And while they are reviewing the merits of the case, France must stay her helping hand!

What, pray, would Germany be doing, in the supposed case, while France was holding back, and the other two Powers were exchanging views? Ever since July 1914 we have known that her trust is in her speed. This is a proposal whose origin is surely obvious. Hitler and his circle have watched with great profit the affair of Sanctions last year, and the affair of the Non-Intervention Committee on Spain in the present year. They have noticed what wonders can be wrought by dexterously contrived postponement. Cannot one picture an invasion of Russia by German armies, without formal declara-

tion of war, and the appeal for French aid met by reference—in terms of this 'New Locarno'—to a joint Committee, British and Italian, for report? It is not only his long postponement of an answer, but the obvious purpose of the answer when it arrived to plan more postponements, that entitles Hitler to be called the German Fabius.

At the very time when Nazi ingenuity was framing a dispatch for the Chancelleries abroad, Nazi propaganda at home was bracing still further the German spirit. They have been keeping a notable anniversary in the Reich, the anniversary of that very event which obliterated the old Locarno Pact. The regarrisoning of the Rhineland towns began on March 7, 1936. It has been a very temperate sort of anniversary celebration, with no military display in the Rhineland, but with commemorative press articles about the wisdom, now, it seems, 'beyond dispute'—in Hitler's surprise move. The sort of articles whose overemphasis, in a setting otherwise of such sombre restraint, serves to reveal the misgivings which it denies!

That was indeed an audacious move of Nazi policy which made certain weeks in the March of last year a time more anxious than any other since the Great War. Everyone was anxious, not least in Germany, where multitudes then awaited with terror the news of a quick counter-stroke by France. As a German correspondent tells me, the telephone was expected any moment to bring news that French troops had crossed the Rhine. What the Nazi press now insists, in simultaneous articles with uniform message all over the country, is that the Fuehrer's judicious daring has been amply vindicated, that the reassertion of German sovereignty begun last March is now complete, that not servile complaisance but defiant self-respect has thus once more proved the true method of winning respect abroad. In London and Paris, say the Government-inspired German newspapers, public opinion a year ago was so clearly sympathetic with the national revival as to make the war-mongering politician abandon any idea of interference. And it adds, what a spectacle is this latest step taken by Belgium—that favorite instrument in the past for British and

French intrigue! Belgium's intimidation of her purpose to remain strictly neutral in a future conflict of those Western Great Powers is enough to show what a change has come over the scene. Heil Hitler.

It is but an acknowledgement of plain fact to admit that the remilitarisation of the Rhineland has been, from Germany's point of view, successful, astonishingly successful. We may dissent, with considerable mirth from other parts of the statement summarised above. For example from the account of British and French public opinion thwarting the bellicose design of British and French politicians. That is an imaginative flight of the German Ministry of Propaganda in the Fatherland's newspapers, or rather in her newspaper, for she has now only one, with various localised editions. We may laugh at the confidence with which 'Belgian neutrality' (a term, by the way, which one would have expected even Nazi propagandists to avoid) is taken as now assured; there must be amusement in Brussels over so sanguine a construction of Belgium's purpose to give a free hand if the crisis of 1914 should recur. But it is unquestionable that the design to reassert complete German sovereignty by simple ignoring of Covenants and challenging of other Powers to do their worst, begun a year ago, has set Germany free in the sense she desired with such passion. She is building armament and training troops just as she likes; she has cancelled all foreign or international control over her waterways; she has practically extinguished the constitution of the so-called 'Free City of Danzig.' And so far the restraints of Pact or Treaty have proved impotent. Not the Treaty of Versailles alone, which her representatives signed under duress, but the Locarno Pact, which they accepted with eagerness and even gratitude, has been violated by her with contempt.

But there is another line of thought at least as significant as such self-congratulation upon the success which has attended bad faith and the impunity with which pledges have been dishonored. As in similar transactions at a bank, the difficulty arises when a new Pact must be made to take the place of the one which has elapsed, and the negotiators are having a taste of the later consequences of 'repudiation.' Germany's advances through her ambassador, von Ribbentrop, urging a common front against 'Communism,' are received with icy coldness, and with constant reminders of the impropriety of wandering from the

point. Meanwhile international relations, from Germany's point of view, have grown steadily worse. Whatever one may think about the feelings of the British public as compared with those of British Ministers towards the Reich a year ago, there is not the least doubt that popular hostility has now become sharper and popular suspicion has become deeper. The affable von Ribbentrop, sent to England for his supposed tactfulness and sympathy with the British temperament, has offended the national susceptibilities again and again, so that it is official restraint which has now constantly to be applied to popular anti-German demonstrations. Correspondingly, British relations with France have become far more sympathetic and co-operative.

It was thus by no means merely the remilitarization of the Rhineland that began a year ago. It was likewise the remilitarisation of all Europe, and the resumption of an armaments race in which, once certain other Powers take it up seriously and determinedly, Germany cannot win, and must suffer most severely in trying to win. That the chief power concerned would not take it up, would remain too deeply wedded to disarmament and peace, was one of those Teutonic delusions that have already been productive more than once within the recollection of every middle-aged man. In Berlin they have always been poor international psychologists. The rearming of Great Britain is the latest of their unpleasant surprises.

Another incident of the week was the opening at Geneva of a conference from which, if faith in all conferences had not been so badly shaken, a great deal would be hoped. It is a straight talk on the 'Raw Materials' question; the complaint from those countries which Nature has not equipped like certain others with cotton and rubber, with nickel and copper and iron. In short, the Have-Nots countries stating their grievance against the 'Haves.' It is part of the irony of the situation that those most voluble in the indictment brought by the under-privileged against the super-privileged nations are precisely those most intolerant of a like plea by individuals under handicap in the social order, and that the demands of international Communism (with threat of war) come from those who herd the Communist worker most ruthlessly into a concentration camp. But whether consistently or inconsistently advanced, this demand for equalized access to the indispensables of manufacture is

## MUSSOLINI WARNS 'HANDS OFF SPAIN'

(This Article is Written by H. M. Paint of The Daily Mail)

Such is the plain meaning of his latest trip to Libya. The ostensible reason was the occasion of the opening of the Trans-Libyan Highway. Field Marshal Italo Balbo, our erstwhile genial visitor to Shelia, has proved himself a great colonial administrator and a master highway builder. He has managed to maintain also a broadminded attitude unusual under a Fascist regime as this extract from a pamphlet printed for distribution among the Arabs will testify. It reads:

"Italy with full right proclaims herself a Musselman power, without, however, falling down on her tasks and duties as a big Christian power."

This unusual claim has been made in an official brochure issued by Balbo as Governor of Libya.

The native Libyan population which had dwindled to a mere fraction of its former numbers under a decade of the stern but paternal government of Field Marshal Graziani—present address, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia—must have read this startling announcement

With Very Mixed Feelings. Unquestionably the magnificent modern highway traversing the Libyan desert must exert a powerful appeal to the imagination of the East. That nothing should be lacking, Mussolini himself was present with every aid of pomp and circumstances calculated to impress the Oriental mind. At the Philenorum Tri-umphant Arch 200 guests dined luxuriously on delicacies brought by air-

a danger signal for the peace of the world. It is a fit subject for a Conference under sponsorship of the League. Curiously enough, Germany and Italy, two Powers which have trumpeted their grievance most loudly on this matter to Heaven, are not represented at this Conference Table. On the other hand the United States and Japan, neither of whom is a member of the League, are participating. Hope is stimulated not less by the surprising absence of the former pair than by the surprising presence of the latter. One begins to hope that the Conference may not be wholly in vain.

plane from Italy. Mussolini occupied a tent luxuriously furnished with Oriental carpets. Beside his tent a leopard tied to a stake mounted guard! What a setting for the romantic tales of the story-tellers in the bazaars! The man has the essential gift so necessary to every dictator who is his own ancestor—the gift

which Napoleon had of dramatizing himself.

The story will travel throughout the East—grow at each retelling.

Another great man, Clive, who conquered India knew well the hold that symbols exercise over the Oriental mind. This great French rival Duplex had erected a giant monument typifying the might of France in the Carnatic. One of Clive's first acts was to order it to be destroyed. Its destruction did more than all his brilliant victories to convince the peoples of India that the power of France was at last broken for ever. Mussolini also knows the East. It is his first step in building up the Mussolini legend among the Mahomaten races.

The problems of England and France in maintaining their colonial Empires largely peopled by a Musselman population have been much aggravated in the last two years by Italian diplomacy and propaganda. A brief survey of the Italian actions of the past two years is interesting.

The Attack upon Ethiopia by Italy did not arouse the resentment of the Musselman world. Ethiopia was a largely Christian country. The Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula had a vast contempt for the Abyssinians as negroes, and also have never forgotten the shameful period of their history many centuries ago when an invasion of Arabia by the Ethiopians caused them to be subject to them for a long period. The conquest of Ethiopia did impress them, however, with a profound respect for Italian power and a corresponding belief that Great Britain was no longer the mighty nation she had been or the Italians would not have been allowed to proceed unchecked. The Arab kingdom of Ibn Sand began to consider the advantages of an Italian alliance if they found the practical overlordship of Britain too irksome.

The Mussulmen of India numbering only one quarter of the population but confident in their valor and fighting ability are not pleased by the new Indian constitution. They are afraid that their vote will

be over ridden and distasteful policies introduced by the Hindu majority. In any case they consider the Hindus an inferior race who should not be considered their equals even for election purposes. India is today more than ever a fertile field for anti-British propaganda.

In the Soudan there has been quiet since the days of the Mahdi and his followers and their final defeat. It has not been enough considered that the quietude of the Soudan has been owing to the just and efficient British administration. The new treaty with Egypt made by Great Britain once more opens the Soudan to Egyptian colonization. Though the slave trade has been eliminated the Soudanese have not forgotten that the Egyptians are their old oppressors and the Anglo-Egyptian treaty is certain to awaken smouldering discontent.

In Palestine the German colonists have intrigued with the Arab terrorists in their campaign against the Jews. The ammunition used by the Arab rebels was made in Germany, so it is said. The situation was not improved during the Ethiopian crisis by the constant broadcasts from the Italian radio station in Bari. Anti-British propaganda was consistently broadcast in Arabic.

Much has also been made of British support for Jewish colonization.

The French Colonial Empire in Africa has only been maintained and extended in North Africa by a hundred years of constant warfare against the fanatical Moslem Moors, Arabs and Berbers. The French have mainly gained ground not through superior fighting ability or even equipment, but through tribal discord and lack of unity of purpose among their enemies.

In short the time is ripe for a "Jihad" or "Holy War" against the infidel throughout the Moslem world.

Those familiar with the life of Col. T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) will remember that this was an ever present fear in his mind during the last few years of his life. Judicious propaganda, gifts of money and arms, and promises of Italian support could easily explode this Moslem powder magazine.

Mussolini's Libyan trip at this date is a plain warning to England and France that he will not tolerate interference with the Spanish war which is the keystone of Italian dreams of Empire.

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