

The von Hassell Diaries

THE STORY OF THE FORCES
AGAINST HITLER INSIDE
GERMANY, 1938–1944

Ulrich von Hassell

with an Introduction by
Allen Welsh Dulles



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von Hassell
Diaries



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Introduction

BY

ALLEN WELSH DULLES

Conspirators do not often keep diaries. Fortunately, Ulrich von Hassell, German Ambassador to Italy from 1932 to 1937, was an exception. His diary gives us a vivid contemporary account of the various plots against Hitler. It was written not after the events but in the midst of them, and the last entries were made a few days before his arrest and execution in 1944.

The Hassell family came from Hanover. Ulrich von Hassell, born in 1881, devoted his youth to preparation for a diplomatic career. After improving his knowledge of languages and of foreign affairs by studying in Switzerland and in England, he served in Tsingtau, China. In 1911 he entered the diplomatic service and served as Vice-Consul in Genoa in the years immediately preceding the outbreak of World War I. Then he joined the German Army. He was seriously wounded at the Battle of the Marne.

In 1919 he returned to the foreign service and served in Rome, Barcelona, and then as Minister to Denmark and to Yugoslavia. In Belgrade his British colleague was Nevile Henderson, and the friendship which started there brought the two men often together in Berlin in the dark days of August 1939 which led to war. Finally, Hassell returned to Rome as Ambassador to the Quirinal. Here the Hassell family considered the American Ambassador, William Phillips, and Mrs. Phillips their most congenial colleagues.

Hassell's diplomatic career in Rome was largely devoted to trying to build a bridge between Germany and the states of western Europe. He felt that there was a common bond in the civilization of these states and that a way must be found to bring Germany into this European culture for her own salvation and the security of her western neighbors. He took an important part in the negotiations leading to the conclusion, on June 7, 1933, of the Four-Power Pact between England, France, Italy, and Germany. The pact was never ratified, and as the Hitler-Ribbentrop policy unfolded Hassell found himself more and more in antagonism to the instructions which came to him from the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin.

During the early days of the Nazi regime, while Hitler was consolidating his power within Germany, the Führer desired to present a peaceful face to the outside world. Hence he was quite content to allow the Ambassadors inherited from the Weimar Republic days to hold their posts. It was only when Hitler prepared to take off the mask that he began to clear the deck of the diplomats who refused to be tools for his policy of aggression.

In November 1937 Ribbentrop, then Ambassador in London, came to Rome and concluded the Anti-Comintern Pact between Germany, Italy, and Japan. He tried to win Hassell over to his views, assuring him that he, Ribbentrop, was soon to become Foreign Minister, and that Hassell had better play along with him. But the Ambassador to Rome, in his reports to the weak and vacillating Foreign Minister, Neurath, left no doubt of his opposition to the formation of the Axis and the inevitable reorientation of German foreign policy against England and France and toward world conflict. A few weeks later Hassell's mission in Rome was ended. He was replaced as Ambassador and retired from the foreign service. From that time on he became the diplomatic adviser of the secret opposition to Hitler.

As a convenient cover for his activities he joined an organization called the Central European Economic Conference which, as its name implies, was devoted to the study of European economic conditions. This gave him an excuse for spending much of his time in Berlin and permitted him to travel

relatively freely, even after the outbreak of war. He journeyed to the Balkans, to Switzerland, and, as the Nazis swept over Europe, to the various occupied countries. Finally, when his enemies in the Foreign Office and in the Gestapo forced him to abandon these activities, he used the Institute for Economic Research as a cloak for his real work as a conspirator.

To get the proper focus, as one reads the diary, it is important to try to recall how world affairs stood at the time the entry was made, not how they look today. Hassell was not always right in his judgment as to what course was feasible to end the war, as his negotiations in Switzerland disclose, but by and large he was right in his assessment of the Nazi madness, and right when many in England, France, and America were wrong. Also, he was sound in his conclusion that one could not depend upon the military—"hopeless corporals," he called them—to stand up against Hitler. "These generals," he wrote, "would have the same government they wish to overthrow give them the orders to do so." Hassell was not one of those whose views were warped by contemporary German military successes. Some of his bitterest lines were written during the days when the Nazis were the masters of Europe. For him, the occupation of France was the death knell for his hopes of finding a way to end the war on a basis of understanding between Germany and western Europe.

Hassell's closest associates during these days of plotting were the two men who were at the center of the conspiracy, General Ludwig Beck, Hitler's dismissed Chief of Staff, and Carl Friedrich Goerdeler, the ex-Mayor of Leipzig. They were slated to become respectively Chief of State and Head of the Government, if the plot succeeded. And then through the pages of the diary pass in review the other important conspirators, Witzleben, Falkenhausen, Canaris, Oster, Thomas, and Stauffenberg among the military; Dohnanyi, Moltke, Peter Jessen, Leuschner, Popitz, Gisevius, and Schlabrendorff among the civilians—to mention only a few out of many.

The diary was largely written at Hassell's home at Ebenhausen, in Bavaria, especially in the latter days. Reasons of security made this necessary. It was not safe to travel around Germany with incriminating papers, and far too risky to keep

them in Berlin. Under the ceaseless bombing, houses and even safes were torn to pieces. In his garden at Ebenhausen his diary was relatively safe. For a time the hiding place was a Ridgeway's Pure China Tea box, buried in the ground. But when it was unearthed after a wet summer in 1942, as Frau von Hassell tells us, the tea box had proved to be a very ineffective protection against the dampness. Then the diary was hidden in a grotto in the garden. When the Gestapo, after Hassell's arrest, searched Ebenhausen, the last pages of the diary, secreted in a photograph album, barely escaped detection. In the early days of the war, when Hassell could travel with a certain amount of diplomatic protection, he had succeeded in smuggling into Switzerland his notes for the years 1936 to 1941.

Hassell did not try to make daily entries. He was a great traveler, back and forth between Ebenhausen and Berlin, and then on trips to France and Belgium, the Balkans, and in the earlier days to Switzerland. He would often wait until his return to Ebenhausen, and then put down the events of a week or two. The last entry in the diary is dated July 13, 1944, just a week before the bomb was placed at Hitler's feet under the map table as he was reviewing with his generals the military events of the day.

Hassell knew what was afoot, and he went to Berlin, ready to play his part if the attempt were successful. He probably had little doubt as to the fate in store for him in the event of failure. He knew that he was the probable choice for Foreign Minister in the government the conspirators hoped to install after Hitler's assassination. He knew that many—too many—other people also knew this.

There had been some discussion among the plotters as to whether the post of Foreign Minister should be given to Hassell, whose diplomatic ties were with the west, or to Count Werner von der Schulenberg, the last German Ambassador to Moscow, who also was a member of the conspiracy. This uncertainty in turn reflected a division within the ranks of the conspiracy. Should Germany turn east or west? Should the new German Republic look to Soviet Russia and have a

Foreign Minister who was a friend of Stalin's, or turn west and lean on the Anglo-Saxon countries?

With true but rather incautious German thoroughness the new cabinet lists had been prepared. The men who were to take the lead had burned their bridges, and when the Gestapo terror set in after July 20, Hassell quietly awaited in his office in Berlin the inevitable visit of the Gestapo. It was futile to hide, useless, even dangerous to flee, as Hassell's wife and children were within the power of the Nazis. On July 28 the Gestapo came. On September 7 he was haled before the so-called People's Court and its sinister Presiding Judge, Roland Freisler, and on September 8 executed. The calmness with which he faced the ordeal of those last days was doubtless reinforced by the knowledge that he was leaving a record on which he was willing that his own conduct as a consistent opponent of Nazism should be judged.

The vengeance of the Nazis was not satisfied by taking Hassell's life. Members of his family, including his daughter, were sent to concentration camps, and the two young children of the daughter, two and three years old, were taken from her and placed in an institution under false names. After the armistice, in July 1945, Frau von Hassell, after weeks of searching, by the greatest good chance finally discovered the children near Innsbruck. It was the Nazi plan, of course, that these children, too young to know who they were, should never learn that their grandfather was one of those who had fought the Nazis.

The evidence on the anti-Nazi conspiracy is not yet all before us. Some of it is irretrievably lost. We have ample information, however, against which to test the importance of the testimony given by Hassell. We have the accounts of Hans Bernd Gisevius and Fabian von Schlabrendorff, two of the survivors; a summary of the evidence by Rudolf Pechel; the letters of Helmuth von Moltke; and the testimony of the widows and orphans of the men of July 20, 1944. Judged by all this evidence, and a mass of other documentation which I have studied, the diary of Ulrich von Hassell ranks high as a document of historical importance. It also has the element of gripping human interest.

No one man, with the exception of General Beck and Goerdeler, and possibly General Oster from his vantage point in the German Counterintelligence Service, was kept informed of all that went on within the ranks of the conspiracy. It was not a closely knit affair. The military men did not always tell the civilians of their plans, and Hassell was absent from Berlin for protracted periods. But with the exception of the three men I have mentioned, and none of them has survived or left behind any extensive written record, Hassell was one of the closest to the center of the plot. Furthermore, he enjoyed the confidence of the leaders. Thus, not only for students of this dramatic attempt to overthrow a totalitarian regime, but for those who are interested in knowing what went on behind the scenes of Hitler's wartime Reich, this diary is an invaluable record.

1938

Berlin, September 17, 1938, on the train between Berlin and Weimar: Stormy international atmosphere. At home there is growing despondency under the weight of Party rule and fear of war. Heydrich again in Nuremberg in full regalia. Hitler's speeches are all demagogic and spiced with sharp attacks on the entire upper class. The closing speech at the Party conference was of the same sort, delivered in wild, boisterous tones. The mounting hatred against the upper class has been inflamed by the warnings of the generals, with the exception of Keitel, against war. At the same time there is growing aversion to all independent people. Whoever does not crawl in the dust is regarded as stuck up. Here also lies the explanation of my situation. Heydrich told Plessen in Rome that the Party considered me haughty. Ribbentrop cannot abide me either.

During the past weeks I have asked myself repeatedly whether it is right to serve such an immoral system. However, "on the outside," the slight chance of successful opposition would be even smaller.

Wednesday, September 4: At twelve forty-five I went to see Raeder, who was still very much impressed by Hitler's foreign policy. Hitler, he said, has had luck, and luck one must have. However, Raeder had received inaccurate information, which he somewhat prematurely passed on to the naval commands, that the Czechs had mobilized. Thereby, they would, of course,

have placed themselves in the wrong. In the afternoon he hastened to let me know that he had been misinformed.

The political situation Wednesday morning was this: in spite of all the bombast, Hitler's speech on Monday left the door open for diplomacy and referred only to the right of self-determination. The deliberate brutality of Hitler's policies has once more repelled all the Great Powers, reluctant to go to war. As a result, Englishmen and Frenchmen today discuss quite calmly the holding of a plebiscite—unthinkable only a few months ago. That Hitler in reality wants more is something else. In spite of this step-by-step retreat on the part of the Western Powers, the odds on war at the time of my arrival seemed to be 10 to 1. This was owing to the irresponsible assumption of Ribbentrop and others that England would not fight.

Then came the great *coup de scène* of Chamberlain's visit. It was another tremendous success for Hitlerian bluff; on the other hand, it constituted the strongest possible moral pressure by England on Germany.

Knowing nothing about all this, I lunched alone with Henderson. He was very frank and friendly, but at the same time visibly agitated. He explained the English position to me convincingly as follows: (1) to work with all their might to preserve the peace, even if this involves sacrifices; (2) but if Germany resorts to force, and France finds it necessary to act, the English will march with France.

He complained bitterly about Ribbentrop, who was chiefly responsible for the fact that England and Germany were not getting along better. Furthermore, he was of the opinion that all might yet go well if the Nazi regime did not make itself so terribly hated throughout the whole world, and especially in England.

Finally he said that he had made a final attempt and induced the British cabinet to propose Chamberlain's visit to Hitler. It was decided yesterday evening. This morning at eight o'clock he had informed Weizsäcker and Woermann, and he was now waiting for an answer. Unfortunately Ribbentrop was off somewhere with the Führer. In my presence he then telephoned to Göring at Karinhall and explained the develop-

ments. He said something like this: "You will admit that it is of the greatest importance that the seventy-year-old British Prime Minister is ready to fly to meet the Führer this very day." Göring answered: "Of course!" and promised to telephone to the Obersalzberg.

Henderson had sworn me to secrecy, but when he heard that I was to see Keitel in the evening he asked me to tell Keitel what he had revealed to me. I did so and was surprised to observe that Keitel was manifestly astonished at England's readiness to march with France in case of conflict. During the conversation he showed himself quite uninformed politically; he figured with all the free-and-easy mathematics of a milkmaid on the chances for war and on the possibility that England might be on the other side. I told W—— of this conversation today and he was of the opinion that Keitel was simply too stupid to understand such things. The Keitel family, however, showed themselves substantially more sober. For instance, his daughter said many young officers thought the "Brown Shirts" should be the first to be sent to the front, for they were wagging their jaws too freely.

Thursday forenoon I went to see Schacht, who was extremely pessimistic about economic and financial matters. He is completely opposed to the regime. At the very beginning he called Hitler a swindler, with whom England would find it impossible to make binding agreements. He said Chamberlain's visit was a mistake, for it would not prevent war.

Today I met Schacht at the Foreign Office, where he went so far as to make what I considered the senseless remark that if Hitler now gets only the German border districts he will have suffered a serious defeat in foreign policy! Economically we had pumped ourselves more and more dry; the secret funds, foreign-exchange reserves (from Austria, et cetera), had already been used up in an irresponsible way. He thought we were even now in the red. So far as the finances of the Reich were concerned, it was often impossible to meet claims on the government. I cautiously referred to his share of responsibility in the matter, but he denied that he had any. To be a Cabinet Minister no longer meant anything—one was not even kept informed. He didn't know, he said, how they expected to get

out of the mess except by printing money, and if that were required of him he would simply resign.

He seemed to think that a state which operated on such immoral principles could not survive much longer. I parried with the remark that many immoral regimes had lasted long. This he denied. The corruption, et cetera, practiced under these systems were condemned in principle. The state as such recognized ethical standards. But we now have a regime which in the administration of justice, for instance, *officially* proclaims immoral principles. There is some truth in this distinction.

He also told me that Goebbels was pretty much in disfavor because of his affairs with actresses and other women who are dependent upon the Propaganda Ministry for jobs. This was getting to be too much of a scandal. Hitler was in a rage, also, because Goebbels wanted to divorce his wife. Goebbels, knowing the mood of the people, was opposed to the rash war policy.

In the afternoon with Widenmann, Naval Attaché in London before the World War. He said openly what countless people think—that as a German one is today in a tragic conflict. If Hitler's drum-beating policies should succeed, it would be difficult to believe in the blessings of such a success.

Friday, September the sixteenth: At noon I went to see Woermann, who reported to me briefly on the Chamberlain visit. Ribbentrop was furious because he had not been asked to attend. In the discussion Hitler had demanded the "cession" of the German region as the only remaining possibility. The word "plebiscite" does not appear to have been uttered. Personally, Chamberlain had shown understanding but had, of course, made no commitments either for his own people or for the French. Weizsäcker told me today that apparently Chamberlain did not make it sufficiently clear that England would go to war if Germany used force. He was evidently under the impression that matters would continue peaceably. I asked Weizsäcker whether there was danger that conditions in Czechoslovakia would lead to an invasion. He thought not; the press reports were artfully exaggerated and in large part faked. At the moment the barometer indicated recourse to peaceful means. But we well know what differences may yet arise in high places. Woermann, as well as Weizsäcker, con-

firmed my opinion that Ribbentrop absolutely would not believe England would go to war.

I hasten to add here that I talked to Eisenlohr, our Minister at Prague, today, shortly before my departure. He had been recalled so that the German representation in Prague might appear "thinner." This he rightly condemned. Just now he belongs in Prague. He was troubled and depressed about the methods used. He thought the whole business could not possibly lead to any lasting good, even if another success was scored.

Saturday, September 17, 1938: In Weimar for a meeting of the Dante Society. From a world of stress and strain into a dream world.

Wittenmoor, September 29, 1938, at Udo Alvensleben's: In Berlin on the twenty-seventh there was a heavy atmosphere. The Sudeten business doesn't go so smoothly as many people thought it would. Although the Czechs promised the English and the French that in principle they would surrender the German areas to us, we are on the verge of war—world war—because Hitler's demands (immediate evacuation and occupation of the predominantly German districts by German troops) are unacceptable to the Western Powers, if only for reasons of prestige. In this situation, that is in view of the expiration of the German ultimatum to the Czechs on the afternoon of Wednesday the twenty-eighth, and in view of the threatened German mobilization in the event of an unsatisfactory answer, the chances of war stand at 10 to 1.

On the morning after my arrival at the Adlon I met Kanitz, former Minister of Agriculture. He reports that people are in a chaotic state of mind as they suddenly begin to realize how serious the situation is. Dohna-Finckenstein, the SS man, had just told him that "the others (i.e., France and England) had betrayed us," and "we must now take the German districts by force!"

I had lunch with Heinrici, Popitz, Tischbein, and Sybel (Agrarian League) at the Continental. All very depressed. Popitz was extremely bitter; he was of the opinion that the

Nazis would proceed with increasing fury against the "upper stratum," as Hitler calls it. Every decent person is seized with a physical nausea, as the Acting Minister of Finance Popitz expressed it, when he hears speeches like Hitler's recent vulgar tirade in the Sports Palace. Before lunch I saw Stauss, who was one of the first business leaders to go over to Hitler. He is now filled with the greatest anxiety and disgust.

Afterward I saw Ullo Osten, who spent a long time in Spain as an officer. He praised the Italians and complained about the condition of our whole military organization, every branch of which, he said, was in poor shape. All sensible officers agree that it is foolhardy to toy with the idea of war under such circumstances. We really haven't even had a chief of the General Staff since Beck resigned, indignant and unbending. There is growing recognition that Keitel is weak and completely without judgment. Stauss thinks he is simply incapable of understanding things. Brauchitsch hitches his collar a notch higher and says: "I am a soldier; it is my duty to obey."

Yesterday [the twenty-eighth] was a most critical day. In the morning I felt the situation was almost hopeless. In Wittenmoor, at Udo Alvensleben's, we and the Kamekes sat constantly by the radio. The German version of the situation was untruthful in the highest degree. It was brashly denied that there had been an ultimatum and a threat of mobilization so they wouldn't have to admit that a postponement had been granted. Not a word was said about Mussolini having intervened at the request of England. The German radio represented today's meeting of the Four Powers as the result of Hitler's own initiative.

How will Mussolini conduct himself today? [The twenty-ninth.] I do not believe he will support Hitler unconditionally. On the contrary he may be pleased by the strong coalition against us which is now clear to everyone, and do all he can to avert war and arrive at a compromise that will save Hitler's face. Then he himself can return to Rome as peacemaker and *arbiter mundi*.

If it comes off ("It is all right this time," Chamberlain called out to the people), Hitler will bring the German areas into the fold and thereby achieve another great success. But the ques-

tion is whether, in view of the methods used, this success may not prove quite different from all others. Hitler must now realize that he has brought us to the brink of war against half the world, and that those who thought England was in earnest were right. The world (but among the Germans, of course, only those who had a chance to hear something besides the German official reports) will be left with a very bad taste in the mouth. Hatred against Hitler and his methods must have grown in bitterness.

Will Hitler, for the first time, begin to tremble in his God-like position? This time he could not freely follow that inspiration he so blindly trusts. Pressure from the outside has become effective. The question is whether recent events produced any sort of inner shock and how this will affect him psychologically. It may be that he will relieve his feelings by more frenzied rages—perhaps on the domestic scene, against the hated upper stratum, which keeps warning him of dangers. In any case, we may be facing fundamental changes.

Ebenhausen, October 1, 1938: One of the few certainties today is the overwhelming and tremendous relief of the whole nation, or rather of all nations, that war has been averted. However, the Germans, or rather the great majority of them, have no idea how close they were to war. In Berlin, London, Paris, and Rome the four returning matadors were all received as "peacemakers" by their people with the same stormy enthusiasm. Hitler's brutal policies have brought him great material successes.

The day before yesterday we went in the afternoon with Udo Alvensleben from Wittenmoor to see the old Princess Herbert Bismark. Schoenhausen [her residence] makes an almost tragic impression. She thought her father-in-law no longer counted; that in fact his stature was systematically played down. This is true, and, in view of the spirit of our rulers and the successful Anschluss policy, very logical. In the beginning she was impressed by Hitler, but today thinks of him and his methods just about as Popitz does. R. Kassner, the philosopher, was also present—a gifted man, filled with the deepest bitterness by the cultural devastation wrought by the Third Reich.

I share Princess Bismarck's belief that a system employing such treacherous and brutal methods cannot achieve good ends. But I cannot follow her when she draws the conclusion (as do General Beck and a thousand others) that therefore the regime will soon collapse. There is not yet sufficient reason to think so.

Yesterday afternoon [September 30], on my way home, I stopped with Alvensleben in Neugattersleben. Werner Alvensleben was there too. He is the famous "Herr von A." of June 30, who has meanwhile been released from prison and banished to a hunting lodge in Pomerania. He is somewhat mysterious, more conspirator than politician. It is interesting that he was with Hammerstein (the general), who told him that Minister of Finance Schwerin-Krosigk had looked him up (or happened to meet him?), piping hot from an audience with Hitler on Wednesday, September 28, and reported the following incident. Krosigk, with Neurath and Göring, had gone to Hitler to persuade him of the utter impossibility of the war on which he seemed bent. Krosigk emphasized that financially we were already done for, and that we could in no case hold out during a war. Hitler apparently stood out against these arguments until the historic telephone call of Mussolini broke in upon the scene and compelled him to give in.

October 10, 1938: Traveled to Berlin on *October 4* for the funeral of poor, charming Princess Friedrich Sigismund, who at the age of forty-one, after a brief attack of influenza, suffered a weakening of the heart and died. It was really very sad, and a great loss to us personally. In Berlin the *principessa della luna* was always a good companion, full of charm and vitality. Indeed her death leaves a great gap, for she was such a good influence—a bridge between the Court and the world. Besides, her house was one of the few which could receive in good style. Her hearty ways of the old days had become more mellow. Huge crowds escorted the cortege from the church in Nicolskoi to the burial place at Glienicker Park. It was really very beautiful—the radiance and color of this autumn day, at the Havel Lakes, and along the road through the old park. But the impression of unreality was distressing: the hearse, drawn

by four horses decorated with violet velvet and the royal coat of arms in silk, followed by a complete array of Prussian, Danish, and other princes, many wearing the orange ribbon of the Order of the Black Eagle, was like a fantasy.

I rode back with General von Kleist, Commander of Hanover, earlier Dieter's commanding officer. He was very bitter about the irresponsible way in which political matters had been handled during recent months; he was also worried about developments in the Army. If we really had been pushed into war on the twenty-eighth, he said, there would have been no way to avoid catastrophe for Germany but for the military to arrest the leading politicians.

As Weizsäcker told me, Hitler had again expressed himself to the effect that the Czech problem must be liquidated within a few months. Weizsäcker was deeply distressed over Hitler's methods and about Ribbentrop, his own irresponsible, superficial, unrealistic chief. He said he simply could not imagine how this business could go on much longer.

Werner Alvensleben, it seems, did not report the events of September 27-28 quite accurately, although in essence correctly. Krosigk does not appear to have gone to Hitler; he expressed his opinion in writing. Neurath and Göring, it seems, were not actually present when Mussolini talked to Hitler on the telephone. Weizsäcker was in a rage because Neurath showed no sense of responsibility. The president of the secret Cabinet Council did not bestir himself at the critical moment; he preferred to go stag hunting. Only on Tuesday did Weizsäcker succeed in telephoning Neurath to come; Neurath now claims that he came of his own accord.

I wager Mussolini felt the greatest relief of his life when Chamberlain made his proposal. Incidentally, it was suggested by Daladier. Although Mussolini had refused to commit himself to Germany in private, he did venture very far in public, and on Wednesday at two o'clock he would have faced the dilemma of going to war or repeating 1915.

The Hungarians appear to have been somewhat fooled (only relatively speaking, of course)—they maneuvered too timidly!

A great question for the future is opening up in the East: Ruthenia. For Poland this is a fateful question of the first order.

On *October 6* I dined with Stauss. It was his birthday. Schacht was also there, and after dinner, unfortunately in the midst of a rather large circle, he dominated a superficial and witty conversation by making biting attacks on the regime under which, after all, he still holds a responsible position. In his private discussion with me his political remarks were obscure and full of contradictions. His beautiful and intelligent niece (daughter of the doctor), who brought me as far as Nuremberg in her car, told me that her uncle's habit of spouting satire kept her on tenterhooks.

The scandalous behavior of Goebbels is rapidly giving rise to a whispering campaign. It appears that his wife, not he, is seeking the divorce that Hitler forbids. Recently the actress Lida Barowa, slightly inebriated, made a painful scene in which she warned Goebbels: "You cannot treat me like the others." Title of the play: Restoration of family life!

Friday evening at the Deutscher Club. I sat between the guest of honor of the evening, Glaise-Horstenau, and the politician, Colonel von Xylander. Glaise talked quite interestingly and soberly. When I praised the old Austrian administration he commented that it was now being hopelessly wrecked and that nothing decent was being put in its place. Afterward he made an address which was much less unorthodox than our conversation. He is a true Austrian in his lovable adroitness, his humorous sarcasm, and his subtle self-criticism, as well as in his exaggerated modesty, not to say servility ("the Führer was very gracious when he received me!"). On the other hand, he told me that his frankness in stating his views during the critical days had cost him the post of governor (*Reichsstatthalter*).

October 15, 1938: Great to-do in Vienna. Before thousands of people in St. Stephen's Cathedral, Cardinal Initzer preached a sermon with some rather conventional exhortations, especially to young people, to fulfill their religious duties. But he made use of several injudicious turns of speech. His remarks

were received with great enthusiasm and there were demonstrations in front of the Cardinal's residence, as Glaise-Horstenau told me today at the Bruckmanns'. Slogans in the Nazi style were used, but with twisted meanings. The *Neue Züricher Zeitung* reported that the crowds shouted: "We want to see *our* Führer," and the Dollfuss song was sung. As a result there were counterdemonstrations, especially by the Hitler Youth, and serious acts of violence against the Cardinal's residence and also against his staff. One cleric was thrown out of the window and had both legs broken.

The most stupefying part of the story, however, concerns the conduct of the police. For hours they gave the mob a free hand, Glaise thought because of fear of the Party, for it was assumed that the Nazis had organized the affair. The Party, he said, is superimposed upon the state. Glaise naturally deplored the fact that the fight against the church has flamed up again after a terribly violent speech by Bürckel. Glaise was in a very gloomy frame of mind in general because of the developments in Austria. It was today nothing but a robber state. There was no single factor strong enough to counteract the disintegration—certainly not Seyss-Inquart. Bürckel made dynastic politics like a medieval duke; he wanted to be Gauleiter of a Greater Palatinate and to "compensate" Bavaria by giving her the Vorarlberg province.

Yesterday [*October 14*] Hitler was at the Bruckmanns' for an hour and a half for Hugo Bruckmann's seventy-fifth birthday, bringing an abominable floral offering. He was said to have been "human" and pleasant. But everything he said clearly indicated that he had not yet recovered from the intervention of the Powers and would rather have had his war. He was especially annoyed with England—that accounts for the incomprehensibly rude speech at Saarbrücken. The dependable friend is supposed to be Mussolini, who unquestionably would have "marched" just as he—Hitler—would do for Mussolini in a similar situation. In answer to Frau Bruckmann's question as to whether he was not glad that it was unnecessary to shed blood, Hitler growled only a half-hearted yes. When Frau Bruckmann expressed certain doubts about the war sentiments of the German people Hitler replied: "Only the ten thousand

in the upper stratum have any doubts; the people stand solidly behind me!" Does he really believe that?

October 23, 1938: Nostitz came from Berlin, from the Foreign Office, and confirmed the reports about Hitler's state of mind, at least he said that Ribbentrop was running about in obviously bad temper because circumstances had not permitted the use of force. Schmitt-Tiefenbrunn (formerly Minister of Economic Affairs), whom we visited last Sunday, also believes that Hitler will remain quiet only a short time. It simply isn't in him to do otherwise than plan for a new move on the chess-board.

At the moment the Hungarian question,¹ which almost led to military action about ten days ago, is much to the fore. However, for the future we have the Ukrainian problem which is already bubbling away in the pot.

Misgivings are increased by the recent report that Göring is avoiding all public appearances because of excessive demands on his time, and asks that no petitions be addressed to him outside his immediate jurisdiction. Why do that just now? Did he make himself that unpopular because of his warnings against war?

The Bruckmanns were here for lunch yesterday. He is an intelligent, cultured man, who tells interesting stories from his experiences. Frau Bruckmann was very depressed (she always feels somewhat responsible) about tales coming out of the Civil Servants' Indoctrination Camp at Tölz. Fritz Bismarck-Plathe had already reported some of them recently. To one participant, who mentioned that he was descended from seven generations of officers, the leader said, "Ah, somewhat decadent, stupid, and arrogant." On another occasion the leader had asked how many of those present still belonged to any church. When twenty-four out of twenty-five reported in the affirmative he said this fact was a disgrace to his course, and declared that he was surprised to know there were still so many fools around.

¹Demand on Czechoslovakia from Budapest concerning a "reorganization" of the border districts.

October 24, 1938: Saw Rintelen [Military Attaché in Rome] on his way back to Rome following his operation. He said Hitler was really very angry with the generals who had, all too imprudently, expressed their views about our inability to wage a war. He is demanding their dismissal, and Brauchitsch must now contend with all his might against this move. Indeed, this has kept Brauchitsch so occupied that he says he cannot find time to cope with less important matters, such as the General Staff discussions which General Pariani keeps suggesting to discuss plans in the event of joint operations. Keitel, the stooge, was also frustrated because the Führer was of the opinion that no plans for any kind of mobilization could be made now because there was no way of knowing what the situation would be at the time!

Rintelen reported further that Brauchitsch was trying to get Hitler at least to agree that in the event of war Beck would be called to command an army. He opined that his successor, Halder, was a very good soldier but hardly a man of great caliber.

November 4, 1938: The dismissal of Beck and Rundstedt is now publicly announced. Rundstedt, I presume, because of "cowardice"? Keitel appointed colonel general.

Princess Bona of Bavaria (daughter of the Duke of Genoa) told us yesterday Mussolini had bluntly told Hitler that Italy could not go to war and thereby forced him to come around. If that is true, it throws a curious light on Hitler's repeated assertions that Mussolini had proved himself his one true friend.

The Vienna arbitration award¹ of Ribbentrop and Ciano has for the first time since the war, perhaps for the first time in history, given rise to anti-German demonstrations by Hungarians before the German Legation in Budapest. At the same time there were ovations for the Duce. One may well wonder whether, as a result of the peace of Munich, new groupings may develop, and when the first occasion for a German-Italian clash will appear.

In the eastern part of the new Czechoslovakia conditions

¹The decision at Vienna, November 2, 1938, required Czechoslovakia to cede 12,400 square kilometers to Hungary.

exist which may lead to great conflicts. Is Hitler counting on the Ukraine?

November 25, 1938, Ebenhausen: I am writing under crushing emotions evoked by the vile persecution of the Jews after the murder of vom Rath. Not since the World War have we lost so much credit in the world. But my chief concern is not with the effects abroad, not with what kind of foreign political reaction we may expect—at least not for the moment. I am most deeply troubled about the effect on our national life, which is dominated ever more inexorably by a system capable of such things.

Goebbels has seldom won so little credence for any assertion (although there are people among us who swallowed it) as when he said that a spontaneous outburst of anger among the people had caused the outrages and that they were stopped after a few hours. At the same time he laid himself open to the convincing reply that—if such things can happen unhindered—the authority of the state must be in a bad way. As a matter of fact there is no doubt that we are dealing with an officially organized anti-Jewish riot which broke out at the same hour of the night all over Germany! Truly a disgrace! Naïve Party functionaries have freely admitted that.

To Hans Dieter one of them gave as an excuse for his lack of preparation for military billeting his “strenuous activities during the pogrom.” A neighboring burgomaster, as early as Wednesday, the ninth, expressed his sorrow to Pastor Weber that he had orders to take action against a respectable Jew. He then added that on the tenth all the synagogues in Germany would be burning. They were shameless enough to mobilize school classes (in Feldafing, on the Starbergersee they even armed the pupils with bricks). In a Swabian village, Leyen says, the Catholic teacher gave in, but the Evangelical teacher refused to let the boys go.

There is probably nothing more distasteful in life than to have to acknowledge the justice of attacks made by foreigners on one's own people. As a matter of fact, in other countries they are making a proper distinction between the people and the group responsible for acts such as these. But it is futile to

deny that the lowest instincts have been aroused; and the effect, especially among the young, must have been bad. One comforting thought is that this time indignation has gripped not only the great majority of the educated class but also broad sections of the people as a whole. It seems to me that the Nazi leaders sense this darkly. Subtle retreats are to be observed here and there. Only the *Schwarzes Korps* [newspaper of the SS] lashes out with blind rage against the grumblers.

Respectable people were shocked to read names like Gürtner and Schwerin-Krosigk among the authors of the decree prescribing penalties for the Jews. These men apparently cannot see how they are degrading themselves and how they are being used.

The day before yesterday, [November 23] at the Leyens' in Underdiessen (she is nee Ruffo—from Rome), they spoke of the unfavorable development of public opinion in Italy, inspired primarily by Mussolini's tendency to copy Hitler. Frequently heard witticism: Mussolini was the Gauleiter of the Gau [District] Italy. Mackensen is said to be stiff and clumsy.

A Belgian was there too on his wedding journey. He was in Germany at the time of the Jewish persecutions and was naturally shocked. He was arrested for no other reason than that he stood for a moment before a demolished shop. According to his stories the mobilized Belgian Army must have been in very high spirits. In his father-in-law's château soldiers and officers got terribly drunk and smashed everything, so that the nearest area commander had to be called on for help. On the Belgian-French frontier Belgian soldiers are said to have set up placards with "Vive Hitler!" on them.

November 27, 1938, Ebenhausen: The Bruckmanns were here for tea. Their horror at the shameless Jewish persecutions is as great as that of all respectable people. According to Bruckmann even thorough-going National Socialists, after witnessing the devilish barbarity with which the SS treated the unfortunate Jews, are now completely converted. Günther Schmitt of the SS Special Troops says that Himmler heard of the impending action against the Jews only on the evening of November 9—new proof, incidentally, that it was organized—

disapproved of it, and for that reason ordered a two-day confinement to barracks for the Special Troops.

Discussions are said to have taken place between Gauleiter Adolph Wagner and the Police President of Munich, Von Eberstein, as to "who was really behind it." Guilty consciences.

Had conversations with B—— and Professor A. V. M—— as to what one could do to give public expression to the general abhorrence of these methods. Unfortunately without success; without office we have no effective weapon. Any action on our part would lead to our being silenced—or worse. The university professors, who occupied a good strategic position at the outset, have long since lost it through their own fault.

The Army, which alone still has "power," has suffered enormous losses politically. In addition to Beck and Rundstedt, Adam has also been relieved of his command because he too candidly pointed out the defects of the Army.

November 28, 1938: Russians and Poles are attempting to come to an understanding because of the pressure of the Ukrainian question, which is dangerous to both. New crisis in Europe.

A very interesting article in the *Observer* by Lord Lothian. He has hitherto been friendly to the Germans, but is now considerably cooler. He grasped the fact that Hitler wanted to use force in the Czechoslovakian question and was prevented from doing so. Lord Lothian sees and sets forth clearly the whole issue as between "totalitarians" and "democrats." He hopes that morality and freedom will finally win out over brute force, even in the totalitarian states.

I was asked today, as I have often been asked before, how one could explain the sudden swing of Mussolini into the use of Hitler's ideological bilge water. It is the old story: one who says A must also say B. The German National Socialist bloc became so tremendously strong overnight that Mussolini no longer saw any possibility of arming against it with the backing of the Western Powers. In that event it seemed better to go whole hog with Hitler!

On the racial question, for instance, there was a time when Mussolini could not make enough fun of the ideas of the

"superior Nordic race." There is that famous article of his, according to which the Laplanders must logically be the bearers of the highest culture; and his angry declaration: "I do not feel that I belong to an inferior race." Now he has decisively executed an about-face, and the Italians (including, therefore, the good Arab-Sicilians) are speedily pronounced Nordics.

November 29, 1938: Professor von Bissing and Professor Karo here. A year ago Bissing had sent back his gold Party badge because of the persecution of the churches. Noteworthy courage, but unfortunately rare. Both were very distressed over our disgrace, but felt that the latest events would have at least one good result: create complete clarity on the situation.

December 1, 1938: Visit with Professor Cossman [partly Jewish] who lives here at Ebenhausen "back in the woods." He reads no papers, listens to no radio, and buries himself in his studies. He said that now, for the first time, he saw how much he had missed and had yet to study! He denied the rumor that he had again been arrested. On the contrary, the local government suggested to him through one of its officials, and apparently with friendly intent, that he take a trip during the critical days (pogrom). This he did.

It is humiliating to see this courageous fighter for German honor in the role of an outcast. He was imprisoned because a man whom he had once saved from starvation had denounced him. For months there were, of course, no court proceedings. He said the prison guards, men of the old school, had treated him well. But what they had told him about other cases, and what he had since been told by acquaintances and relatives, begged description. The saddest thought for him, especially since these recent happenings, is that the foundation on which he had based his whole battle against the German atrocities stories during the World War had now been shattered, for he had always claimed that Germans were incapable of such bestialities.

We talked about Minister of Justice Gürtner, whom he had known for a long time. It was his opinion that the man was most unhappy but unable to do anything. If he were to resign

he would have the worst to fear because he knows too much.

Interesting address by Ciano. He pictures Mussolini's role in September as that of the real peacemaker, who at the critical moment persuaded Hitler to wait twenty-four hours. It is doubtful whether Hitler will enjoy having the fact of his yielding to Mussolini's pressure thus established before the eyes of the world.

At the same time Ciano asserts that Mussolini would most certainly have gone along with Hitler. That, too, we may doubt; but it costs nothing to say it now, it obligates Hitler to reciprocate, and it serves as a threat against the Western Powers. England is treated with friendly coolness. France is "cut" completely, and Poland and Hungary are admonished to keep quiet.

Daladier has won out against the general strike. Will this result in a strengthening of democracy? In Hungary the crisis continues between Liberal-Conservatives and Progressives, between Progressives and Nazis. In Rumania Codreanu has been done away with "while trying to escape." Throughout Europe the constitutional way of life is locked in a pitched battle with the totalitarian.

December 3, 1938: Ciano's warning to Hungary and Poland must be considered with the one reservation "if it only lasts." (namely, this attitude to the rising Ukrainian problem).

This question is now very much to the fore—following the organized Italian demonstration about Tunis and Corsica, which in turn were precipitated by a casual remark of Ciano's. Although this new demand for something that is an Italian objective serves for the time being only as a means of extortion, the situation may become very serious. Mussolini is fed up with playing second fiddle and can bring us into a very dangerous subordinate role overnight.

December 11, 1938: The correspondent Heymann, who came here yesterday fresh from Rome, is of the opinion that the Axis will hold. I asked him how the 120 per cent Nazi attitude of the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* (for which Heymann writes) can be reconciled with the mentality of a

thoughtful man like Wirsing. He replied that the paper was submitted to Hitler every day and had to be appropriately dolled up.

Heymann has been traveling around Germany for three months and got the impression that the mood of the people was very gloomy. H. Nathusius told him he had heard young officers on active duty discussing quite openly their desire to make an attempt on Hitler's life. Leyen gave a similar report from a resort for officers of the Luftwaffe in Pommersfelden. In the presence of foreign air attachés these officers had spoken about the Third Reich in violent terms.

Lunched yesterday with Plessen. He gave a fantastic description of conditions in the Foreign Office, where, under the insane leadership of Ribbentrop, everybody's nerves are beginning to snap. The new, young diplomats, for instance, are to be schooled in special Party training camps, which means that they will be without any real knowledge.

Maritschi Plessen confirmed the story that teachers had armed school children with clubs so that they could destroy Jewish shops on November 9.

Berlin, December 20, 1938: In Berlin—during a severe cold spell. These days are marked by a deep sense of shame which has weighed heavily on all decent and thoughtful people since the hideous events of November (pogrom). There is talk of little else. Apparently our rulers are fully aware of the disastrous effect of this stupid and vulgar undertaking. Even within the inner sanctum the majority of those responsible secretly condemn the pogrom, and everyone tries, shamefacedly, to make minor amends. But this does not change the essence of the matter one whit; on the contrary, one gets the impression that the paroxysm is spreading into all fields of public life, domestic and foreign.

Perhaps the worst of it is that Göring, who condemned the pogrom most sharply and openly before all the Cabinet ministers and Gauleiters, could not bring himself to quit his post and join with Brauchitsch to call a complete halt. This would have been a very opportune and psychological moment for a stroke which at one fell swoop would have made him the open

defender of all good forces in Germany. Apparently he did say something about this being the last filthy business to which he would lend his name. This is reminiscent of the lieutenant in the café who, upon receiving a box on the ear, cried: "Sir, if you slap me once more I shall challenge you to a duel." Or, for that matter, it is like the Anglo-French policy toward Hitler's "offensives."

Arrived in Berlin in the *evening of the fourteenth* one hour late. Dinner for the board members of the Deutscher Club. Neurath and Krosigk, it seemed to me, were both somewhat uncomfortable in their sorry roles. Bodo Alvensleben is still relatively optimistic because he hopes the Army will do something to change the regime. He said Hoepner, the Commanding General of the Third Corps Area, who was present, was an especially useful man.

On *Thursday, the fifteenth*, Herbert Göring told me that Thyssen had made a great show of resigning as *Staatsrat* and *Reichsrat*, especially because of the organized attempt to murder Acting Governor Schmid (the so-called *Schweineschmid*) in his home at Dusseldorf. Schmid, who has a partly Jewish wife, barely escaped with his life because the wife of the janitor managed to hide him.

Lunch at the Weizsäcker's, with the Magistratis, the Dieckhoffs, Ritter, and an intelligent Swiss banker, Rickenbach. On the whole a cautious Foreign Office atmosphere. Dieckhoff and Ritter told interesting stories about conditions and currents of thought in America. Weizsäcker told me Ribbentrop had said there was no point in his receiving me. As a matter of fact he has still not received Ambassador Trautmann, who returned almost half a year ago from China. He is no more inclined to listen to divergent views than his lord and master. The pace in the Foreign Office, it seems, borders on the unbearable; it is a frantic merry-go-round in which everybody's nerves are getting frayed. Even the highest officials—with the possible exception of Weizsäcker, and he to a limited extent—know nothing about the political objectives and general lines of policy.

Visited Kurt Hammerstein [former Chief of Staff of the Reichswehr]. His attitude toward this regime of criminals and fools is just about as antagonistic as one could imagine. He

doesn't place much hope in the decapitated and dishonored Army. Brauchitsch, he said, is a good soldier but has no political sense and no power, owing to the new and deliberate reorganization of the High Command.

Wilmowsky [Baron von Wilmowsky, a partner in Krupp's] called on me in the evening and talked very intelligently and sympathetically about some vague financial prospects for me. He also spoke of the really mad pace of rearmament, which one can view only with the gravest concern. Dinner with the Brauchitsch family. Next time they want to invite me informally with their cousin, the general, so that I can work on him.

Friday, December the sixteenth: Called on Weizsäcker in the morning. He gave me rather an alarming description of the foreign policy of Ribbentrop and Hitler. He thought it was obviously aimed at war. It had not yet been decided whether to strike out right away against England, while keeping Poland neutral, or to move first against the East, in order to liquidate the German-Polish and the Ukrainian questions, as well as the Memel problem. The latter, in Hitler's opinion, would not require a resort to arms, but merely a registered letter addressed to Kaunas! For the time being immediate action has apparently been once more postponed.

In the anteroom I met tall Mr. Sahm, who is supposedly about to be dismissed, and Carl Burckhardt of Danzig. The latter, understandably enough, was not in a happy frame of mind; he said he was playing a role like that of the Bey of Tunis and would prefer to resign. The Nazi leaders in Danzig, especially Forster, he says, were disagreeable people who had lied to him continuously. It is characteristic of Ribbentrop that he first kept Burckhardt waiting and then had him told to be brief, since he had little time. Burckhardt replied to the attaché with polite irony that he would take only five minutes of the Minister's time. When he emerged afterward he told me Ribbentrop had asked him to stay on.

I saw Hentig at the Foreign Office. He rightly pointed out that all this complaining about conditions is useless. The situation is so threatening that one must begin to prepare for action. But how? That is the big question. There is no chance

of creating an organization. The one positive approach in this direction, which has already been made, is the surveillance of the entire Party through the Intelligence Section (Canaris) of the Army.

Saturday, December 17, at ten o'clock I called on Neurath, who is reduced to a room at 74 Wilhelmstrasse—an undignified setting. He is slated eventually to move over into the Reich Chancery, but this does not improve his position. He seems to be in a resigned mood, but covers it up with a lot of hollow phrases. It's interesting that the Turks (he had attended Atatürk's funeral) had told him that Soviet Russia was almost on the point of falling to pieces.

In Potsdam to lunch with Kameke. He told me about Kerll's [Reich Minister of Church Affairs] tactics in convening a synod to put the affairs of the Evangelical Church in order. The basis of his plan was that external matters should be entirely separated from spiritual matters, and the former (finances!) should be put in the hands of the state. Kerll had Winnig in mind as chairman, but he had refused because the whole thing was phony. If the state controlled church finances it would control everything. Meiser, Wurm, and Marahrens had rejected the idea, so the matter was limited to the Old Prussian Union. Wilmowsky had finally consented to serve in place of Winnig.

Popitz, with whom I lunched today, was of a different opinion: Kerll, to be sure, was not orthodox; nevertheless he was a Christian who was known to have told Hitler (and for a Party member this was quite something): "If you steer a course against Christianity I shall not follow you." Moreover, Kerll was an honest chap. Popitz does not believe that the meeting of the synod will be a success, but he feels that tactically it would be an error to refuse to participate, especially since the "German Christians" are very angry with Kerll and dislike the idea of a synod.

Incidentally, Popitz tendered his resignation to Göring after the pogrom, and Göring promised to transmit it to Hitler. Popitz said he felt it necessary to take this action at least since those responsible—Gürtner, Schwerin-Krosigk, and Neurath—though Cabinet Ministers, had once again failed ignominiously. Neurath, he said, was simply lazy and negligent. For

instance, when Popitz wanted to talk matters over with him Neurath simply sent word through a secretary or the like that he couldn't do it now. This story is indeed typical of Neurath. Popitz said that he himself discussed this subject candidly with Göring and clearly pointed out its significance to Göring's future position and the impossibility of going along with this sort of thing. Göring was deeply moved and apparently entirely convinced. But in the end this proved not to be enough, for Göring is completely dependent upon Hitler and is afraid of Himmler and Heydrich. Nevertheless Göring is reported to have talked to them very bluntly, and to have said that he would burn up the honorary uniforms the SS had given him. He thundered away at the Gauleiters so that the whole house shook. Olga Riegele-Göring is in complete despair; she is being besieged with petitions from all sides to influence her brother.

I asked Popitz about Himmler's attitude toward the pogrom, which I can't quite figure out. Popitz confirmed the story that Himmler had created a subtle alibi for himself by writing or wiring Hitler to the effect that he could not carry out the orders. Then when he received no reply he carried out the orders anyway. Now he can say that he did what he could. Very strict orders seem to have been issued by Hitler himself, and detailed mimeographed instructions as to methods of destruction were sent to the provincial governors. Popitz had told Göring that those responsible must be punished. Göring answered: "My dear Popitz, do you wish to punish the Führer?"

Sunday, the eighteenth: Spent the afternoon in Achterberg near Soltau to visit Fritsch. The Army had put this charming manor house on the training grounds at his disposal. Long political conversation. The substance of his views is: "This man—Hitler—is Germany's destiny for good and for evil. If he now goes into the abyss—which Fritsch believes he will—he will drag us all down with him. There is nothing we can do."

I objected to this spirit of resignation, but have to admit that I see little ground for hope of halting this journey into disaster. Fritsch considers Göring a particularly bad specimen, always engaged in double-dealing. Göring began to conspire against him, Fritsch, as early as 1934, that is after June 30,

because he regarded him as a potential leader of a *putsch*, or at least as the coming commander in chief—a position which Göring had persistently sought for himself.

In considering Göring's personal history, it is interesting to note that in the spring of 1934 he had sought to get Fritsch as a confederate against the ever-growing threat of the SA. In this connection he emphasized the importance to the Army of the fight against the SA, especially now that an officer (Heydrich), who had been expelled from the Army and who hated the officer corps, had become head of the Gestapo. To Fritsch's question "How is it possible that such a man should be appointed to this post?" Göring replied: "The Führer has so decided."

Monday, the nineteenth: Went early to see Schwerin-Krosigk: well-bred and as agreeable as always, but he has lost all his punch. He feels uncomfortable in his awkward situation. In an attempt to justify his conduct in his own eyes he holds that it had been necessary above all else to get things into a "legal channel." There he is wrong. A while ago I chanced to meet Mrs. H—— at the railway station. She is the first educated person I know of who goes so far as to defend the pogrom.

At twelve o'clock with Woermann at the Foreign Office. He imparted to me the interesting fact that Magistrati handed in a strange document to the effect that the Tunis demonstrations were a spontaneous movement of the people and were not engineered by the government! The Italian Government indeed did not wish to take the offensive now in the question of Tunis. Furthermore, the document continued, "in order to change the subject," Italy would be very glad to be of service in bringing about an understanding between Germany and England. It appears to me that Italy has got wind of our plans for war and wishes to establish an alibi, so that afterward it cannot be said that Italian demands in the Mediterranean were the cause of the conflict.

Lunch with Schacht. Unfortunately he is getting a reputation (so say Beck, Popitz, and Fritsch) for talking one way and acting another—i.e., he won't stand his ground on a position he has agreed to take. In his conversation with me there was also

apparent some kind of inner conflict. He was just back from England, where he had been discussing business matters only—not politics—such as a plan to finance Jewish emigration (the Warburg plan). The English were eager to work with us, but first wanted a very clear understanding about our policies. They ought to see things clearly by now! Naturally Schacht regards our present development, even the economic part of it, as very grim in spite of all “prosperity.” He himself takes the position that he must hold out at his present post until the impossible is demanded of him (inflation, for instance). He had bought Rauschning’s book¹ in Basel and found it brilliant.

With Beck in the afternoon. A refined and intelligent man, and a decent soldier. This whole trend disgusts him, and the irresponsible attitude of our leaders toward war angers and horrifies him. He dwelt on the outrageous way these people have of toying with the dangerous idea that this is “certain to be only a very short war.” Apparently he has written another memorandum on the real conditions under which a war would be fought. I forgot, incidentally, to mention that Schacht absolutely rejects Ribbentrop’s idea of a “decadent England”; our nerves, he said, would make a poorer showing if exposed to a great test. Beck thinks so too.

I went with Ilse Göring to the Deutsches Theater in the evening to see *Minna von Barnhelm*. Good performance; Loos as Riccaut, especially brilliant. This unfortunate bearer of the name Göring is very distressed at recent happenings and worries about the domestic and political affairs of her brother-in-law and Uncle Hermann. Emmy [Göring’s wife] had conducted herself splendidly the whole time, and had spoken her mind stoutly and openly.

December 25, 1938, Ebenhausen: I forgot to mention the piquant detail that, after the murder of Codreanu, which followed closely upon the heels of King Carol’s visit to Germany, Hitler ordered that the Rumanian decorations just bestowed should be returned; the German decoration intended for the Crown Prince was not given to him. The battle of King Carol against “Hitlerism” in his country and for his own dictatorship

¹*Revolution of Nihilism.*

assumes a fundamental significance, within the limits of the somewhat oriental conditions prevailing in Rumania. The situation is similar in Hungary.

After returning from Berlin I went at once in the evening to Schoen's [former Minister in Budapest] to meet Welczeck. The latter described Ribbentrop's visit to Paris very vividly. He was apparently driven by a peculiar, almost pathological desire for recognition and a childish vanity. He made it plain that anything arranged in his honor would have to be staged in as extravagant a style as possible "Whenever feasible to surpass the splendor of the reception for the King of England." Welczeck had the impression that Ribbentrop was simply mad.

Day before yesterday at the Bruckmanns'. Frau Bruckmann is in growing despair because of the man on whom she had staked everything (Hitler). She clings to the last shreds of her sentimental attachment and her hopes, but in her mind she has completely rejected him. In addition to the outrages against the Jews, she is shocked by the contemptible campaign against poor Spann [Professor Spann, Austria] conducted in the paper *Schwarzes Korps*.

December 29, 1938, Ebenhausen: Yesterday afternoon with Schmitt [formerly Minister of Economic Affairs] at Tiefenbrunn. His son Günther did not get the Cecil Rhodes scholarship. Both father and son believe—and are indignant—that he was rejected because he belonged to the SS and because he left the church. If that were true it would be easy to understand, for it is the duty of the committee to send people to England who do not give offense.

The domestic and economic situation discourages Schmitt as it does all of us. He considers Goebbels and Heydrich the most dangerous of the Party leaders. On the other hand, he is not ready to give up Himmler entirely; although, of course, Himmler had some wild notions (i.e., the Church) which cannot even be discussed with him. In many other fields, said Schmitt, his views were not so bad.

Among the Gauleiters there were some obvious rascals and utter gangsters; others were better. Among the worst he numbers Streicher, Mutschmann, Wagner (Munich), and

Schwede; among the better, first of all Köhler (Baden), Wagner (Silesia), and Terboven; Murr was harmless; Koch (East Prussia) doubtful; Görlitzer (Berlin) was evil and corrupt.

In the evening to the Bruckmanns' for further information. The usual subject. Pietzsch, that faithful follower of Hitler, was horrified at the dangerous economic situation: the immoderate, stormy tempo of a production drive that is seriously overstraining all energies and resources. The present breakdown of the railroads at Christmastime was indicative of the general situation. It was characteristic of the present state of things in Germany that the whole country, so to speak, was covered with ruins, that is with all kinds of unfinished buildings that cannot be completed. The deterioration in the quality of everything was tangible evidence not only of the scarcity of materials but also of a rise in prices. Today's tax burden was already so great that an honest business profit and a healthy accumulation of capital were simply not possible.

Hitler had no understanding of all these things; he refused even to discuss economic affairs. For a year and a half he had not spoken to Pietzsch. In addition we had corruption. A man like Undersecretary Reinhardt paid taxes on a 350,000-mark income and earned even more because he got a handsome sum for each copy of a publication that every finance official was compelled to buy.

Equally scandalous were the earnings that Amann derives from Party publications (sale of *Mein Kampf*, for instance). Hitler held fast to his corrupt associates. The obscenities practiced by Schaub and Brückner, who are in Hitler's company every day, were followed by a season of disgrace; then they were reinstated and flourished again. The photographer Hoffmann, according to Frau Bruckmann, is almost the worst of all—a kind of evil spirit, a Caliban. On what foundation his relationship to Hitler rests is a dark secret.

On December 23 Hess spent two hours with the Bruckmanns. They said he had never before been so depressed. He left no doubt that he thoroughly disapproved of the action against the Jews; he had presented his views to the Führer in very clear terms and had implored him to stop the pogrom. Unfortu-