

Inside Germany

BY DOROTHY THOMPSON

IT WILL be a great mistake to regard what is happening in Germany as primarily a Jewish matter. A senseless gangster Bolshevism, which for five years has been held somewhat in check by the more conservative elements, has broken out. The leading spirits in Germany today are Streicher, the madman of Nuremberg, and Goebbels, the "minister of enlightenment," who is totally ruthless, totally cynical, a careerist revolutionist of the Marxist type.

Germany, a great, industrious, civilized people, is in the hands of a gang, and the German government is a super-racket. The foreign correspondents have been trying for five years to tell the world that this was the condition of affairs.

The representatives of the British, American and French press stationed in Berlin have, with negligible exceptions, been unanimous on this from the first.

Robert Dell, the veteran correspondent of *The Manchester Guardian*, wrote a book in the Spring of 1934, "Germany Unmasked," which opens with a quotation from a diplomatist at that time stationed in Berlin. "The conditions here are not those of a normal civilized country, and the German government is not a normal civilized government and cannot be dealt with as such."

Unfortunately the conservative government of Great Britain and since M. Bonnet became foreign minister, the government of France did not listen to their own experts. Mr. Chamberlain's advisers have not been his foreign office; his advisers have been a personal clique.

The action precedent to Munich was not taken on the advice of the Quai D'Orsay or of the French general staff.

The anarchy in Europe is a direct result of personal government, the obstinate inability of the old conservatives to believe anything as utterly fantastic as the truth about what was going on, the inability of the British conservatives to abandon a policy when that policy had been outdated by new events, the fear of people like M. Bonnet of the radicalism of the French workers, and the obstinately held conviction that Nazism was a maintenance of property rights.

Since the Conservative government came into power in England in 1931 its policy has been to give Germany a free hand in the east, against Russia. It has never abandoned that policy.

It has been terrified of Bolshevism, and has thought that it would be a very good thing to let Germany clean up the "Russian experiment."

So enamoured has it been of this idea that it has never taken a really good look at the sort of "experiment" that was going on in Germany. If it had, it would have seen that, except for words and slogans, the two "experiments" were rapidly approaching each other.

The real nature of Nazism has been concealed behind the front of the German diplomacy and the German bureaucracy as a whole, which the Nazi regime took over intact.

This bureaucracy and diplomacy is loyal to Germany, to Germany as such, no matter what regime may be directing them. The bureaucracy is extremely efficient, patriotic, loyal, confident of its own abilities and politically stupid.

The same can be said of the German Army, whose esprit de corps is superb but who have always constituted a sort of state within a state, with a motto to let politics alone, as long as politics lets it alone.

The bureaucracy, the army and the foreign office have kept their positions, furnished a respectable front, believed, no doubt, that they were much more powerful than they were or are, and that they could "influence" events while, step by step, the Nazi party, which is nothing more or less than a gang, destroyed every vestige of legitimate government in Germany.

The bureaucracy and the diplomacy, as well as every instrument of public opinion, now work with pistols at their backs.

Every kind of political, economic or social organization which might have restored order has been demolished.

There are no political parties except the Nazi party, and it is not a party at all but a horde blindly following absolute dictation.

There are no trade unions which might have mobilized the working classes. Even the churches have become underground movements insofar as they remain religious bodies.

The only thing that kept the Nazis in check was the fear of outside intervention, the fear, that is to say, of war. That fear not only kept them in check externally. It kept them in check internally.

There was always the chance that in a showdown with any formidable outside force the army would mutiny or its most important officers resign en bloc.

There was always the fear that, with arms in their hands, the people would find new leaders to overthrow this terror.

Again the conservative governments abroad were afraid of the latter. They thought that the result would be "Bolshevism." But the German people have most probably had their fill of Bolshevism. They want peace and quiet, the end of terror, order, legitimate government and the reestablishment of a few civil freedoms.

The last check on the Nazis was removed by the conquest of Czechoslovakia, because with that conquest Britain and France made themselves powerless for unforeseeable time. They gave away 34 divisions, enormous man power reserves, fortifications and munitions industries which were on the precise spot where they would be most effective.

At the same time they confused the public opinion of the world and go on confusing it in the effort to plead their own case for bringing on the greatest catastrophe in many decades of history.

Secure now externally and internally, the Nazi gang has gone berserk. That is to say, it is behaving according to its real nature. It is beginning a wholesale confiscation with the Jewish people and adding a new high-jacking refinement. The papers report that all Jewish children are required in the schools to write the names and addresses of relatives abroad.

The intention is simply to hold up these relatives for ransom money to fill the coffers of a looted treasury.

I hear on excellent authority that Albert Voegft, one of the officers and directing minds of the Vereinigte Stahlwerke—the great steel trust—is arrested. Count Westarp, for many years chairman of the German Nationalist party—the party of the Junkers—is in prison under a 15-year sentence.

Dr. Schacht is still president of the Reichsbank, vainly trying to keep his hands on the nation's money. His name is never mentioned in the German press today.

And a new decree says that the Nazis will from now on exercise a veto power over the managements of all industries, with the power to remove from the direction of them any one they choose.

The only hopeful sign is in England, where the by-elections indicate that the British people are beginning to wake up, despite the fact that the Chamberlain government is doing everything in its power to prevent them from getting at the real story of what has happened in the last six weeks.

Vernon Bartlett, a well known radio commentator and journalist, extremely well informed, has left the position of spectator, and standing alone, without any party behind him, won a sweeping victory a few days ago in a conservative stronghold.

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