

"The assertion of truth, the unveiling of illusion, the dissipation of hate,
the enlargement and instruction of men's hearts and minds."

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27 CRESSWELL PLACE, LONDON, S.W.10

KENSington 4301

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DEAR MEMBER,

The full text of a remarkable document lies before me. It is a petition which was sent to Herr Hitler by the chaplains of the armed forces of the Reich. This document is entitled: "*Memoir regarding the effects of the Church struggle on the moral preparedness of the German people*". The main points are as follows. The Church versus State conflict has now become a "domestic political issue of primary importance". The Church is being attacked from within and without and, as an example of the latter policy, the memoir declares that in the training camps of the Nazi party it is repeatedly explained that National Socialism has three enemies: "Judaism, Masonry and Christianity". The document goes on to declare that there is a deep schism in the land the consequence of which is, that of the German nation: "The one half believes enthusiastically everything that is officially announced; the other half holds that it is all a lie". The statement is made that "of the 18,000 Protestant pastors in Germany approximately 1,300 have been in prison or under police arrest since 1934, that the pastor should be arrested has become a routine affair for Protestant parishes". Then follow a number of specific instances of brutalities towards pastors and examples of the manner in which Christianity is openly attacked. For instance, the report states that: "In Halle a high functionary of the Storm Troops speaking before assembled members of the organisation referred to Christ as 'that . . .'.* School teachers have repeatedly referred to Jesus in their class rooms as 'that Jewish tramp'." In a later passage the report declares that "this chaos is destroying respect for authority. At the beginning of the Church struggle (1933) every one clung to the idea that the Führer knew nothing of what was happening and disapproved. This confidence is

* The epithet used is so blasphemous that I do not feel like reproducing it.—S.K.-H.

weakening to-day. Everywhere men are seeking for a name in which they can have hope. The feeling in regard to the *régime* as a whole is changing, however. An ever wider gulf is appearing. . . . It is cautiously estimated that 12 to 15 per cent. of the population has been forced into bitter opposition to the State and the party by the campaign against Christianity . . . the assumption that only old people are included and that it is merely necessary to let them die off is a mistake."

The next section of the report, and this apparently is the explanation why it comes from the chaplains of the armed forces, points out that the situation described will have serious effects in time of war, when "the full enthusiasm that has been natural to the Protestant German when the fate of the Fatherland was at stake will be lacking if matters go on as they are". In conclusion the memoir demands that attacks on Christianity shall cease and that the State shall leave the Church alone.

This extraordinary document, extraordinary not so much for the information in it but because of the courage of its authors, will be found *in extenso* in the *New York Times* of 28th November, 1937. So far as my investigations have gone the character of this petition has not been reported in the British Press and since I have received information which leads me to suppose that this action on the part of the chaplains of the armed forces is of considerable significance, I have dealt with the document at some length. It should perhaps be mentioned that one or two British papers commented on the petition early in November when a summary was issued, but this summary did not give much indication of the true nature of the document. I have also received three independent reports from Germany which have this much in common, that they each remark on the freedom with which the *régime* is criticised as compared with the state of affairs two years ago and each of my correspondents remarks that whereas six months ago the criticism always excluded Herr Hitler who was regarded as not being aware of the less satisfactory activities of the "little Adolfs" (subordinate officials), nowadays it is not uncommon to find Hitler's capacity questioned. There is (according to these reports) a growing feeling that General Goering is the man of the future probably in conjunction with the Army rather than with the Nazi party.

In his address to Congress on "the state of the nation", President Roosevelt dealt with two subjects. First he proclaimed again his unshakable belief in the validity of democratic principles. He said that "peace is most greatly jeopardised in and by those nations where democracy has been discarded or never developed" and he prophesied that "over the years, democracy will be restored or established in those nations which to-day know it not". He remarked that a growing disregard for both the letter and the spirit of treaty obligations seemed to be associated with what he called a "surface trend" away from democratic representative

government and that this circumstance would make it necessary for the U.S.A. to increase her armaments. These observations, together with earlier statements from the White House on the international situation, show that the President's diagnosis of the cause of the ferment in world politics is the same as that which has been consistently and persistently advanced in this correspondence. Perhaps the persistence with which I have held to this course has been almost monotonous at times, and it has certainly infuriated certain people in Great Britain who seem to think that a durable peace and sound international understanding can be built up on the mirage-like basis of assuming that totalitarian states are democracies in disguise.

In the second part of his speech the President dealt with the internal situation in the U.S.A. If he was less offensive to big business and the so-called "sixty families" than some of his Lieutenants have been, yet he also gave notice that the New Deal and all its works are still the content of his mind. Big business in the States has been engaged in a sit-down-stay-in strike, and if in his speech the President, by appealing for co-operation, extended a hand in order to help business to its feet, there was no doubt that the steel hand of reform was in the velvet glove. The President told America that there was "a new moral climate" in the land and that the Capitalist must learn to live in it. He added that it was his desire to raise the national income of the U.S.A. to a hundred thousand million dollars (£20,000,000,000) which is an increase of 50 per cent. on its present estimated figure. The President's long term policy is primarily one of education. The task in front of the Americans during the next few decades is that of building up a social sense of co-operative citizenship between capital and labour. In Great Britain we are faced with the same task, though for historical and geographical reasons (our compactness) we are at present in the secondary school as it were, whilst the Americans, so recently in the rough playground of rugged individualism and the pioneering era, are shifting uneasily and rather turbulently on the hard forms of the elementary school. Seen in the light of America's immediate task of nation-building within the ground plan of democracy, a job which requires amongst other things the creation of a first-class civil service, the policy of isolation from entanglements in foreign affairs is entirely understandable. The trouble is that it takes two to avoid such entanglements and so the State Department of the U.S.A. has to do its best to conduct a positive foreign policy despite an American public opinion which is essentially inward thinking.

A conspicuous example of a case in which one of two parties seems bent on making trouble is afforded by Japan's aggressive actions towards British and American interests in the Far East. It is becoming clear that Japan means to control Shanghai and the question arises as to what action Great Britain can take to

defend her interests in the Far East. They far exceed those of the U.S.A., both from the political and the commercial points of view.

It may be taken as a fact that if any naval reinforcements are sent to the Far East, they will be substantial. The foundation of the British position in the Far East is Singapore. The colony of Hong Kong is a mixed blessing in times such as these. If seriously attacked it could, I think, hold out for about a month. Its chief function in case of trouble would be to gain time. This may seem ominous stuff to put into our correspondence but you may as well know that the pros and cons of war with Great Britain occupy a surprising amount of space in the Japanese Press to-day. There was also the amazing outburst of the Admiral who is now Minister of the Interior, in which he said that Japan intended to push the white races out of the Far East. In a letter I have received from Japan there occur these words: "I wonder whether the public at home realise that here in Tokyo, Great Britain ranks as equal to China in being Public Enemy Number One!"

In N-L. 76 I stated that I had some reason to believe that the Partition of Palestine was not necessarily the British Government's last word. The White Paper on the "special body" which is to go to Palestine to report on the details of Partition (see N-L. 57) is full of IF's which were not in Mr. Eden's speech when I heard him address the Council of the League on the subject at Geneva last year. There are said to be divisions in the Cabinet about the Palestine policy, the Colonial office being pro and the Foreign office saying: "Yes . . . perhaps . . . maybe . . . but what about the—er—Arab world?"

My opinion is that the Government is moving very slowly towards carrying out the Partition policy, but doing so stern first! By this I mean that I should not fall down dead with astonishment if the engines of the ship of state were to stop and then begin to move in the opposite direction, so that Partition, described in the Royal Commission's masterly report as "the best and most helpful solution", disappeared below the horizon of time. To those in high places who read these words I commend Elijah's question as set forth in 1 Kings 21, when he asked: "How long halt ye between two opinions?" Also see Psalm xxxix, 3 (second line). No, you can look that one up for yourself!

Yours sincerely,

Stephen King-Hall