

A. P. LAURIE

The Case for Germany

[Part 1]

*“I am deeply stirred by the word which
Ulrich Hutten wrote the last time he seized
his pen: — Germany.”*

ADOLF HITLER

January 30th, 1937

The Case for Germany

A Study of Modern Germany

by

A. P. Laurie

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With a Preface by Admiral Sir Barry Domvile

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DEDICATION

It is with admiration and gratitude for the great work he has done for the German people that I dedicate this book to the Fuhrer.

A. P. L.

TO THE READER

There are two sides to every question. You have read one side in our Press for six years. This book gives the other side.

A. P. L.



PREFACE

It is a great pleasure to me to introduce the public to Dr. Laurie's valuable book on modern Germany. He is best known to the world as a brilliant scientist, but he has found time in the intervals of his work to pursue with ardour the task upon which every sensible member of the British and German races should be engaged — namely the establishment of good relations and a better understanding between these two great nations.

Dr Laurie knows full well that this friendship is the keystone to peace in Europe — nay, in the whole world.

He is one of the small group who founded the Association known as "*The Link*", whose sole aim is to get Britons and Germans to know and understand one another better. He is one of the most zealous workers in this good cause in the country.

He writes of the National Socialist movement with knowledge and great sympathy.

The particular value of this book lies in the fact that it is written by a foreigner, who cannot be accused of patriotic excess in his interpretation of the great work done by Herr Hitler and his associates. I recommend this volume with confidence to all people who are genuinely impressed with the desire to understand one of the greatest — and most bloodless — revolutions in history.

BARRY DOMVILE

Robin's Tree
8th May 1939.

“As we advance in our social knowledge, we shall endeavour to make our governments paternal as well as judicial; that is, to establish such laws and authorities as may at once direct us in our occupations, protect us against our follies, and visit us in our distresses; a government which shall repress dishonesty, as now it punishes theft; which shall show how the discipline of the masses may be brought to aid the toils of peace, as the discipline of the masses has hitherto knit the sinews of battle; a government which shall have its soldiers of the ploughshare as well as its soldiers of the sword, and which shall distribute more proudly its golden crosses of industry — golden as the glow of the harvest — than it now grants its bronze crosses of honour — bronzed with the crimson of blood.”

RUSKIN. *Political Economy of Art.*

“All front fighters fought side by side and went through an inferno. They are all comparable to the heroes of the ancient world. It was the manhood of the nations in their prime who fought and experienced the horrors of modern war.

In another war the flower of the nations’ men and women will have to fight. Europe will be destroyed if the best in all of the nations are wiped out. A new conflict will exceed even the ghastly tragedies of the Great War.

I believe that those who rattle the sabres have not participated in war. I know that war veterans speak and think differently.

They energetically desire to prevent another conflict. I hope that the men who are standing before me can contribute to preserve the peace of the world — a peace of honour and equality for all.

Let us not talk of prestige as between the victors and the defeated. This is my one request: Forget what has divided the nations before and remember that history has advanced.”

*Field Marshal **GOERING** addressing the British and German war veterans.*

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Chapter One

DER FUHRER

*“De l’audace et encore de
l’audace et toujours de l’audace.”*

It has often been said here of the Fuhrer that he was “*only a house painter*” or that he had “*no education*”, and the general tendency of opinion in England is that he was not a public school man and therefore is not much good. This attitude shows not only a regrettable snobbishness, but a total ignorance of the origin of so many great men. It is an error which we in Scotland are not likely to fall into, as so many of our famous Scotsmen have come from a similar stock, and have had a similar upbringing and education to that of the Fuhrer.

The Highland crofter with his fierce independence, and the poor Scottish student who worked on the farm all summer to pay his university fees, are our equivalent to the finest type of European peasant, who produces a Mussolini, and a Hitler, and the small farmers of America who produced an Abraham Lincoln.

It is among the peasants of Europe that the old customs and traditions are maintained; the towns people tend to become all of one pattern, and it is to the country that we must go to find the old costumes handed down for centuries, and the old legends and fairy tales. The people in the mountain and forest districts of Germany still live in the houses, and wear on gala days the costumes with which the Grimms fairy tales are illustrated; through these tales we live in an imaginary world in our childhood, with which the familiar Grimms fairy tales are illustrated; through these tales we live in an imaginary world in our childhood which is the familiar every day world to them. However strong may be our link with Germany in later life, through the

Protestant religion which we owe to her, and through her philosophy and music, the ties formed at our most impressionable age are with the peasant.

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In the district of Waldviertel, lives a race of peasants who, in spite of having been part of the Austrian Empire, still speak the Bavarian dialect, and have clung fiercely to their traditions and racial independence. In 1672 a son was born to two of these peasants who bore the name of Stephan Hitler. His descendants lived on in the same district, until Alois Hitler, the Fuhrer's father, determined to see the world, and set off on foot for Vienna. He became a Customs official, but love of the soil was strong in him, and he soon bought a farm in the beautiful district where the Inn joins the Danube, where he established his family, and to which he went on his retirement to take up again the life of a farmer which had been led by his ancestors.

It was here that Hitler passed his early childhood, and attended the monastery school where he first saw the Swastika carved on the arch of a stone well.

As a boy his desire was to be an artist. On the death of his parents he went to Vienna with a few coins in his pocket taking his portfolio of drawings with which he hoped to gain entrance to the Vienna art school. "*You will never be a painter*", said the Professor who glanced through his drawings, "*but you show some talent for architecture*". An interesting prophesy for the future of the boy who was to superintend the rebuilding of Berlin.

Rejected as a pupil both at the school of art and architecture, he found himself alone in Vienna with only a few coins between him and starvation. Building was going on everywhere and he found employment as a builder's labourer: the boy of 18 entering on a life of desperate poverty learnt to know all that was most sordid and cruel in

the life of a great city. For long his only home was the corner of a cellar which he shared with other workmen. His fellow workmen were all followers of Karl Marx, and endless discussions went on in which young Hitler joined. He became convinced that the Socialists and Communists were on the wrong lines, refused to join the trade union and for this refusal suffered an early martyrdom, — he had no sooner got a job than his fellow workmen had him dismissed.

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During this period he learnt the close connection between the Socialist movement in Vienna and the Jews. He has told us of his astonishment when he met in the street a Rabbi with long locks dressed in his caftan. He realised for the first time the existence in the heart of his civilisation of a people of an Eastern race and Eastern religion, foreign to all his racial and religious traditions and exercising an enormous influence through their control of finance. A people bound together by devotion to their race, which had survived being scattered broadcast through the world and persecuted through the centuries.

Finding it impossible to earn his living as a labourer unless he accepted the teaching of Karl Marx, he managed to pick up a scanty living by painting and selling cards. Many of his sketches made at this time survive, and show considerable artistic talent. After a time he migrated from Vienna to Munich and found a lodging with a small working tailor's family. He continued to earn a small pittance by his painted cards, and began to devour all the books he could get out of the public library on history and politics. The tailor and his family have always remained his good friends, and have the pleasantest recollection of the courteous young Austrian who was adored by the children and made his good landlady anxious for his health by his omniverous reading on history and politics, which often continued through the night. He denied himself bread in order to have the means to visit the theatre, especially the great works of Wagner whom he revered and still reveres today.

When war broke out he got permission from Austria to join a German regiment, and went joyfully to fight for his beloved Fatherland; at last, he felt, he could do something for Germany. He was chosen for the dangerous task of dispatch carrier from the trenches, was twice decorated for valour, was wounded, and won the affection and admiration of his fellow soldiers. His final decoration, the Iron Cross of the First Class, was won for capturing single handed a small French force and leading them back to his own trenches by sheer bluff and personality. At the close of the war he was blinded by a gas attack and lost his sight for some time, and ultimately returned to Munich still in the army.

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Munich like the rest of Germany was in a state of anarchy and after a desperate struggle had suppressed a Communist rising which committed the most brutal atrocities. Hitler was employed to lecture to the troops to correct the disaffection among them and show them the follies of Communism.

A few months after his return the disastrous terms of the *Treaty of Versailles* were made known to the Germans. They were received with a feeling of utter dismay which was soon succeeded by one of hopeless despair. Hitler in the meantime had discovered during his lectures to the soldiers where his real future lay, and determined to return to civilian life and devote himself to politics. He investigated all the various groups which had formed themselves, each sure that they had the means of saving Germany, but none of them had grasped what seemed to Hitler the only road to salvation. He alone conceived the bold idea of refusing to accept the exactions of the *Treaty of Versailles*; but how was he, an unknown soldier, to get his ideas to the people of Germany?

One night he read a pamphlet, which had been given him at a meeting, by a workman called Anton Drexler, and realised that here at last was someone who was thinking along the right lines. Next evening he went to a meeting of this “*Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*”, a group of seven men with only 7.50 marks for funds, which was later to emerge as the National Socialist Party and sweep the whole of Germany.

Hitler inevitably became their leader and convinced them that the only chance of success was to hold public meetings. One of their first modest ventures was a meeting in the Munich *Hofbraukeller*, which held about 130 people. Hitler rose to address them and laid before them his whole plan for regenerating Germany. As he spoke the audience became wildly enthusiastic. He realised that he had the gift of oratory, and that by the use of this gift he could rouse Germany to action. The audience went out to spread everywhere the name of Hitler. Their future meetings grew larger and funds began to flow into the empty cash box. The Socialists became alarmed and decided to break up Hitler’s meetings by physical violence; but he had foreseen this development and had called to him a handful of his old comrades of the battlefield and organised them as a militant body whom he called his Storm Troopers.

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In November 1921 he decided to hold a great mass demonstration to test the real strength of the new movement, and if it succeeded to spread his organisation over the whole Reich. The Socialists determined that it should fail, and arranged to make an attack at the meeting which would smash the movement once and for all. The audience sat at little tables and refreshed themselves with beer while listening to the speaker. In Munich these beer mugs are heavy earthenware vessels. While Hitler was speaking the Socialists had been storing the empty mugs under their tables for ammunition, and at a given signal began hurling them at the heads of the audience and at Hitler who was standing on a table. During the rain of mugs Hitler

never moved, and by some miracle was not hit. His Storm Troopers went promptly into action and though they were unarmed and their opponents had knives and other ugly weapons and greatly outnumbered them, the Storm Troopers after a desperate fight drove them out of the meeting. The scene was one of the wildest description and the hall was littered with broken mugs and smashed tables and chairs. Hitler calmly continued his speech where he had left off as if nothing had happened. Henceforth the Storm Troopers were known as “*Storm Detachment*” (Sturm Abteilung or SA.).

While the Nazi movement was spreading through Bavaria, the Bavarians were getting more and more dissatisfied with the central government in Berlin, and a movement was spreading to separate Bavaria from the Republic. The Bavarian Minister von Knilling appointed, Herr von Kahr as Commissar with almost absolute power. Herr von Kahr broke off relations with Berlin and was joined in his revolt by the heads of the army and the police in Bavaria. There was talk of a march on Berlin, while Ebert was considering the possibility of ordering the army of the Republic to march on Bavaria. Von Kahr and Hitler were in agreement, but von Kahr hesitated and failed to push the rebellion. On November 9th 1923, Hitler and Ludendorff were marching through Munich at the head of their comrades and fellow members through cheering crowds, when they were stopped by a cordon of police who fired upon them. The scene was one of the wildest panic, the street was strewn with dead and wounded, eighteen of Hitler’s comrades were killed, and Hitler was thrown down injuring his shoulder.

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This attack by the police was followed up by the arrest of Hitler and many of his party.

At his trial he made a speech in which he unfolded his whole policy; a speech which made a great impression in Germany. “*It is not you,*

Gentlemen”, — he told the Court — “*who pass judgment on us. We shall be judged before the eternal bar of history.*” He was condemned to five years imprisonment in the fortress of Landsberg, a sentence which was afterwards commuted to nine months, and was soon joined in prison by many of his followers who were allowed by the prison rules to mix together in the daytime. While there letters and presents poured in from all over Germany, but his organisation was rapidly falling to pieces without the presence of its leader. It was during his imprisonment that he dictated “*Mein Kampf*” to Hess.

When he left prison in December 1924 he had come to the conclusion that a revolution based on a coup d’etat did not provide a permanent foundation on which to build a new state, and determined to undertake the colossal task of converting the whole German people and obtaining power by their votes. In spite of being forbidden to speak in several of the German federal states, his movement made rapid progress, and returned larger and larger numbers of members to the Reichstag at each election.

The work of building up this great organisation was stupendous, and during elections he flew in a plane all over Germany speaking everywhere and organising his followers. Finally he had a large majority over any other party in the Reichstag, and Hindenburg conferred on him the post of Chancellor, on January 30, 1933. Hitler asked the Reichstag for absolute power for four years; this was granted, and afterwards confirmed by a plebiscite of the whole German people.

Placed in power, he did not follow the usual practice of Dictators and shoot his opponents. The more dangerous enemies of the new government were put in concentration camps, where they suffered no more hardships than the common soldier. Civil servants opposed to him and Jewish professors and heads of institutions, were pensioned off at the full value they would have received in old age. Then began

the vast task of re-organising Germany; *the most bloodless revolution the world has ever seen had been accomplished.*

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One cannot read the story of Hitler's early life without realising that everything went to form his mind for his future task. Consciously his ambition was to become a painter, but his early absorption in history and geography pointed in another direction. As a young boy, he came to realise what it meant to be separated from Germany, and to live in an Empire which is largely dominated by alien Slavonic influences. He read a history of the war of 1870 when he was a boy, and asked himself, why did we not go to the help of the Germans? The answer was plain. Because although we are Germans, we are divided from our blood brothers; the peoples would have joined, but the outside influence of rival dynasties kept them apart. Can we not see in this deep impression the reason behind his resolve to unite Austria and Germany, and his determination to bring the Sudeten Germans back to their fatherland?

He has denounced the folly of conquering and subduing foreign peoples. He had a perfect example before him in his youth, in the endless struggles to subdue the turbulent slav populations of the Austrian Empire, which finally caused its destruction. He was horrified when he visited as a young man the Austrian parliament, and found it full of Slavs who were making long speeches in languages which only a few could understand, and whose racial hatreds finally boiled up into a free fight.

The great social reforms which he has carried out can in the same way be attributed to his early experience. His sufferings of poverty, uncertainty of employment, and starvation in Vienna, when he was left an orphan at eighteen and had to become a labourer, made a deep impression on his mind, and unconsciously again, fate was shaping his destiny, giving him by this harsh treatment an understanding and

insight into the difficulties and struggles of the working classes, which he could never have had otherwise. He has fought and conquered for Germany the terrible disease of unemployment, remembering his own misery when he was workless, and the pressing anxiety of where the next meal was to come from.

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Brought into contact with Communism, the accepted faith of his fellow workmen, he was faced at an early age with fundamental political problems. Communism aims at a class war which would split Europe horizontally and result in an international communist state. Hitler saw in nationalism an emotional force which could unite all the peoples of a nation in a common purpose of justice for all classes. Communism appeals to hate, and denies the national bond, while nationalism appeals to the natural good feeling between the members of the same community. Communism is therefore necessarily anti-Christian, and nationalism is Christian, so long as it is used as a motive for internal reform, and does not result, as it has done so often in the past, in the proof of patriotism being the extent of our hatred of other nations. Brought into intimate contact with Communism as an active political force, and not as a subject for discussion in the study, he learnt to hate it, and to hate the men who were exploiting the workmen for their own purposes. His contact with Communism was therefore a part of his training for his future task; still a boy in years, he had to choose between the risk of starvation or the acceptance of Communism, and he chose to suffer hunger rather than bow the knee to the god of hate and class war.

As a soldier in the battlefield, he was to learn the horror and the mad futility of war, and the wickedness of hatred between nation and nation. Patriotism, according to Hitler, means, thou shalt love the people of thine own nation as thyself. *Patriotism according to the Peace treaties, means, thou shalt hate the people of other nations.*

The solution of these fundamental problems was hammered out by the young Hitler in suffering, and the lessons learnt burnt into his soul. Most men who had endured what he had, would have joined the ranks of those preaching the gospel of hate; hatred of the rich and powerful, and hatred of the peoples of other nations. It is true that in “*Mein Kampf*”, he shows something of the old Adam, but the fires of suffering have burnt all dross out of his soul, so that he comes today before men with a message of Peace and goodwill.

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We have many impressions of Hitler from those who have known him personally, but perhaps the most interesting is the one given by his jailer. The relation of jailer and prisoner is naturally a difficult one, and yet he speaks of Hitler’s unfailing courtesy, and prompt recognition of the necessity for prison discipline. The jailer occasionally had difficulties with the young Nazis, who were indignant at their imprisonment, and chafed at prison rules. When trouble arose he had only to go to Hitler, who would say, “*leave it to me*”, and everything was put right. He speaks of his unfailing cheerfulness, how he encouraged his followers, and kept them interested to break the monotony of prison life, and of his invincible courage in spite of the apparent wreckage of his party.

His kindly personality, simplicity, modesty and absence of all pretence are spoken of by everyone. When his old Munich landlady summoned up courage to call upon him, she had only to explain to the two S. S. men on guard that she had known Hitler in the old days, to have every door opened to her and to be greeted by Hitler as a dear old friend.

While Hitler has this charming personality, he is of the stern stuff of which leaders of revolutions are made. He stands apart and like all men of genius who have led great movements he is simple and direct, and puzzles and alarms the complex confused personalities of the ordinary diplomatist; yet anyone who will with an open mind study

his speeches and watch his actions can learn to understand him. Dwelling among his beloved mountains he makes his decisions and carries them out swiftly and with absolute certainty.

He burns with one consuming passion, his love of Germany and the German people, rich and poor, old and young, and above all the children. “*How wonderful*”, he has said, “*are the children of Germany.*”

He feels bitterly her wrongs, the *Treaty of Versailles* and all that followed. The writer of “*Mein Kampf*” is there today, with its cynical exposure of European statesmanship, and its call for revenge, but he has found a better way. He has realised that the war and the infamous Treaty were symptoms of a deep rooted disease and that Europe must begin anew.

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He bases his political creed on an idealised conception of nationality, and of race of which nationality is the flower. God, he tells us, has made different nations. Each nationality has something to contribute to civilisation but the value of the contribution lies in its being essentially national. Those who say that Hitler is out for the conquest of other peoples show a complete misconception of his beliefs. To introduce an alien element by conquest of another country is to injure your own. A race can only reach its highest perfection if it is kept pure, and a nation must work out its own salvation and must care above all else for its own people. Patriotism in its highest form means the complete subjugation of individual gain for the whole community. He believes that no alien element can be expected to work in with this ideal, and herein lies one of his main arguments against the Jewish community in Germany.

Instead of suppressing nationalities, the policy of the treaties which the League supported, he takes that deep emotion love of country —

and bends it to a new purpose, service to one's own people and peace with one's neighbours.

There are times when God in compassion for the self inflicted sufferings of men sends a man simple and direct in thought and inspired by one passion, to carry out an ideal which controls him. Hitler has been entrusted with the task not only of saving the German people, but of securing peace in a distracted Europe. *Future generations will recognise him as the man who led Europe into the paths of peace.*

Chapter Two

THE BELEAGUERED CITY

In order to understand Hitler's denunciation of the *Treaty of Versailles*, it is necessary to realise the strategic position of Germany at the time he came into power, and to compare the map of Europe at that time with the map before the war. Germany is bounded by other countries, except along the Baltic, and if we proceed to trace this post-war frontier we shall find that the title given to this chapter was fully justified at that time.

We shall begin with the frontier facing France. Alsace and Lorraine, which had belonged to Germany since the war of 1870, were restored to France. These territories which contain a mixed French and German population, have changed hands more than once. Louis XIV seized them in time of peace, and they continued to be part of France after the close of the Napoleonic wars, to be regained by Germany in 1870. France never ceased to look forward to their recovery; the statues in Paris representing the two provinces being always draped in black. It is probable that if they had not been taken by Germany in 1870, the war of 1914 would have been confined to Eastern Europe. While the *Treaty of Versailles* was being drafted, Foch wished to have the whole of the Rhine Provinces added to France, and during their occupation after the Treaty was signed, attempts were made to agitate for their separation from Germany. The plebiscite taken in the Saar at the end of its occupation under the League, showed clearly that these provinces had no desire for separation, but they were included in the neutral zone, and German troops were forbidden to enter them. France built the Maginot line of forts within five miles of the frontier, armed with powerful siege guns able to throw shells twenty miles inside the German frontier. These forts extended from the Rhine to the borders of Luxembourg.

The *Treaty of Versailles* re-created the country of Poland out of Russian, German and Austrian territory, and in order to give Poland an outlet to the sea, presented her with a broad strip of land on the Vistula, ending in the town of Danzig, which was made a free city under the suzerainty of Poland and the League.

This strip of territory cuts off East Prussia from the rest of Germany. Difficulties have arisen over Danzig, the population of which is more than 90% German, difficulties which have been increased by Poland building the new port of Gdynia in the neighbourhood, on Polish territory, to which her sea-going trade is being diverted. The Polish corridor contains a mixed population of Poles and Germans, and was given to Poland without a plebiscite. According to the German census of 1910, it contained a majority of Germans. A considerable section of Silesia, including three quarters of the valuable Silesian coal fields, was given to Poland in spite of a plebiscite in favour of retention by Germany. As this extensive minefield had been developed by German capital, and contained a considerable German population, this region has also been the source of endless difficulties. One of the causes of trouble is the low standard of living and wages of the Polish miner, wages which the German miner who was handed over has had to accept.

The *Treaty of Versailles* carved up the whole Austrian Empire, creating the new country of Czecho-Slovakia, which contained six different races over whom the Czechs, having a small majority, have ruled. Bohemia which, as can be seen from the map, cuts into the heart of Germany, was formerly part of the friendly Austrian Empire, but now belongs to Czecho-Slovakia. It has been a bone of contention between the Czechs and the Germans for centuries, contains a population one third German and two thirds Czech, and includes the important historical city of Prague. The German population suffered

severely under Czech rule; the Czechs never having carried out the clauses in the Peace treaties designed for the protection of minorities. CzechoSlovakia is a democracy, but a democratic government is no protection to an alien race in a permanent minority, and the Czechs kept their prisons full of German political prisoners.

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It is generally admitted today that the commissioners who drew up the new frontiers showed very little wisdom or knowledge of the various peoples whose fate they were deciding in an arbitrary manner. They refused a plebiscite which had been promised by Wilson whenever it suited their purpose.

If we now look at the geographical position of Germany as a whole when Hitler came into power, it is obvious that she had extensive frontiers on the other side of which were peoples who were far from friendly, not through any faults of the German people of today, but because of long enmity extending into the past. France and Germany had been foes since the days of Louis XIV both for racial and historical reasons, and France hastened, as soon as the war was concluded, to build up an army far more formidable than the one she had possessed in 1914, to make alliances with Poland and Czecho-Slovakia directed against Germany, and to lend these countries large sums to enable them to buy arms. In Bohemia, in place of the friendly Austrian Empire, Germany had the Czechs who were her hereditary foes, and resuscitated Poland was not too friendly to the Germans who assisted in carving up her territory in the 18th century. Behind Poland and Czecho-Slovakia lies the Soviet Republic which has two reasons for hating Germany : the racial reason that as Slavs they hate Germans; and the political reason that the Soviet is a Communist Government bitterly opposed to National Socialism, the Nazi revolution being just in time to prevent a Communist revolution in Germany. Finally, France, after the signing of the *Treaty of Locarno*, which seemed to give Germany some security, entered into an alliance

with Russia which CzechoSlovakia also joined. Czecho-Slovakia offered Bohemia to Russia as a base for her bombing planes, within 150 to 250 miles of every important city in Germany except Hamburg, and promised a free passage to the Soviet troops through her territory to attack Germany.

No one therefore who looks at the map can doubt the correctness of the title I have given to this chapter. The huge guns of the Maginot line can destroy the German towns to 20 miles behind the frontier, and it forms a military base for the invasion of the Rhine provinces; while a Russian fleet of bombing planes planted in Bohemia can destroy the cities of Germany.

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The invasion of the Ruhr by France in time of peace had shown Germany what to expect from her neighbours if she remained in this vulnerable position to the enemy without the gates.

In addition, at the time when Hitler came into power, the Communist vote had risen to 7 million, and the German people had already experienced the horrors of a Communist rising in Munich, Central Germany, the Ruhr Valley and in Hamburg. Horrors that would have been repeated all over Germany if Hitler had not acted promptly.

Germany's very existence depended on a highly centralised government; a stern internal discipline; the training to arms of the young men; the possession of munitions not inferior to her neighbours; and the organisation of the whole nation for one purpose, the preservation of the German people from attack. Germany is not in the position to attack, nor desirous of attacking any nation in Europe; but no nation could be expected to tolerate for long this policy of encirclement without taking measures for defence.
