



ONTARIO

Department of Education

**THE WAY TO WAR
AND
THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

**Topics 9 and 10
Modern World History, Grade XIII**

Issued by Authority of The Minister of Education

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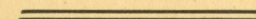
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THE WAY TO WAR

The World Problem

After the Great War of 1914-1918, the most important problem which faced the world was whether or not a system of international or collective security could be set up and successfully maintained. The organization of the League of Nations, and its early successes in healing certain festering sores on the international body, in furtherance of world-wide social and humanitarian reform, and in the spread of the idea of international co-operation, raised great hopes everywhere. Optimism found additional fuel for its fire in the movement for disarmament, the various security pacts, and the banning of war as an instrument of international action. Until 1929 the world looked towards a future of increasing peace and finer civilization. Then came the turn of the tide. Aggressive nationalism, which had seemed to be on the ebb during the twenties, except in some of the smaller states, surged forth again to claim the loyalties of millions of men, and to hurry the world towards new and greater wars. In the early 'thirties hopes of peace and security started to give way to pessimism and then to despair as the forces of collective security began to falter and break under the assaults of disciplined nationalism. Hence, any history of the nineteen-thirties must be a description of the way to war.

That there had been much unthinking illusion about the optimism of the first decade after the Great War was made plain when the testing time of the great depression came along. The latent fear of war had never died out. Indeed, in 1930 the world was spending almost a billion dollars more on arms than in 1925, despite lower costs of material and labour. In this atmosphere economic nationalism flourished. Building on foundations that reached down to the base rock of old traditions, politicians in almost every country offered national economic self-sufficiency or autarchy as the best means of preparing a nation to meet the prospect of war. Strongly organized groups, which stood to gain by high tariffs and a policy of protection, backed them up in such efforts. Economic nationalism was in itself, perhaps, the most important cause of the great depression. But when that scourge came with its grim attendants—misery, want and fear—then nations more than ever drew into their shells, and tried to live to and for themselves. It was a vicious circle. Even a country like Great Britain, long-time advocate of free trade, was forced in this process to adopt the protective principle in 1931, and to negotiate intra-imperial trade pacts in 1932.

New Threats to Peace

Whilst statesmen tried to think of some way to loosen the tightening bonds of international economic strangulation, hope flamed anew for those who dreamed of a better world when the delegates of the powers sat down at the conference table in Geneva on February 2, 1932, to discuss further disarmament. But hope soon received a shock. Though public opinion in most of the world was ardently in favour of disarmament and the curbing of war, when countries were faced with the need to sacrifice national sovereignty in behalf of collective security, they balked. Fear, tradition, and the short-time point of view triumphed over the program of the future. The fateful problems of security for France and equality for disarmed Germany could not be solved.

Ominously General von Schleicher pointed out that if Germany were not granted "full security and equality of rights" she would reorganize her forces so as to give herself security. More threatening still was the fact that, as the delegates sat around the conference table, Japanese troops were fighting in the streets of Shanghai, proving with guns and bombs that ruthless force is mightier than a flood of words in praise of peace. At the Conference no one knew whether or not to trust the olive branch that the Italians seemed to extend, for the delegates remembered Mussolini's sword-rattling pronouncement, "Italy cannot remain a prisoner in a sea that once belonged to Rome." On December 14 it was decided to adjourn the meetings until January 31, 1933. This, it happened, was one day after Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of the German Reich. Thus, as the old year was dying and the new year coming in, programs for disarmament were being buried in the files of the experts, while in Germany the fanatically nationalistic author of *Mein Kampf* was reaching for the seat of power.

The Rise of the Nazis in Germany

Important changes were imminent in Germany, it was clear, but how great no one could then foresee. For over twelve years the Germans had smarted from the humiliation of defeat and the loss of their "place in the sun." Upon defeat followed economic ruin, the product of war's disruption and inflation. Saddled with these burdens the ill-starred Weimar Republic, national Germany's only true experience of democracy, stumbled through its short career with more or less benevolent aid from the outside world. Pessimism characterized the German mind in these years. With the onset of world depression, pessimism darkened into hopelessness. The acceptance of Oswald Spengler, author of *The Decline of the West* and herald of European decadence, as a great philosopher is indicative of the German outlook. Such despair as this was propelling the nation blindly towards the abyss of catastrophic change. As early as 1930 the Weimar democracy began to go to pieces when Chancellor Brüning, faced with a Reichstag made up of irreconcilable factions, began to practise government by decree. By making use of this situation Adolf Hitler climbed from oblivion and a prison cell to absolute power. On March 23, 1933, the newly elected Reichstag passed an enabling act, officially called the Law to Combat the Misery of the People and the Reich, which in effect suspended the democratic constitution of 1919 and gave the Hitler government dictatorial power for four years. The burning of the Reichstag building a few days before the election had been the funeral pyre of democracy in Germany.

Adolf Hitler

This man, who had risen to power through unrivalled demagoguery and adroit exploitation of public feelings, had been born in 1889 in Upper Austria, the son of a minor customs official. Against his father's wishes he indulged his taste for drawing and painting, going to Vienna to study architecture. There he failed to gain entrance into the art academy and had to eke out an uncertain existence as decorator and draughtsman. His leisure time he devoted to avid reading of books on politics and economics, and to long discussions. Turned bitter by frustration he found an emotional outlet in blaming socialists and Jews for his failure, and in fervent adherence to German nationalism. No doubt this last led him to enlist in the Bavarian army when the First World War broke out. After the war the evident weakness of Germany filled him

with fury, and in 1923 he participated in an attempt to overthrow the government. When this failed he was sentenced to prison. Upon his release in a few months he worked to rejuvenate the National Socialist German Workers' Party, or Nazis for short, which he had helped to found in 1919. The party program was put before the German people in *Mein Kampf*, a product of Hitler's pen. This book has become a sort of Nazi bible, required reading for all Germans. It seemed so fantastic when it first appeared, and Nazi prospects appeared so slim, that the outside world gave it short shrift. An unabridged English translation first became available only in 1939. The world laughed at the book as they laughed at its author, the man with the moustache. It would have been better had it believed.

The Nazi Program

Hitler has, in fact, followed the Nazi program as laid down in *Mein Kampf* as closely as circumstances have allowed. It called, among other things, for a Third Reich, a greater Germany which should include all those of German blood; the abrogation of the Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain; the re-acquisition of colonies as a measure of economic self-sufficiency. It talked about a pure German race and the expulsion of foreign elements, among whom would be the hated Jews. It marked out a plan of agrarian reforms, nationalization of trusts, state-guaranteed employment, the curbing of large incomes; and yet it offered itself, as one of its chief merits, as a bulwark against communism. It demanded parity with other great powers in armaments, but looked forward to German supremacy on the Continent because Germany needed living space (*Lebensraum*), and deserved the dominant place by virtue of being a master race. This last was to be gained through alliances with Italy and Great Britain, through wars with France and Soviet Russia. Soviet Russia, in fact, was seen as the nearest available outlet for German colonization and economic exploitation. It stigmatized democracy, liberalism and the rights of the individual, and elevated the national state to supreme place as the arbiter of everything, the moulder of destiny.

Nazi Links with German Tradition

Apart from the immediate objects of protest there was little new in this program. The Third Reich was to pick up where the Second Reich of Bismarck had left off, and to create a greater German domination of Europe than that of the First Reich, or the Holy Roman Empire. The Jews have always been a convenient scapegoat in German history and anti-Semitism an oft-raised cry. Attacks upon Marxism and the concept of the pure German super-race go back to the last century, as do ideas of pan-Germanism. The Nazis promised Germany a return to power, a way out of the valley of humiliation to a new place in the sun; and it was an old and familiar road they were to follow. The party organization, with its rituals and its mystical emblem, the swastika, appealed to a romantic-minded nation. The storm troopers, the black shirts, and the general military flavour of the party fascinated a people attuned to military discipline and warlike ideals. To the support of the Nazis rallied the pride-stiffened but ruined middle class seeking an alternative to destruction, industrialists and conservatives who feared communism, discouraged peasants, the jobless, university graduates, and, above all, youth. The Hitler movement seemed to offer to a generation of depressed and cramped youth a way out. Among them the poison of false idealism had its most insidious effects. The

efficiency of the Nazi machine was again nothing new. Efficiency is a German characteristic, especially associated with the Hohenzollern tradition and Prussia. With that tradition, too, is linked the treachery and duplicity of Hitler. It looks back to the coldly calculated double-dealing of Frederick the Great, and to the international jugglery of Otto von Bismarck. Indeed, Germany was slipping back into age-old habits and time-worn traditions when she accepted the Nazis. Their regime was a new version of an ancient pattern, Prussianism reborn as totalitarianism.

Establishment of Nazi Domination. Religious Opposition

One by one the enemies and rivals of the Nazis were eliminated. First came a systematic attack upon the Jews under the lead of Herman Goering and Julius Streicher. All the traditional hatred and pent-up bitterness of national frustration vented itself on this hapless people as a wave of savage atrocities swept the land. The civil service and the professions were "cleansed" of non-Aryans; properties and businesses were confiscated; internment camps were filled with victims, and a stream of refugees began to flow across the frontiers. The outside world was shocked and disgusted, but protests from abroad had little effect. Other groups were dealt with in turn. The nationalist parties were absorbed, but the communists were banned; the trade unions were broken up—their place taken by the German Labor Front, whose prime function was Nazi indoctrination; the Social Democrats were outlawed. The Catholic parties held out longest, until destroyed by the secret police. Finally on July 14, 1933, a law was passed making the Nazi party "the only political party in Germany."

In economic as well as in political life the national government assumed more and more control so that, although for some time private property and initiative were upheld as pillars of the new order, in the end even the great industrialists who had helped to finance the Nazis into power were caught in the toils of totalitarian economic control as surely as their kind had been in Soviet Russia. Every means was employed to make Germany a self-sufficient state. German culture, likewise, was subjected to totalitarian co-ordination under the guiding hand of Dr. Goebbels. Music, art, history, all were given a Nazi interpretation. Good Nazis made better marks in school than good students. Difficulties arose, however, when the Nazis tried to bring the Christian churches into line. An organization was set up designed to unite all Protestant sects into a German Christian Church under a national bishop, appointed by Hitler. Unexpected opposition arose from pastors and laymen, who regarded this move as unwarranted interference with religion. The opposition could not be overwhelmed, and many of these men went to internment camps or to death. The Catholic Church tried at first to adjust itself to the new regime, and a concordat was signed in July, 1933, but soon it became apparent that co-operation was impossible with a regime which, being totalitarian, was at heart anti-Christian. As this became clear Catholic priests, monks and nuns joined Lutheran and Calvinist pastors in internment camps and martyrdom. There is hope for Germany, however, in that spirited defiance, and for Christianity which thrives on persecution.

Der Fuehrer

In June, 1934, discontent in the ranks of the Nazis, notably among the storm troopers who wanted a more radical, left-wing revolution, led to a

frightful purge of the dissatisfied leaders. Less than five weeks later the venerable and highly respected President von Hindenburg passed away. From this moment the offices of president and chancellor were combined, and Hitler ruled alone as Der Fuehrer.

Nazi Defiance of International Organization

Though Hitler had to tread warily until his regime was consolidated, Europe had not long to wait to discover that the rise of Nazi Germany meant the upsetting of the post-war international arrangements. Denunciation of the reparations payments had been one of Hitler's trump cards in his rise to power, and, though the depression, the Lausanne Conference, and the Hoover Moratorium had brought virtual cessation to the payment of both reparations and war debts, the apparent victory for Germany on that issue could be used as a precedent for further piecemeal destruction of the peace settlement. The World Monetary and Economic Conference, called to meet in London in June, 1933, died a quick death. It was the United States, intent upon struggling out of the worst economic breakdown in its history, which delivered the fatal blow in this case by its refusal to participate in the stabilization of currencies, but the plain fact was that the straitjacket of economic nationalism had become so tight that the world could not free itself. This was another blow to collective security, and every blow meant a gain to Nazi Germany and other totalitarian powers that were better fitted to play the game of aggressive nationalism, because they believed in it. A second and heavier blow was struck on October 14, 1933, when Hitler loosed his first great diplomatic bombshell in the announcement that Germany had withdrawn from the Disarmament Conference, and would withdraw from the League of Nations.

Crumbling Collective Security

From that moment the crumbling system of collective security was to dissolve rapidly. The world was entering a new era of power politics, wherein the statesman's main principle of action would be, as George Canning had once said when another international system was breaking up, "everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost." Symptomatic of the new era was the signing of a bilateral Non-aggression Pact in January, 1934, between Germany and Poland. On the surface an achievement for peace in Europe, and used by the Nazis from this point of view as a telling bit of propaganda, this pact was for Germany a blow at the solidarity of the French alliance system, a means of providing a bulwark between Germany and Russia, and of gaining precious time for Germany to concentrate upon rearmament and further plans for the destruction of the Versailles settlement. In Poland it postponed friction over Danzig and the Polish Corridor, and enabled her to continue the old policy of balancing between Russia and Germany, a policy which in the end was to prove fatal, giving Poland merely the privilege of being caught between two fires.

Divided France

Facing a resurgent Germany was an ever-weakening France. Uncertain of her system of alliances and of the collective system, in neither of which had she put full faith; unsuccessful in the attainment of guarantees of security; uncertain of British support, France was experiencing discouragement and a growing feeling of isolation. To make the situation worse there was the widening breach between Left and Right inside the country. The Left, anxious to preserve

the Third Republic, and to bring the lower classes greater economic security while curbing wealth and big business, was the spiritual descendant of the revolutionaries of 1789, 1830, 1848 and 1871. In fact, the French Revolution has never been fully fought out. The lines have always remained drawn, and the sides ready to clash when circumstances dictated or opportunity allowed. Thus the Right was in the 1930's Fascist and extremely nationalist in complexion, but it looked back to a monarchic and aristocratic past—Bourbon, Orleanist or Napoleonic—in which it had once been dominant. After 1919 the perennial French quarrel was twisted and recoloured to suit the needs of a great revolution that everywhere was invading politics and causing upheaval. As a result the running sore of French political life became steadily more malignant. In fact, in 1934 France was on the verge of civil war. Revelation of corruption in high places and in the press, and the continued failure of the government to balance the budget, blew the lid off the seething political pot on February 6. On that day bloody riots occurred in the streets of Paris. Members of Rightist and Fascist organizations tried to march on the Chamber of Deputies and were fired on by the guards. Fifteen people were killed and thirteen hundred were injured. In the next few days Leftist counter-demonstrations followed, culminating in a twenty-four-hour general strike.

Out of these troubles was born the Popular Front, a combination of Radicals, Socialists and Communists, designed to prevent a Fascist *coup* in France. This group came to power in June, 1936, with Léon Blum, a well-to-do Alsatian Jew of great legal and some literary renown, as Premier. An extensive program of social reform was carried through against stormy opposition, but in 1937 the financial situation proved the nemesis of this government as it had of so many other French cabinets. A definite trend to the Right set in. But France remained a divided nation, and French influence in international affairs was greatly weakened at this particularly critical period. In foreign policy Left and Right were equally at swords' points; the Left believing in the League of Nations and collective security but unwilling to back the system with force, and the Right fearful of communism, cynical about internationalism, and having a desire to come to terms with Nazism and Fascism. Right up to 1939 France hovered on the brink of civil strife.

Reasons for the Development of the Policy of Appeasement

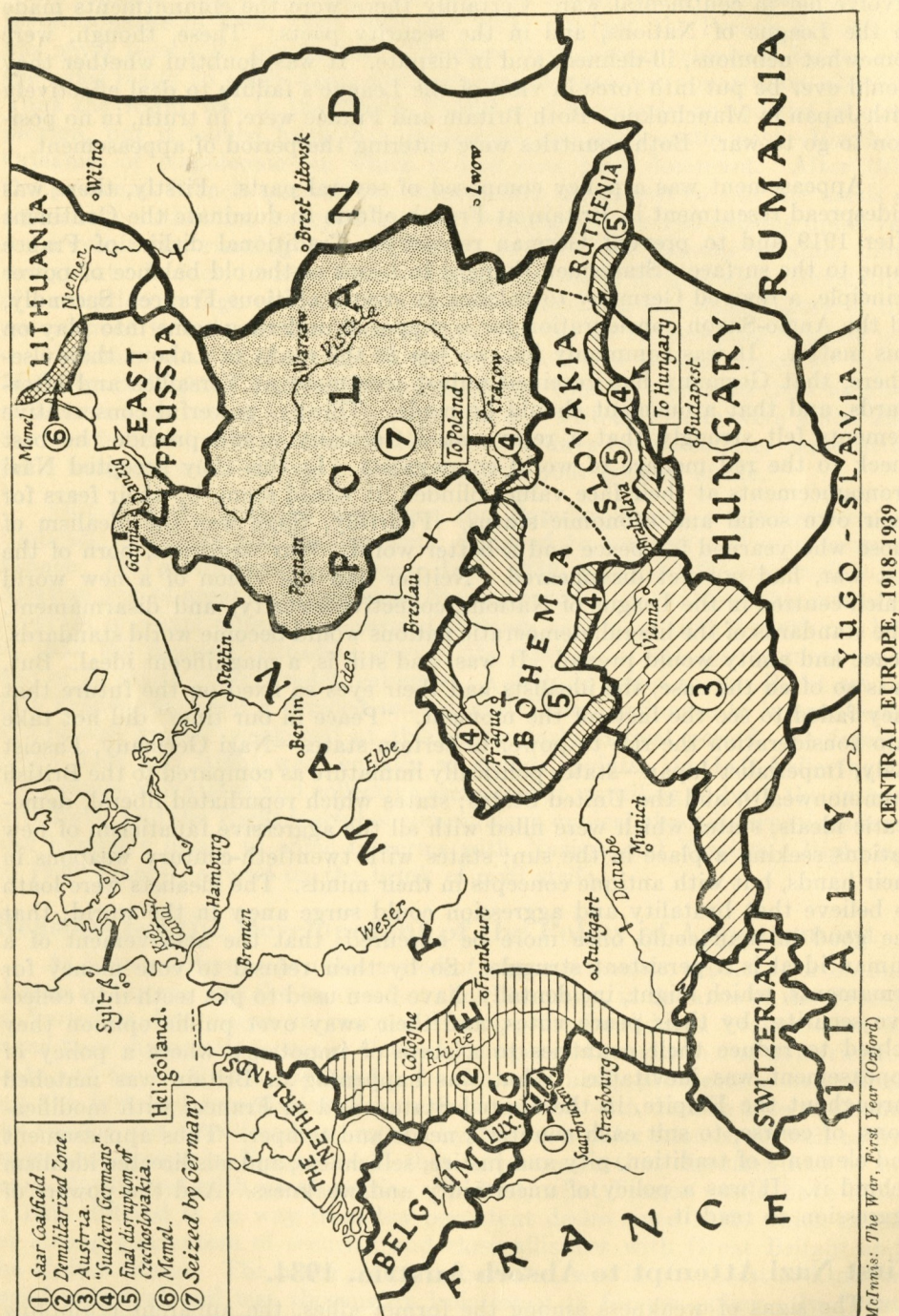
As France entered upon this period of grievous trouble, the next portentous change in Europe was the known fact that Germany, in defiance of the Treaty of Versailles, had begun to rearm. Hastily, the bewildered French tried to mend their diplomatic fences in Central Europe, and sought to find new friends. Italy and Soviet Russia appeared to be the most likely prospects as new allies, but the first had imperial ambitions that clashed with French interests, and the second was considered so suspect by France's older friends, as well as by important groups in France itself, that advances in that direction had to be made slowly and with great caution. Indeed, what France would have liked in 1934 differed in no way from her persistent desire since 1919, which asked for strong guarantees of security and close alliances with Great Britain and the United States. The latter country, however, was in the midst of a major social upheaval and was thoroughly isolationist in foreign policy. In Great Britain the National Government, with Ramsay Macdonald as Prime Minister, was attempting to cope with a serious financial crisis, unemployment, and other aspects of the depression. Moreover, Britain showed her traditional

disinclination to make commitments on the European continent that might involve her in continental war. Certainly there were the commitments made to the League of Nations, and in the security pacts. These, though, were somewhat nebulous, ill-defined, and in dispute. It was doubtful whether they would ever be put into force in view of the League's failure to deal effectively with Japan in Manchukuo. Both Britain and France were, in truth, in no position to go to war. Both countries were entering the period of appeasement.

Appeasement was a policy composed of several parts. Firstly, there was widespread resentment in Britain at French efforts to dominate the Continent after 1919 and to prevent German recovery. Traditional dislike of France came to the surface. Statesmen thought in terms of the old balance of power principle, a revived Germany to balance an over-ambitious France. Secondly, all the Anglo-Saxon consideration for a supposed underdog came into play on this matter. It was commonly felt, no less in the ranks of Labour than elsewhere, that Germany had received unjust treatment at Versailles and afterwards, and that atonement should be made. Thirdly, powerful conservative elements felt strongly that a rejuvenated Germany would provide the best check to the red menace of world communism. In this they accepted Nazi pronouncements at their face value; blinded, it would seem, by their fears for their own social and economic status. Fourthly, there was the idealism of those who yearned for peace and a better world. War weariness, born of the last war, had not yet disappeared. Neither had the vision of a new world which centred in the League of Nations, collective security, and disarmament. The standards of the liberal, democratic nations would become world standards. Peace and amity would prevail. It was, and still is, a magnificent ideal. But, as is so often the case, the idealists had their eyes so fixed on the future that they failed to see the facts of the moment. "Peace in our time" did not take into consideration the rise to power of certain states—Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, Imperialist Japan—states politically immature as compared to the British Commonwealth and the United States; states which repudiated liberal, democratic ideals; states which were filled with all the aggressive fanaticism of new nations seeking a place in the sun; states with twentieth-century weapons in their hands, but with antique concepts in their minds. The idealists were loath to believe that brutality and aggression could surge anew in the world; that the good in man could once more be obscured; that the achievement of a human ideal is a persistent struggle. So by their refusal to vote money for armaments, which might, incidentally, have been used to put teeth into collective security; by their peace votes, and their sway over public opinion they helped to reduce their countries to a state of impotence where a policy of appeasement was inevitable. What was happening in Britain was matched throughout the Empire, in the United States, and in France: with modifications, of course, to suit each country's needs and temper. Thus appeasement had elements of tradition, pity and justice, selfishness, and misdirected idealism behind it. It was a policy of uncertainty and weakness. And the powers of aggression so read it.

First Nazi Attempt to Absorb Austria, 1934.

The signs of weakness among the former allies, the apparent crumbling of collective resistance to Germany's resurgence, and the failure to set limits to or to establish control of Germany's rearmament, all meant a situation favourable to Nazi progress. It was somewhat astonishing, therefore, that



Hitler should have suffered a set-back in Austria in 1934. Union with Austria (Anschluss) had always been an essential part of the Nazi program. And it was more than the union of all Germans in the Fatherland which made it so. A glance at the map will reveal that Austria and Czechoslovakia are of paramount strategic value, standing as they do at the crossroads of Europe. Ruined in the war of 1914-1918, Austria eked out an existence on a starvation basis with some financial help from the League of Nations in the years that followed. Economically an absurdity, Austria could find no adequate way out of the dilemma. Anschluss with Germany, which most Austrians favoured up to the advent of the Nazis, was steadily blocked by France, Czechoslovakia and Italy, who feared an enlarged Germany. A plan for Danubian federation, backed by France and the Little Entente in 1932, was found to be impossible of realization because of Hungarian revisionism, and because of German and Italian ambitions in this region. Dependence upon Italy was the only alternative, and in 1933-34 Engelbert Dollfuss, the Chancellor of Austria, was turning his attention to the establishment of closer relations with Italy. Dollfuss was a Christian Socialist whose aim was to make Austria "a Catholic, German state . . . thoroughly Austrian upon a corporative basis." Opposed on the one hand by the Social Democrats and on the other by the Nazis and their friends, Dollfuss was in a precarious position. As Nazi intrigues and incidents increased, "brave little Austria" became a major concern to the Western Powers, though they felt unable to come to an open break with Germany over the matter. In February, 1934, a brief but bloody struggle in Austria resulted in the crushing of the Social Democrats and the founding of a Fascist dictatorship under Dollfuss. Almost at the same time a trade pact, of more political than economic importance, was signed between Austria, Hungary and Italy, thus making clear Italy's growing influence along the Danube. Nazi Germany had no intention, however, of having her own ambitions so thwarted. Hence in July a Nazi Putsch was attempted in Vienna. Dollfuss was shot and allowed to bleed to death, but the plot was bungled, so that Hitler found it advisable to disavow the whole affair at the time. The immediate consequences were the emergence of Kurt Schuschnigg, faithful friend of Dollfuss, as head of the Austrian government, with Mussolini as Austria's protector.

Balkan and Baltic Ententes

The lengthening reach of Nazi ambition was causing consternation in Europe. Great states were nervous and anxious. Little states began to draw together for mutual assistance, or to scuttle for cover under the protecting wing of some stronger power. On February 9, 1934, Greece, Yugoslavia, Rumania and Turkey signed the Balkan Pact at Athens. Disgruntled Bulgaria and Mussolini's puppet, Albania, were not included—they were the danger spots in "the powder keg of Europe." Turkey, anxious for peace, in which to consolidate the achievements of her magnificent revolution, took the lead in strengthening the Balkan Entente and in pressing for its co-operation with the Little Entente. By the end of June, considering the progress made and Soviet Russia's benevolent attitude, it was hoped that peace had been assured from Prague to Ankara. Hope of peace rose a little higher in September, when Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania signed a mutual assistance pact, thus creating a Baltic Entente to add to the other two. The acts of the little states could not, however, be decisive. Only within an effective system of collective security

could they be of much importance. Everything depended upon whether the faltering League could be revived, or, alternatively, whether a new system of alliances could be built up. In either case the question of where Soviet Russia was to fit into the system was vital.

Russia Concentrates upon National Development

Soviet Russia of 1934 was in many ways no longer the Russia of the Bolshevik Revolution. When the Georgian peasant, Joseph Stalin, defeated Leon Trotsky in the struggle for leadership in the Soviet Union after Lenin's death, Russia definitely turned its face from world revolution towards national development. This did not mean an abandonment of the main results of the revolution, nor a displacement of the Communist Party in Russia, but it did mean that Marxian Communism was now to be modified to fit practical Russian needs, since pure Marxism had been found to be an unworkable abstraction. Russia under Stalin was to concentrate upon her own internal development, as successive Five-Year Plans were to show. Stalin's task was to bring modern industrialization to a state hitherto preponderately agricultural; to open up and develop a vast, more than half-empty land; to construct impregnable defences against the "inevitable attack" by capitalist powers. In the end Russia might become so successful a socialist state—that was the ideal held before the people—that other countries would follow her example. But active encouragement of world revolution was virtually abandoned; or rather, world revolution was postponed to the indefinite future.

Russia Enters the League of Nations

The full import of this alteration in Russian policy was a long time in coming home to the rest of the world. Not until the Second World War was well under way and Russia herself a belligerent was there a reluctant admission that it might be true. Berlin, Tokyo and Rome, all emphasized the danger of Russia and world communism for their own special reasons. Conservatives everywhere refused to believe in any change. Others doubted and were uncertain. But suspicion and fear in the outside world was matched by suspicion and fear in Russia. Soviet Russia feared capitalist powers as much as capitalist powers feared Soviet Russia. All this made Russian participation in international affairs very difficult. Nevertheless, Russia's desire for an era of peace in which to build the new Russia, and her growing apprehension of aggressive Japan in the Far East and of Nazi Germany in Europe, pushed her towards an increasing share in the organization of collective security, and closer association with a rather unwilling West. French reluctance, moreover, began to fade before French desperation. Consequently, in 1934 the French Foreign Minister was feverishly busy trying to construct an Eastern Locarno Pact, which would include Russia, and would guarantee frontiers and secure peace in Eastern Europe as, it was thought, its counterpart in the West had done. But German and Polish objections proved insuperable. Some compensation, though, was to be found in Russia's entry into the League of Nations in September, 1934, with a permanent seat on the Council. Russia's entry brought new breath to the League, shocked by the resignation of Germany and Japan. By the end of the year France had bolstered its position by laying the basis for a Franco-Czech-Russian triple alliance.

Unsuccessful Efforts to Deal with Growing Nazi Threat

In the west France was working to build a Franco-Italian-British Entente. A step in this direction was made early in January, 1935, when Pierre Laval and Mussolini made a series of agreements in Rome whereby France gained Italy's support for a multilateral security pact system in Central Europe designed to check German advances, and Italy received satisfaction in Africa for colonial grievances that had rankled since the First World War. Mussolini did not promise, however, to oppose German rearmament. When a week later the plebiscite in the Saar Basin brought that area back to Germany peacefully, men breathed more freely in Europe. Unhappily, disillusionment was not long in arriving. Early in March, Germany announced the creation of an air force, with General Goering as air chief. This was followed on Saturday, March 16, by one of Hitler's many Saturday surprises: the proclamation of the restoration of universal military service and the establishment of a peacetime army of 550,000 men. Efforts at disarmament were thus brought to an abrupt end, and the rearmament race which had been going on behind a smoke screen was now brought out in the open. The reaction of ineffectual protest which met these pronouncements was very encouraging to Hitler, and to Mussolini who had his own dream of aggression. So when France, Britain and Italy met at Stresa in April to create the so-called Stresa Front, this creation was mostly front with little backing. France felt a little better when the arrangements for the Franco-Czech-Soviet alliance were virtually completed in June. But within a fortnight both France and Russia were bitterly denouncing the new Anglo-German naval agreement.

Great Britain had been concerned over the naval question for some time. Fear of a Saturday surprise in connection with the navy was evident. It was increased by the knowledge that Germany had ordered the construction of new submarines and had reopened two submarine schools. Anticipation of an impending naval race with Japan and Italy also entered the picture, as did the insistence of Labour and Liberal groups for further efforts to limit armament. Hence when Hitler seemed friendly and offered to limit the German navy to thirty-five per cent of the British tonnage, the British government seized the opportunity. The agreement was a great surprise to the British public, who accepted it, however, as a contribution to peace. But France and Russia pointed out that the German navy was concentrated in the Baltic and North Seas, whereas the British navy was scattered across the world. Italy and France felt that the Stresa Front had been cracked.

It was evident that no country in Europe had adopted a clear-cut, consistent policy, backed by a united public opinion, towards the Nazi threat. Liberals clung to the system of collective security; conservatives reverted to power politics to cope with the menace. The result was that both methods were followed, side by side, and consequently both were incomplete and weak. Nothing was to illustrate better this fatal weakness than the Ethiopian Crisis, which showed that the road lay open to aggressors.

Fascist Italy and the Ethiopian Crisis

Up to 1935 there had been no case of aggression by a European power against the territorial integrity of a member of the League. Outside Europe, Japan had invaded China without serious check, but it remained for Il Duce

to present the League and Europe with the problem of what to do with a European power bent upon territorial aggrandizement. Italy advanced many stock imperialistic reasons for colonial expansion, such as overpopulation and lack of raw materials and foodstuffs. There was the rankling grievance over Italy's failure to share adequately in the distribution of colonies after the First World War, and the sore memory of Italian defeat at Adowa in 1896 at the hands of the Ethiopians. Most, if not all, of Italy's problems might have been settled peacefully. But Fascist philosophy regarded the methods of peace as the tools of the weak. Fascism glorified force and military might. It felt that Italy, a young nation, had every reason to follow the conqueror's path to power and glory as other states had done. Economic difficulties and discontent in Italy emphasized the need for foreign diversion. Foreign conquest could bring prestige to Italy and to Il Duce, and could give Fascist Youth a chance to lay the cornerstone of the new *Imperium Romanum*. East Africa had long been a centre of Italian colonial ambitions. The conquest of Ethiopia would bind together Eritrea and Somaliland into one large Italian empire. Ethiopia was one of the few regions in Africa suitable for European settlement. It was reported to have vast undeveloped resources. Socially and politically it was backward and weak. Emperor Haile Selassie had only begun the work of centralization and modernization. Up to this time Ethiopia had escaped absorption by colonial powers only because of the rivalry between France, Great Britain and Italy over the region. But now in 1935 France and Britain were on none too friendly terms; Italy was strong; the League was moribund. Now was the time to strike.

When Haile Selassie's appeals to the League revealed the true situation between Italy and Ethiopia, that body appointed a commission which, in due time, reported a verdict recommending arbitration. Meanwhile Mussolini, confronted unexpectedly with mounting British hostility, tried to frighten Britain and France by a show of closer co-operation with Germany. Success crowned this move when Sir Samuel Hoare and Pierre Laval in September agreed strictly to limit any measures taken against Italy. These negotiations were not known until the end of December. But war broke out in the first days of October. Not only was the League faced with an insoluble problem, but there then began a British-Italian rivalry along the Route of Empire which has not yet been settled. The League named Italy as the aggressor, and by December an overwhelming proportion of the members had applied certain economic sanctions. Unfortunately these sanctions did not include many key war materials, such as oil, steel, cotton, copper and wool. It was considered that war would result with Italy if these materials were included in the sanctions. And it was not certain that they would be effective, as non-League powers like the United States and Germany controlled a large proportion of such materials. A blow to American co-operation in this affair and to League prestige was struck in December when the United States, along with the people of the British Empire and many other countries, were shocked by the revelation of the Hoare-Laval agreement. In Britain public opinion rose to a fever pitch. Sir Samuel Hoare was forced to resign, and his place was taken by popular, young Anthony Eden, a strong pro-League man. Eden's policy went far to wipe out the memory of Hoare's part in the attempt to appease Mussolini. In spite of King George V's death on January 20, 1936, and of internal troubles in France, arrangements were made by March so that Britain was ready to support oil sanctions which, it was believed, would end the war

in short order. But on the same day, March 7, that Mussolini announced his readiness to negotiate, Hitler denounced the Locarno Pacts, and the Nazi army marched across the bridges of the Rhine. The Ethiopian War was shoved into the background. Sanctions came to an end in July. The death knell of the League was being sounded. Ethiopia was being added to Manchukuo. The smaller states were losing faith in the League leaders, in the League, in themselves. Mussolini had proved again that sword-rattling paid, and the lesson had not been lost on Hitler as the heavy tramp of Nazi soldiers' boots along Rhineland roads showed.



McInnis: The War, First Year (Oxford)

SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, 1939

Nazi Reoccupation of the Rhineland

Hitler's occupation of the Rhineland was not only a step forward in the Nazi program of tearing up the Treaty of Versailles; it was also his answer to the Franco-Soviet pact. He was on sure ground in proclaiming to the world the Nazi mission against bolshevism. This made an appeal to conservatives everywhere, and Hitler's fair promises were swallowed in large part because of it, since millions of people were inclined to believe that Nazi Germany was less of a menace than Communist Russia. Then, too, in the Rhineland Germany was occupying German territory, not invading another's land. Liberals had long advised revision of the territorial clauses of Versailles in favour of Germany. Moreover, Britain at the moment was most concerned about the Mediterranean route of Empire, whereas France wished to curb Germany. Neither would, or could, go to war without the other. Between these divided powers, divided within as well as between themselves, Hitler and Mussolini got what they wanted. Hitler, indeed, took another step forward in July when he forced the unhappy Schuschnigg, Chancellor of Austria, to sign a so-called treaty of friendship with Germany, thus paving the way for the complete Anschluss of 1938. Italy's star in Central Europe was beginning to wane. Russia would not act alone. France and Great Britain, far behind in the armament race that was now gathering speed at a tremendous rate, and immersed in their own troubles, were on the defensive, seeking, of necessity, to avoid war with anyone.

New Troubles in the Mediterranean Area

Though ominous rumblings indicated that a storm was brewing in Central and Eastern Europe, the immediate centre of trouble shifted abruptly back to the Mediterranean area. The Ethiopian crisis had set the whole region in a turmoil. Flushed with success in Ethiopia, despite the heavy cost of that venture, Mussolini was more than ever determined to make the Mediterranean Italy's *Mare Nostrum*. The French and British position had been visibly weakened by Italy's success. Unrest in Egypt and Syria; riots and disturbances in Tunis, Algeria and Morocco, and the ugly Arab-Jew strife in Palestine revealed a Moslem and Arab world in ferment, preparing to throw off the foreign yoke and to assert its own identity. Italy hoped to profit from this situation, though her own relations with the Arabs were scarcely friendly. Italian ambition received a setback, however, when Turkey, deeply apprehensive of Italian attack, requested an international conference to reconsider the question of the Straits (the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus). The Turkish request, in contrast to Germany's unilateral denunciation of treaties, and Italian aggression, made a favourable impression. In July, 1936, the Montreux Convention gave Turkey the right to refortify and control the Straits, thus restoring to her "the key to her own house." Turkish control of the Straits was also a boon to Russia, in view of the close relations between the two countries. A new treaty between Britain and Egypt greatly eased relations between the two, and granted to Egypt more complete freedom than she had enjoyed in over two thousand years. But bad feeling did not wholly vanish. In Palestine matters went from bad to worse, a factor which tended to hamper British freedom of action in the Mediterranean. Nevertheless, had not civil war broken out in Spain, France and Great Britain, like Russia and Turkey, might well have been satisfied at the turn of events in the Mediterranean. But the Spanish civil war showed again that within the world were seething fires; and whenever a crack in the surface cover occurred the flames shot out.

Civil War in Spain. An International Problem

Spain's political and social development has lagged behind that of most of the rest of Europe. There remains there a landed aristocracy, an unenlightened peasantry, a military caste, and an entrenched church, which are all reminiscent of France before the Revolution. Alongside these, industrialization has placed extremely inimical social and economic groups in the cities and industrial areas. Hence the impact of the modern world has stirred repeated conflict in Spain, where revolution, civil war and foreign intervention are no new thing. When trouble broke out in 1936, Spain was a country sharply divided with no strong moderate group to keep a balance between the two sides. Traditional labels were replaced by the modern tags of world strife, communism and fascism. The Popular Front government, or the loyalists as they came to be called, were dubbed "reds" by their opponents, though they were less radical, if anything, than the Popular Front in France. Revolt, planned with the knowledge and encouragement of Berlin and Rome, broke out in Spanish Morocco in July. General Franco came out of virtual exile to lead the revolt, which was supported by the army, the aristocracy and the church at home, and by Germany and Italy abroad.

The strategic position of the Spanish peninsula, as well as its economic resources, make any trouble in Spain of first-rate significance to France and Great Britain. But questions of strategy were obscured and complicated by the fact that Spain now became the chief battleground between world communism and fascism. This made it necessary for Russia to enter the fray, for fear of losing face among left-wing elements all over the world. In addition a Fascist victory in Spain would leave Russia's ally, France, almost encircled, and Great Britain greatly weakened. Russia would be left alone to face Nazi Germany in the West and Japan in the Far East. It was soon evident that Italy and Germany were giving Franco active assistance. The chance to win a new ally, to paralyze France and Britain, to divide conservatives and liberals everywhere by the cry of the red menace was too good to be lost. Moreover, here was a chance to try out new military methods and weapons. To the western powers other things seemed of more moment than the Spanish civil war: especially the avoidance of general European conflict. Hence, by September a non-intervention policy was worked out, designed to quarantine the affair, and a Committee of Non-intervention set up to which France, Britain, Germany, Italy and Russia belonged. Behind this facade the last three powers continued to do as they pleased, and the first two pursued a hesitant policy of uncertainty.

Rome-Berlin Axis. Anti-Comintern Pact

As tension mounted in Europe the forces of aggression drew closer together. On November 1, 1936, Mussolini announced the establishment between Italy and Germany of "an axis around which all European states animated by a desire for peace may collaborate on troubles," the Rome-Berlin Axis. The two countries had much in common. Both wanted a Franco victory in Spain; both disliked the Montreux Convention; both disliked the League, though Italy was still a member; both were anti-Soviet and anti-democratic. Their interests conflicted, it is true, in Austria, in the Balkans and even in Spain, but a little bargaining could settle those differences. And Italy was not at this time so overshadowed by her partner as later. There was much to be gained for the aggressors by concerted efforts. The month after the forming of the Rome-Berlin Axis the formation of the German-Japanese Anti-Comintern

Pact was proclaimed. Announced as merely an instrument of common action against the Communist International, it seemed to have little importance at the time. But Russia suspected secret arrangements aimed at making her fight on two fronts; and other powers had their fears, including Britain and the United States. The Anti-Comintern Pact was a sinister foreboding of the future. The initiative was now in the hands of the aggressors, the have-not powers. Since none of the democratic powers, or Soviet Russia, was ready or willing to use force against the aggressors the policy of appeasement was followed. The white war, or the war of nerves, had begun. In this, every time a move of aggression was matched by a counter-move of appeasement, Hitler and Mussolini and Japan regarded it as a sign of weakness rather than goodwill and used it as a prelude to further advances.

Difficult Times in Britain. Chamberlain as Prime Minister

Britain, faced with the internal crisis which culminated in the abdication of Edward VIII and the accession of George VI to the throne, with the grave threat which a strong German-Italian-Japanese alliance would mean to British naval power, and with the uncertainty of support abroad, pursued a consistently cautious foreign policy. Recurrent crises in connection with the Spanish war over such matters as the international patrol, the withdrawal of volunteers, and the shipment of arms were met with a noncommittal middle-of-the-road attitude. It was felt in the world that this policy was equivalent to aid for Franco. Late in May, 1937, Neville Chamberlain took Stanley Baldwin's place as Prime Minister. He had been Chancellor of the Exchequer for many years, and had probably been as influential as Baldwin in policy-making for some time. Chamberlain was a man with a sincere abhorrence of war; a business man with an inclination to bargain with his opponents; a man with little experience and less aptitude for diplomacy. He was to pursue a dual policy of rearmament and appeasement. This was based on a realistic realization of British weakness. It also reflected the unwillingness of his own country and of Canada, Australia and South Africa to go to war at the time, a fact which was uncovered at the Imperial Conference of 1937. On the other hand, Chamberlain's efforts to appease the aggressors, his constant retreat before them, his reluctance to revive the League, all created tremendous resentment both at home and abroad, especially in Liberal and Labour ranks, and was regarded as shortsighted by those who believed in collective security. However, the program of purges and trials in Soviet Russia at this time seemed to have weakened her as a potential ally, and to have set her more completely apart than ever from democracy, which was something different from either Nazism or Communism. The fall of the Blum government in France raised the possibility of civil war in that country. It was indeed a difficult time for any government in Britain.

Japan and the China Incident. Disquiet Among the Powers

Into the witches' broth that was being brewed in the cauldron of world affairs Japan poured a new ingredient in 1937 when she renewed her attacks upon China. Since her consolidation as a modern state in the latter half of the last century, Japan has pursued a consistent policy of imperialistic expansion. Her advances have always coincided with crisis or weakness in the West. Sometimes she has had to draw back, give up gains, but always with new opportunities she has again pressed forward. Her ambitions have grown with

1895 1905 1931 1933
success. From Formosa and Korea we move steadily towards the present flaunted dream of a New Order in Asia, Asia for the Asiatics, an Asia over which shall wave the banner of the Rising Sun. Unchecked in Manchukuo—the Japs only laughed at the League's fumbling efforts, the Lytton Report, and the unco-ordinated gestures of Britain and the United States—they felt free to march every time a new crisis developed in Europe. In the spring of 1935, during the turmoil over German rearmament, they forced the grant of new concessions in North China. In the autumn, with the Ethiopian crisis at its height, they gained still further concessions. During the Rhineland coup they tried out Russia's defences in outer Mongolia and along the Manchukuo frontier. Russia was indeed keenly alarmed, and proceeded to build great new fortifications, to create an autonomous Far Eastern army, to double-track the Trans-Siberian railway, and to establish new industrial centres in Central Siberia as supply bases. When the undeclared Sino-Japanese War broke out in 1937, Russia began to ship much-needed war materials to Chiang Kai-Shek, the great Chinese leader. If Japan could be deeply involved in China the fear of a two-front war would be indefinitely postponed.

The United States was almost as alarmed by Japanese aggression against China as was Russia. More than century-old American interests in China, the open-door policy, and the balance of power in the Pacific were at stake. China, on the way to be a modern state, a true nation, would in time be a makeweight against, or even overshadow Japan. But the Japs were striking now to prevent that very eventuality, and to ensure their own domination in Asia. Bad feeling between the United States and Japan had risen steadily for a generation, a state of affairs strongly reflected in Canada. Nevertheless, the United States was in 1937 still deeply isolationist, and the Japanese could count on that fact as they could rely on crises in Europe to prevent action by Britain, France and Russia. Not even President Franklin Roosevelt, who had done so much to lead his nation to a fuller consciousness of its true position in world affairs, could yet draw the reluctant populace into efforts to curb aggressors, even Japan.

Difficult Times in the United States

Indeed, the United States was no more ready, less so in many ways, to go to war than the other powers. President Roosevelt had led the country into a great social revolution. This upheaval was precipitated by the stunning pressure of the great depression. None the less, it must be regarded historically as a new episode in the recurrent efforts to realize in the United States that ideal of social democracy upon which the United States is based, and on which Americans have always fixed their hopes. It was a great step ahead but, as is always the case when profound social upheaval takes place, harsh feelings were aroused, with a divided country as the result. No doubt the great majority of the people believed in the President, his program and his leadership, as his successive triumphs at the polls have shown, but the opponents were many and strong. The problems of internal reorganization, then, including the need of coping with the large hostile minority, combined with age-old isolationism, post-war disillusionment, weak armaments and a strong pacifist movement to make the United States unwilling and unready to take a strong line in international affairs. Like France, Great Britain and Russia, the United States found it necessary to act cautiously.

Failure to Curb Japan

Following China's appeal to the League, that body engineered the calling of a World Conference at Brussels. This was to restore peace in the Far East. But Japan and Germany refused to attend. The democratic powers were divided and weak. Hence the conference was doomed to failure before it began. Even the Scandinavian nations, the most wholehearted supporters of the League, refused to sign the mild reprimand to Japan which was finally drawn up. Japan could afford to laugh. Even while discussions were still taking place in Brussels, Italy adhered to the German-Japanese Pact, and early in December she announced her withdrawal from the League. By these acts the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo bloc was consolidated into a totalitarian alliance designed to reshuffle the world's pack of cards according to its own liking. An atmosphere of pessimism and gloom pervaded the supporters of democracy and peace as 1937 came to an end. Hitler was making ready for new thrusts.

Nazi Absorption of Austria

The obvious feebleness of the efforts to stop aggression, the weakening hold of Italy on Central Europe, and the pressure of economic strain at home set the stage for a German push to the East: a new chapter in the age-old program of *Drang nach Osten*. But the best path to the East lay down the Danube valley through Austria and Czechoslovakia. Anschluss with Austria was on the Nazi agenda from the start, as we have seen, though it had been passed over for awhile. Hitler became alarmed in 1937 when Schuschnigg took up the cause of Hapsburg restoration as an alternative to Anschluss. Czech statesmen were again striving to create a Danubian bloc that might check Nazi expansion. By the end of the year Hitler was ready to act. The crises in Spain and China were holding world attention. Austria, he had found, would not be cajoled into Nazification. Therefore it must be crushed. Fifth columnists in Austria were prepared, and Nazi agents began to appear in Vienna in large numbers in January, 1938. At this point Austrian police uncovered evidence of the plot. Certain delays and changes in tactics followed. As a matter of fact the German chief of staff and many other generals were opposed to the move, and had to be retired or forced to resign, a new purge. Early in February Schuschnigg went to Hitler's mountain estate to beard the lion in his den. There he received a terrible shock. The Fuehrer screamed and blustered at him, assailing him as a traitor to the Austro-German treaty, and laying before him plans for the invasion of Austria. His demands left no doubt that complete Anschluss was now intended.

A weeping Schuschnigg went back to a dazed Vienna. When he tried by telephone to seek aid from his protector, Mussolini, he was told that Il Duce was away skiing. There was nowhere to turn for help. Hungary was alarmed but weak, and hopeful of benefitting by her neighbour's misfortunes. Czechoslovakia dared not act alone. The Little Entente was unwilling to give aid against Germany. Rumania was in the midst of a political crisis. Poland would rather have Nazi armies moving down the Danube than across the Vistula. Russia was still in the midst of her treason trials, and was worried about Japan. France was politically unstable and uncertain of British aid. In Britain many people felt that Anschluss should never have been prevented. Austria was a German state. It was widely held, also, that Hitler would be satisfied by concessions and so made a peaceful, law-abiding ruler. At any

rate it was safer to deflect his attention eastward, where the Nazis and Soviets could fight it out together. The appeasement policy was in full sway, though opposition was rising against it, as Anthony Eden's resignation from the Cabinet showed. It was clear to Germany, however, that Britain would not precipitate war over Austria.

The blow fell on March 11. In response to the Nazi ultimatum, Schuschnigg ordered the Austrian army to make no resistance, so that bloodshed might be avoided, and took leave of the Austrian people in a moving radio address which ended with the words, "God save Austria." Hitler crossed the border at his birthplace, Branau, and on March 14 entered Vienna, accompanied by German tanks. The Gestapo had preceded. Under these auspices a plebiscite showed more than ninety-nine per cent approval of the Anschluss. Austria became a German province, and Strauss waltzes were forbidden in Vienna.

This *coup* showed that the directive force in the Rome-Berlin Axis was Berlin, not Rome. Early in May the Fuehrer was entertained in Italy by Mussolini midst great pomp and thousands of secret police. A few days later the Duce told the world that the Stresa Front was dead and would never be resurrected. Italian adoption of anti-Semitic laws was striking proof of Nazi domination. The Anschluss had reversed Italy's victory over Austria in 1918. Italy was again at the mercy of German legions. France, Great Britain and the United States recognized the Anschluss on the grounds that it was the result of an Austrian invitation. Soviet Russia proposed collective action, but nothing could be done. Hitler's greatest advantage from the *coup* was that Germany was now in position to outflank Czechoslovakia and to gain easy access to the Hungarian plains.

Nazi Menace to Czechoslovakia

Caught neatly in the German pincers, the Czechs were certain that the next blow would fall upon them. It was not long in coming. Czechoslovakia was the most successful of the states created out of the old Austria-Hungary. It was highly industrialized and had rich mineral resources. Its strategic position is the most important in Central Europe, as Bismarck once pointed out. It was a democracy, the bastion of democracy in Central Europe, and an ally of France and Russia. In every way it fitted Nazi interests to destroy and absorb this state. The existence of a German minority of over three million in the country gave the Nazis a convenient excuse for action. The problem of minorities was very serious in Czechoslovakia. The Sudeten Germans, as they were called, did have grievances. But the bulk of them believed that their destiny would be best worked out in conjunction with Prague rather than Berlin. The Nazis, however, would not have it so, and pro-Nazi elements among the Sudetens increased as the effects of the depression became more marked, and as Hitler's triumphs mounted in number. The German press and radio ground out propaganda about persecution and mistreatment of the German minorities: the customary procedure of the war of nerves and the usual prelude to violent action. In May, 1938, a war scare developed when it was believed that German invasion was imminent. If the Nazis hoped thus to test the reactions of Czechoslovakia's allies, the reactions were strong enough so that during the next two months the Nazis curbed their propaganda campaign, and strained every nerve to complete the *Westwalle* defences. Despite far-reaching Czech concessions to the Sudeten Germans, Hitler roared at Nuremberg early in September "that if these tortured creatures

cannot obtain rights and assistance by themselves, they can obtain both from us." A new war crisis was at hand. The British fleet was ordered to be on the alert. In France the Maginot Line was manned. The Czechs stood firm, proclaimed martial law in the Sudetenland, and Nazi leaders there had to flee to Germany. At this moment France and Britain had to consider the question of such factors as the superiority of German-Italian forces, the turn of events in Spain where a Franco victory was in sight, the menace of Japan, at the moment in unofficial armed conflict with Russia, and threatening French and British interests. In the circumstances, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, with the approval of Edouard Daladier, Premier of France, decided to fly to Berchtesgaden to talk directly with Hitler to find out "whether there was any hope yet of saving peace."

The Munich Conference

The Prime Minister was met with sharp demands, and he had to return to London convinced that Hitler would be satisfied with nothing short of annexation of the Sudeten Germans to the Reich. Consultations with the French revealed French weakness. The activities of the Poles and Hungarians, who were now eagerly looking forward to their shares in the oncoming plunder of Czechoslovakia, were hardly reassuring. Consequently Prague was told that the British and French governments favoured the cession of the Sudetenland to Germany in the cause of peace, and that they would guarantee the new frontiers. After severe pressure President Benes accepted the bitter pill. While angry Czechs were demanding a military dictatorship and utmost defence, Chamberlain flew to Godesberg to his second meeting with Hitler. There, to his surprise and dismay, he was met with harsh new demands. War was creeping nearer. Prague ordered mobilization. The crisis reached its peak on September 27-28. Chamberlain and Bonnet, the French Foreign Minister, worked feverishly to secure the continuation of negotiations. To their efforts President Roosevelt added his personal appeal for peace to Hitler and Mussolini. On September 28, just as Chamberlain was finishing a speech in the House of Commons, a message was thrust into his hand, and he was able to tell the House that he had been invited to Munich for a conference with Hitler, Mussolini and Daladier the next day. The tension snapped. The House cheered. Everyone seemed swept off his feet by the sudden prospect of peace.

At Munich the four men, after a brief discussion, signed the Four-Power Accord which granted to Hitler his full demands with only minor variations, and laid down the terms for German occupation of the Sudetenland. In an annex Great Britain and France proclaimed that they would guarantee the new frontiers. Significantly, Germany and Italy refused to make such a guarantee until the demands of the Polish and Hungarian minorities should be satisfied. In addition, Chamberlain and Hitler signed a mutual pledge to use the method of consultation in settling all future differences between the two countries. The four leaders returned to their peoples to be received with joy. Chamberlain told the huge crowd that greeted him, "This is the second time in our history that there has come back from Germany to Downing Street peace with honour. I believe it is peace for our time." The world sighed with relief as the prospect of war subsided, but it came out of the crisis with a bad taste in the mouth. It was too evident that violence, treachery and sheer force had won a tremendous triumph. And too many people were asking them-

selves: If Hitler has broken every promise to date, why should he keep those made at Munich?

Indeed, why should he? Second thoughts brought back alarm and doubt. Russia, excluded from the conference table at Munich, pronounced the settlement a "crime against real peace." In Britain men like Winston Churchill protested vigorously against the government's policy. Leadership was being provided for the ever-growing public opinion which was determined not to accept the Munich policy, but to reverse it.

Nazi Partition of Czechoslovakia. Italian Protectorate over Albania

Rapidly, new events justified the alarm of those who saw in Munich nothing but a truce, a hesitation on the road to war. The first partition of Czechoslovakia went ahead on schedule in October and November, 1938, with the Nazis not paying too close attention to the terms of the Accord. Poland and Hungary, aided by the Axis, satisfied some of their demands for territory. Following up these gains, Germany brought great economic pressure to bear upon the Balkan states. Hitler, moreover, began to talk to Poland about Danzig and the Polish Corridor. Poland found herself with a sword of Damocles hanging over her head. Meanwhile Britain and France attempted to appease Italy, only to be shown again in late November where this policy must lead, when deputies in the Italian Chamber shouted, "We want Tunisia, Corsica, Nice, Savoy!" As winter faded into spring, General Franco completed his triumph in Spain. The Axis could chalk up another victory. But even before that significant event Hitler was again on the move. On March 15, 1939, Nazi troops marched into Prague after the city had been threatened with total bombing. Sullen, weeping crowds looked on, daring only to jeer and throw a few snowballs. The next day Hitler declared a protectorate over Bohemia-Moravia, and gathered the now autonomous Slovakia also under his protection. Hungary took this chance to annex Carpatho-Ukraine and so gain a common border with Poland. In Britain Chamberlain denounced Hitler's disregard of pledges and admitted that his action had sounded the death knell of appeasement. It was now clear that the Nazis intended to establish German hegemony over Europe by force. One violent act followed another in rapid succession. On Good Friday Mussolini, to compensate himself for Nazi gains and to save face, invaded Albania and declared it to be an Italian protectorate. This, however, was the last unchallenged conquest of the totalitarian axis. Appeasement was dying. Britain and France were girding themselves for resistance.

Growing Demand for Resistance to Axis Aggression in Britain and France

In both countries there was dawning the realization that the totalitarian axis could strike westward as well as eastward, against democracy as well as against communism. Britain and France were themselves in danger. There was clearly no way of checking Hitler except by his own means, force against force. No more bastions must be surrendered. People were getting tired of the unending crises which appeasement seemed to foster rather than prevent. In this atmosphere, given practical expression by a revolt in the Conservative Party ranks, Chamberlain was compelled to announce the end of appeasement. But one of the difficulties confronting the new efforts to build a front against the totalitarian powers was that of convincing the world that this change

of attitude was certain and permanent. Another difficulty was to know where the totalitarian bloc would strike next. Rumours were rife. And the initiative was in their hands.

The Polish Crisis

The trouble centre became fixed, however, in Poland, when Germany indicated that she expected that country to meet her demands about Danzig and the Corridor at once. Poland's answer was mobilization. As a deadlock developed between the two countries, Britain and France decided that the time had come to act. Hence, they declared that they would guarantee Polish independence. This constituted a new epoch in British foreign policy, as Chamberlain pointed out, since never before had Britain undertaken such obligations in Europe east of the Rhine. Guarantees were also extended to Rumania and Greece, and negotiations were begun to make an alliance with Turkey. To bolster the political moves, financial and commercial assistance was given to these countries in order to offset the German economic offensive. Meanwhile the British Territorial Army was placed on a war footing and doubled in size; and nearly half the new national budget was devoted to defence. Across the Atlantic the more far-seeing Americans began to see that totalitarian aggression would constitute a threat to the western hemisphere. So Cordell Hull went to the Pan-American Conference at Lima to check Nazi-Fascist encroachments in South America, and to lay the basis for a hemispheric foreign policy. President Roosevelt asked for the repeal of the arms embargo. In April he sent a message to Hitler and Mussolini, asking their assurance that they would not attack some thirty-one countries which were listed. Hitler made a cunning answer, expressing his peaceful intentions, but at the same time denouncing the Anglo-German Naval Agreement and the Non-aggression Treaty with Poland. German pressure on Poland was steadily increasing. Yet, unless Britain and France could come to terms with Russia, there was not much that could be done to help Poland or any other country in Eastern Europe.

Nazi-Soviet Non-aggression Pact

The countries of Eastern Europe disliked and feared Russia. They were disinclined to appeal to her for aid even to save their existence. Indeed, they regarded the need of choosing either Russia or Germany as a friend as the choice of the frying pan and the fire. Russia, herself, was in no mood to deal with the Western Powers. The experiences of the last few years, especially the exclusion from Munich and the failure of France to live up to its treaty obligations, had revived all the traditional Soviet suspicions and fears. Moscow was certain that Britain and France were trying to provoke war between Germany and Russia. It was not strange that Anglo-French efforts to woo Russia soon reached an *impasse*, for in addition to their suspicions Stalin and Molotov were determined to stay out of any war. British recognition of Japan's "special requirements" in the war with China, though dictated by the recognition that Britain could not resist on all fronts at once, aroused further suspicion in Moscow. The efforts to win over Russia came to an abrupt end on August 23, when the world was jolted by the announcement of the signing of a non-aggression pact between Germany and Russia. The stage was now set. Freed of the fear of a two-front war, and with his potential enemies divided, Hitler was ready to sound the attack.

The Coming of War

The German-Polish pot had been boiling all summer. On August 29 Hitler sent a virtual ultimatum, cloaked in seemingly fair terms, to Poland. The Polish Ambassador had a last interview with the German Foreign Minister on August 31. When he tried to get in touch with Warsaw after that interview he found the telephone wires had been cut. At 5.45 the next morning, September 1, without a declaration of war, Hitler's blitzkrieg of Poland began. For two days Britain and France hoped against hope to avert a general European war. But on September 3 the suspense came to an end. Early that morning both countries sent ultimatums to Berlin. When no answer was received, war was declared. Canada's independent declaration of war, a significant step in her development as a nation, followed on September 10. The issue was now joined. The world had to decide whether totalitarian barbarism or law, order and security would prevail.

THE SECOND WORLD WAR

September 1939—December 1942

Germany Provokes a New World War

The First World War was, as we now know, indecisive. Lying latent during the nineteen-twenties, the persistent struggle was given new life with the establishment of the Nazi regime in Germany. From that centre the revived conflagration spread and intensified until, with the German invasion of Poland, and the outbreak of hostilities between Germany and the Allies, France and Britain, it once again reached the stage of open conflict, the Second World War.

The second war was, as never before, a total war: a war of nations using their utmost resources of men and machines, of everything under their control. In a real sense there were no noncombatants, either from the point of view of effort or from that of exposure to danger. This fact was voiced by King George VI in the words, "This time we are all in the front line." For years Germany had prepared for such an all-out war. Believing in war as a desirable means to achieve power and as a good thing in itself, the Nazi leaders not only built up a huge military organization, but also fashioned German economic life, indeed, all phases of life, to suit the purposes of war. "Guns instead of butter" was the slogan of national existence. Thus Germany had, at the opening of conflict, a very real advantage over Britain and France, because the latter countries looked upon war as an evil thing, to be avoided, not sought after. Their national life still functioned largely for purposes of peace.

German and Allied Prospects

Yet, if Germany was better prepared, the nation more disciplined and mentally ready, the German people had for years been under the kind of strain which is associated with war. It is significant that Germany began the war with ration cards. The Nazis had accumulated large amounts of materials needed for war, but if the war should be prolonged it was to be remembered that Germany was deficient in such essentials as oil, rubber, cotton, fats and iron ore. Since Britain and France were almost sure to have command of the seas, such deficiencies might spell defeat in a long war. The two Western Powers, moreover, could eventually muster a greater manpower, control more resources, produce more machines of war than their foe. Germany had a preponderance of air power at the outset, though it was a question whether either her machines or her airmen were equal to those of the Royal Air Force. Britain began immediately, moreover, to develop an airplane industry and an Imperial training organization for pilots in Canada, which was to be of prime importance in the struggle for air superiority. All the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations joined the Mother Country in the war save Ireland. Canada's declaration of war we have noted. Australia and New Zealand did not hesitate. Sharp division of opinion in South Africa was overcome under the leadership of a new premier, a man old in honour and fame, Jan Smuts. Ireland's defection, the result of historic bitterness, gave rise to grave uncertainties, and later to serious difficulties, notably with regard to the maintenance of the sea lanes in the Atlantic. It did not, however, prevent a good many Irishmen from serving

with the Imperial forces. Within three months Britain and France had achieved a greater co-ordination of military efforts, and of economic organization—the latter amounting to a pooling of joint resources in war materials, food, shipping and finances—than had ever existed in the First World War. And behind the British Empire and France was an increasingly benevolent United States. It looked as though Germany with her initial advantage must win a short war or suffer defeat in a long one. People in the western nations began to say, "Time is on our side."

Germany entered the Second World War without active allies. Her previous ally, Turkey, was this time a neutral, but antagonistic to Germany and pledged to resist German aggression in the Balkans together with the Allies. Austria-Hungary had disappeared; and though German absorption of Austria and Czechoslovakia gave the Nazis some of the strategic and economic advantages of the older alliance, it also brought them problems of controlling hostile and resentful peoples. Italy was not ready for war, and she disliked the German-Soviet agreement. If she came into the war it was certainly most likely to be on the side of Germany, because this time she could fulfil her ambitions only at the expense of France and Britain. Japan was far away, involved in China, and none too pleased with apparent German-Soviet friendliness. But Japan, too, was a potential German ally, though her participation in the war depended upon Nazi successes in Europe and the nature of German relations with Russia. Soviet Russia had signed a pact of friendship with Germany, and a trade agreement. But these did not make Russia a German ally, nor a participant in the war, though they did almost eliminate for Germany the danger of fighting a war on two fronts. There was, indeed, Poland to create an eastern front, but Poland did not appear to be a dangerous foe. Since Germany was ready to strike, and the Siegfried Line or *Westwall* prevented Allied attack in the west, the Nazis could throw their full weight against inferior Polish forces and eliminate the eastern front before France and Britain were prepared to take decisive steps.

Defeat and Partition of Poland by Germany and Russia

Poland was crushed with a rapidity that shocked the world. The brief campaign was a striking demonstration of the success of blitzkrieg methods on favourable terrain. Poland, a country of thirty-five million people, primarily agricultural, without natural defences and with few fortifications, was called upon to meet the whole might of one of the greatest industrial and military states. The German attack was launched simultaneously from north, west and south. Polish mobilization was incomplete. Her army, which fought bravely, was inferior in numbers and equipment. The Polish air force was destroyed on the ground in the first days, thanks to an efficient Nazi spy service, and the Polish army was left blind. With German mastery of the air Polish communications were disrupted. The speed and recklessness with which German mechanized columns advanced was certainly unexpected. In a series of well-calculated pincer movements, Polish resistance was broken and confused. By September 16 Warsaw was almost surrounded; the only hope of resistance lay in Eastern Poland. But on the next day Russian armies began to invade from the east. The Soviet government stated that the Polish state no longer existed. Hence, treaties with it were void. Russia must protect its "blood brothers" in Poland. Germany announced that this intervention was made with her full knowledge and approval. Under the circumstances, organized

Polish resistance was no longer possible. Although Warsaw and a few other centres held out a short while longer the Polish phase of the war was over. On September 29 Russia and Germany agreed to partition Poland. Germany received more than half of the country—the richer, more industrialized western portion, but Russia's section contained twelve million peasants closely related to the Russians in race and ways of life. Germany annexed the westernmost areas, but created a so-called autonomous province in central Poland where Poles and Jews were to be segregated, a huge ghetto.

War in the West

Having disposed of Poland, Hitler now proposed a peace settlement on the basis of Germany's existing conquests and remaining needs. Britain and France, however, could not accept new products of German aggression, nor put any faith in further German pledges. Peace was impossible on German terms. The war had to go on, and it would now be centred in the west.

Slight Activity on Land. In Air

Yet in the west the war settled down to what one wit called the "sitzkrieg." Advanced French forces were withdrawn to the Maginot Line, a solid line of underground forts, casements and pillboxes along the border from Luxembourg to Switzerland. Across the German border the Siegfried Line, though not a connected line, was the counterpart of the Maginot Line, built on the same principle as the French line, that of defence in depth. These fortifications made direct attacks too costly, and both sides contented themselves with mere raids and artillery duels. But preparations for future action went on behind the lines. By October there were over 150,000 British troops in France. German troops were moved from Poland to the west. In November it seemed as though the Germans were going to invade the Lowlands in order to circumvent the Maginot Line. This caused Holland and Belgium to strengthen their defences and to offer to mediate peace. This offer was rejected and the scare subsided, but France announced that the Maginot Line would be extended to cover the Belgian and Swiss frontiers. Relative inactivity on land was matched by greater inactivity in the air over the land. Neither side seemed ready to commence serious bombing. Leaflet raids over Germany by the Royal Air Force and reconnaissance flights constituted the main activities.

More Intensive War at Sea. Submarines and Raiders

The war at sea was far more intense. The Allies had the advantage as the German fleet amounted in tonnage to only a little over one-tenth of the Allied fleets. But it was impossible to force this inferior fleet into a decisive battle, and the Allied navies had to guard the sea routes of the world so as to make the blockade effective against Germany and to assure supplies for themselves. The Germans resorted at once to ruthless submarine warfare—the weapon of an enemy weak in sea power. They began again where they left off in 1918, as the sinking of the passenger liner *Athenia* on the first day of the war indicated. Erich Raeder, head of the German Admiralty and a veteran of Jutland, hoped with the submarine, of which Germany had an estimated sixty-five at the opening of the war, to break British sea power and to destroy British economic life. To counter his efforts Britain chose Winston Churchill as First Lord of the Admiralty, the post which he had occupied in the First World War with such great success.

By the end of the year British shipping losses were nearing five hundred thousand tons, but most of these losses had been made up by seizures from the enemy, new construction, and transfers from neutrals. The convoy system was working effectively to reduce sinkings. Germany now resorted to submarine attacks on neutrals, and the indiscriminate laying of mines, including magnetic mines and mines laid by airplanes. Britain countered with the laying of protective mine barrages, a mine-sweeping campaign, and the planting of mines along German shores. By mid-December Germany seemed to have lost one-half of the submarines with which she entered the war. Air attacks on ships were added to those of submarines, and the air forces of both countries were chiefly active over the sea during this period. Brilliant feats were performed at sea, such as the sinking of the *Royal Oak* in Scapa Flow, an exploit which led to the abandonment of that anchorage as a main naval base. But the outstanding episode of the war at sea in these months was the running fight between the *Admiral Graf Spee*, a German pocket battleship acting as commerce raider, and the British cruisers *Exeter*, *Ajax* and *Achilles* off the Uruguayan coast. The much lighter British boats combined superior speed, effectiveness of smoke-screen and daring tactics to shatter the myth of the pocket battleship. The *Graf Spee*, badly hurt, took refuge in Montevideo, and when forced out by diplomatic action, the German commander scuttled the ship and committed suicide.

Economic War. Struggle for Supplies

Behind the struggle on the sea lay the grim reality of economic need. Each side had to assure itself of supplies for the war effort as well as for its national life, and each side had somehow to pay for these imports with exports or cash. Hence, the desire to destroy the enemy's trade was a necessity of war. Needless to say Britain, though more dependent than Germany upon outside supplies, had the advantage of command of the seas. If she could retain that position it might prove decisive, though air power was now a serious challenge to sea power. Germany could bring strong pressure to bear upon European neutrals. None the less, the Allies had rather the better of economic bargaining during the first months of the war. The blockade and Allied ability to make large contracts and to pay cash were all great advantages. The most important change in the economic sphere of war during this time was the alteration of the Neutrality Law in the United States. Designed originally to prevent the United States from becoming involved in war through economic entanglements, the law of 1937 forbade the sale of munitions and the granting of loans to belligerents. But a natural desire for trade and a growing sentiment in the United States in favour of the Allies led President Roosevelt to seek amendments to the act. In November the new act adopted the cash and carry principle, by which war supplies could be bought in the United States if the purchasers transported them in their own ships. Loans were still not allowed to belligerents. Since the Allies had command of the seas, they were now able to enlist the tremendous productive capacity of the United States in their behalf. Friction between Britain and the United States over blockade procedure, such as marred relations in the early years of the First World War, was reduced to a minimum by the barring of American ships from war zones. On the whole, the blockade control ports, supported by the navicert system, functioned with little trouble. To the United States must be added Canada as a centre of war production. Indeed, new industries reached unprecedented heights in the creation of supplies needed to sustain the Allied war effort. These Allied

advantages, which would grow greater with time, plus the effective operation of the blockade in cutting both German imports and exports, gave a favourable aspect to the Allied efforts in the economic struggle at the beginning of 1940. The relation of the Soviet Union to the economic side of the war, as well as to other aspects was, however, a matter of grave doubt.

Soviet Outlook. Strengthening of Defences

The Nazis tried persistently to frighten the world with the prospect of Russia entering the war on their side. Russian supplies to Germany, it was said, would completely nullify the effects of the blockade. But it was soon clear that Stalin and the Soviet Union had other ideas on such things. Russia was in the most favourable position enjoyed by the Soviet regime since its inception in 1918. The agreement with Germany and an armistice with Japan in mid-September, 1939, gave her unusual freedom from fear of attack. It was gratifying to have the capitalist powers fighting each other instead of Russia. Russia could, therefore, take the occasion to strengthen her defences against the inevitable attack in which she believed unswervingly. In this respect it is to be noted that not only did the exchange of goods between Russia and Germany not develop on a large scale, and military aid not at all, but also that her greatest efforts to improve her defences were focussed on the western frontier where the attack, if it came, could hardly come from any other state than Germany.

We have already seen that the partition of Poland added considerable territory to Russia, and space in which to operate freely was a tactical asset in this mechanized war. Treaties with Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania in October, 1939, gave Russia rights of military garrison, and naval and air bases which extended her defences to the Baltic, into an area previously dominated by Germany. But now the Reich ordered the Germans of these Baltic states to return to Germany and be settled in the annexed districts of Poland. This move meant uprooting families from age-old homes, to settle them anew in a hostile land from which other families had first been uprooted. It increased German strength in Poland and freed Russia of a potentially dangerous minority. Soviet efforts to extract concessions from Turkey did not fare as well, and served to arouse fears in the Balkan states and in Italy.

Russo-Finnish War

Finland also opposed Russian demands. Friction developed rapidly and on November 30, 1939, Soviet troops invaded Finnish territory. The Germans were none too pleased. Most of the rest of the world was highly indignant. The League of Nations declared Russia an aggressor, but no country was prepared to go to war with Russia for the sake of Finland. The Finns, however, were able to put up a remarkable resistance on their own. Misled, perhaps, by the quick German victory in Poland and acquiescence in Russian demands by the Baltic states, the Soviet government relied upon great masses of inferior troops to frighten and overwhelm the Finns. Instead, the Finns stood their ground, exacted a heavy cost from the invaders, and endangered the prestige of the Soviet regime. The war raged through the snows and sub-zero temperatures of one of the severest winters in European history. By February Russia decided to use troops of better quality and abler officers. New tactics were employed. A direct assault on the Mannerheim Line was launched, the path for infantry attacks being opened by a terrific artillery bombardment. Despite

staunch resistance breaches were made in the fortifications, and by March 11 Viipuri was on the verge of capture. Indeed, four days before this the world had been startled by a statement that peace negotiations between Russia and Finland were under way.



McInnis: The War, First Year (Oxford)

THE BALTIC, MARCH 1940

The Russian demands were so stiff that Britain refused to act as intermediary. Sweden undertook that task. The Swedes sympathized strongly with the Finns. Swedish aid and volunteers had been a prominent factor in prolonging Finnish resistance. But the Russo-Finnish war had made Sweden's position extremely risky, exposing her to pressure from Russia, Germany and the Allies. Germany, fearing that the Allies were preparing to make a northern front in Scandinavia under the pretext of helping Finland, had told Sweden and Norway that Allied troops on their soil would necessitate a German invasion. In fact, an Allied expeditionary force of a hundred thousand men was planned, and a few days before peace negotiations started the Finns were told that fifty thousand were ready to sail. But before diplomatic and other difficulties could be ironed out, Russia and Finland had come to terms. That strengthening of her western defences was Russia's main objective, was again clear in the peace terms: the acquisition of many islands and the lease of Hangö gave Russia control of the Gulf of Finland; the gain of the Karelian Isthmus and the region around Lake Ladoga eased the defence of Leningrad, and placed the Mannerheim Line in Russian hands. In the north Russia was now able to dominate Petsamo and to defend Murmansk more easily. Other provisions gave the Soviet government virtual diplomatic and economic domination of Finland. The extent of the Russian triumph was obscured in the eyes of the world by her unimpressive military efforts in the early part of the war.

War in the West. Norwegian Neutrality

Meanwhile in the west the Nazis and the Allies did little on land. The war was dragging through repeated reports of German troop concentrations which kept the Lowlands and Switzerland in a state of nerves. On the ocean neutral and Allied shipping suffered increasing losses, but German shipping was almost driven from the high seas. Naval warfare provided the exciting incident of the *Altmark* rescue, when a British destroyer dashed into a Norwegian fjord at night and grappled with the German prison ship, *Altmark*. A boarding party leaped on the German deck. Fighting followed with German sailors firing from the shore. In the end, two hundred and ninety-nine British seamen, crews captured by the Graf Spee, were rescued. The Nazi government fumed, and the Norwegians, fearful for their neutrality, were annoyed. This episode served to show how the Germans were using Norwegian coastal waters to circumvent the blockade. It was a serious gap not yet plugged. In the air heavier bombing raids took place, aimed at destroying the British base of Scapa Flow and the German base at Sylt.

Reorganization of Normal Life

During these first months of the war the reorganization of national life to meet war conditions went on apace. The passing of the Emergency Powers Bill by the British Parliament gave the government the right to make extensive regulations by Order-in-Council. The French government had similar rights reconfirmed. But in both countries the fundamentals of democracy were retained. Individual rights, personal liberty and ultimate control by parliament were not lost to view. In Britain a War Cabinet was formed, as in 1916, though this Cabinet was not like the earlier one, a coalition of all parties, since Liberals and Labour remained aloof. Though Winston Churchill, and on occasion Anthony Eden, were included, the War Cabinet was dominated

by men who had guided British policy in pre-war years. Rising impatience with such leadership provoked certain changes in the next few weeks, during which Winston Churchill gained a more prominent post. In France the appearance of a new ministry in March, 1940, under the leadership of the energetic and democratic Paul Reynaud would, it was hoped, bring a more vigorous prosecution of the war. Unhappily, France remained a sadly divided land. Even the Nazi government had to be further organized for war. During these changes Field Marshal Goering emerged more clearly as second to Hitler in importance in Germany.

Importance of Economic Element. The Balkans

The economic element in the war became steadily more important. Rationing was introduced in Britain in January, 1940, and meatless days started in France in March. Restrictions multiplied, aimed at reducing individual spending to bare essentials so as to leave more money, materials and labour available for war needs. The war was costing each of the belligerents from thirty to thirty-five million dollars a day. British and German income taxes and the indirect taxes rose to unprecedented heights. France preferred to rely more upon indirect taxes and levies on business profits. Britain floated a heavy loan at three per cent interest and took measures to prevent wartime speculation. Careful husbanding of credit resources that could be used for purchase of war supplies abroad was undertaken.

The struggle for economic domination of the Balkans went on. Though Germany had greatly increased her trade with this area, the Balkan states were by no means yet ready to succumb completely to Nazi economic overlordship. A new commercial agreement between Italy and Germany in February, 1940, raised again the prospect of the potential Italian menace athwart the Mediterranean supply routes. Consequently the Allies decided to abandon gentler tactics in dealing with Italy. Britain announced that all shipments of coal from Germany to Italy by sea would be seized, beginning on March 1. This was a severe blow to a country dependent chiefly upon sea-borne coal supplies for her industries. In the circumstances Hitler decided to make use of Italian resentment to draw Italy closer to Berlin. A meeting with Mussolini took place where, it seems, plans were discussed for the creation of stronger German economic domination in the Balkans. Co-operation with Russia and Italy was necessary for this, and the relations between those two states were very cool. Indeed, Russia, though unfriendly to the Western Powers, showed no great cordiality for closer relations with Germany. Whatever the decisions made by the two dictators, economic strain was becoming increasingly greater. The extension and intensification of the Allied blockade must lead to the spread of hostilities as the Nazis strove to break the closing ring.

Nazi Blitzkrieg in the West. Denmark

Suddenly, with but little warning to the world at large, the Nazis' blitzkrieg burst with full force upon the West. The Allies then found that for this type of war they had little understanding and almost no preparation. Unhampered by any consideration of morality, such as the maintenance of international law or the preservation of the rights of nations, the Nazis hurled their juggernaut at the unoffending neutrals, Denmark and Norway. Denmark, which had virtually no defences and a tiny army, relied on a non-aggression pact with Germany and a discreet observance of neutrality to keep itself free of war.

When it was attacked simultaneously at six places, by land and by sea, it could offer almost no resistance. By mid-afternoon of the day of attack the country was under effective Nazi control. The Germans announced that they came as protectors.

Nazi Conquest of Norway. Results

In Norway matters did not go quite so easily for the Germans. The plan of attack had been calculated with cool precision. German troops and mechanized equipment had been shipped to Norway in boats that were apparently sailing in ballast. The sudden appearance of these troops gave the Nazis a tremendous surprise advantage and left the Norwegians bewildered. Inside Norway, also, Nazi friends had been searched out and organized—fifth columnists, ready to betray their native land. Though overrated in importance, perhaps, their internal co-operation was a vital feature of the successful attack. The chief ports of Norway from Narvik to Oslo were taken with little trouble, though German naval losses in the Oslo fjord from Norwegian fire were unexpectedly heavy. The Norwegians bravely refused to capitulate even when their capital was lost, and had nothing but contempt for the puppet government set up by the Nazis under the traitor, Major Quisling. The British rushed naval and air aid to the scene. In the sea fighting that followed, of which the British raid on Narvik was the most spectacular incident, the Germans lost from one-third to one-half of their fleet. Still, they had established themselves in Norway, and unless an effective Allied counter-expedition could be brought into Norway at once Norwegian resistance would be overwhelmed by superior manpower and equipment. Allied attack forced the Germans for awhile to rely on air-borne reinforcements alone, but the Nazis gradually cleared their lines of communication and ships got through. When the Allies did land a force at Namsos and Andalsnes they found that German command of the air, superiority in manpower and fire power were overwhelming. Allied forces lacked mechanical equipment, numbers, and adequate bases. In the end their withdrawal was forced. At Narvik a brilliant British assault was followed by the same result. When the Allied forces left Norway, King Haakon also left, in order to establish a Norwegian government-in-exile in Britain. The Germans held Norway in their grasp.

German losses were heavy, but German gains were greater. Gold reserves and foreign credits; accumulated supplies of oil, rubber, cotton and foodstuffs were of tremendous value to the Nazis. Still more so was the assured control of the products of the farms and dairies of Denmark, of the fisheries, forests and mines of Norway. These were not only gained for Germany, but were lost to the Allies, who had now to seek elsewhere, in less convenient places, to make good the losses. It was true, of course, that neither Denmark nor Norway was self-sufficient economically, and so Germany would have to make up the deficiencies somehow. This would be done mainly, as it had been elsewhere, by lowering the people's standard of living. This, the unhappy Danes and Norwegians were soon to find out. Fortunately for the Allies, Norway's main asset, her merchant fleet, fourth largest in the world, largely escaped the conqueror. It was soon operating under Allied control through arrangements with the exiled Norwegian government. But German strategic gains were highly dangerous, for Norway provided a large number of fine harbours, well suited as bases for submarines and sea raiders, and much nearer to the North Atlantic sea routes than any held before. To these must be added air bases

in easy striking distance of Scotland and the northern islands. Finally, Germany could now exert such pressure upon Sweden as to render her an economic dependency, thus assuring the Nazis of a continued satisfactory supply of the superb Swedish iron ore.

New Leaders in Britain. Winston Churchill

The German triumph in Norway precipitated a political crisis in Britain. All the long-smouldering animosity against the Chamberlain policies found vent in an outburst of ire against the government, especially the Prime Minister. A revolt in the Conservative party brought things to a head. Chamberlain did not lose the majority in Parliament, but he was clearly condemned. Labour leaders refused an invitation to join the government. Hence, on May 10, 1940, Neville Chamberlain resigned, to be succeeded as Prime Minister by Winston Churchill, a vigorous leader who typified the dogged determination of the embattled British public. They felt the guidance of the war effort was now in safer, sounder hands. It was well they looked at it so, for on this very day, May 10, the Nazi might burst through the dykes of the Netherlands to overflow the Low Countries, and to present Britain with the worst threat to her existence since the days of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Nazi Conquest of the Low Countries

Like Denmark, Holland and Belgium had pursued a policy of strict neutrality in recent years. Belgium had been released from her military alliance with France in 1937, and had subsequently refused to consider any plans of co-operation with France and Britain, though these countries still guaranteed aid against invasion. Holland showed an even stronger desire to cling to isolated neutrality. "As far as human help goes, we rely solely upon ourselves," the Premier said. Pledges of assistance were spurned. Even the preparation of co-ordinated defence plans with Belgium, and the building of an unbroken system of border fortifications, were refused. Consequently if Allied aid, finally sought in desperation, was less effective than it might have been, part of the explanation must be found in this attitude. The futility of Nazi promises, and of a policy of strict neutrality in the face of Nazi ambitions, was once more demonstrated.

Behind a line of newly strengthened forts the Belgians felt that they could withstand the invader far longer than they had in 1914. Unhappily, they had prepared themselves to meet the tactics of 1914, not those of 1940. The Dutch system of water defences was even more archaic than the forts of the Belgians, harking back to old-time Dutch experience. Through such inadequate protection the highly modern Nazi war machine blasted its way almost with impunity. A considerable group of French officers felt that the Allies should take their stand behind the Maginot Line and its recent supplementary extensions. But other French leaders and Britain felt that earlier pledges should be kept, and the Belgian coast defended. The latter course was chosen. An Allied force, chiefly British, entered Belgium to help the Belgians stem the German onslaught. The striking power, efficiency and new tactical methods involved in this assault were very imperfectly appreciated by the Allied High Command, though they had been demonstrated in Poland. This was no longer the defensive war of fixed lines, such as characterized the Western Front in the First World War, but a new war of rapid movements and long distances. Nazi air and land forces were co-ordinated with remarkable precision. Waves of dive-bombers

roared ahead to pave the way for attack. Tanks rolled along the roads or across country to make the first break-through. Motorized infantry rushed up to exploit or consolidate the advance. Many spearheads were thrust out to curl around defences and break up armed forces into small units that could be encircled by pincer movements. Paratroops were dropped on airfields, bridges and other strategic points far ahead of the advancing land forces, in strength and with equipment sufficient to enable them to hold these points until the advance reached them; or, at least, to destroy their usefulness for the defenders. Fifth columnists, well organized and ready for action, appeared as they had in Norway. Even the flooded plains of Holland were turned to Nazi advantage by means of fast motor boats and barges. Such unexpected methods, the overwhelming weight of the attack, and the utterly ruthless bombing of defenceless cities like Rotterdam broke Dutch resistance in five days. On May 13 Queen Wilhelmina and the Dutch government fled to England. On May 17 all organized opposition ceased.

Meanwhile the German onrush into Belgium swept through Belgian defences with alarming speed. The prospect of a German encircling movement such as was tried in 1914 opened up. When the Allied forces left prepared positions in France to advance into Belgium, a temporary weak spot was created near Sedan. Perhaps the Belgian defences in the Ardennes were counted upon to delay the Germans long enough so that this gap could be filled. Instead, the Germans advanced rapidly, discovered the weak point, and struck at it with all their might. Inadequate French forces were completely confused. Even bridges were left undestroyed. By May 19 a corridor sixty miles wide was driven between the French armies in the Maginot Line and the Allied forces in Belgium. Two days later the invaders reached the Channel coast at Abbeville, isolating the Allied armies in the north. Everywhere the Germans were able to muster superior strength, thanks to their new methods, their efficient co-ordination, and their superiority in mechanical equipment. French airfields and the French air force were destroyed in short order. The Royal Air Force conducted itself with the greatest courage and daring, inflicting much heavier losses in proportion on the German than it suffered itself. Nevertheless, it remained painfully evident that the Germans had long prepared for this type of war: the Allies had not. Courage and daring, even superior planes, could not make up for lack of numbers in planes, tanks and other equipment, nor for adequate plans to meet such tactics. The initiative lay constantly with the German attackers. In a few days Dunkirk was the sole port remaining to the Allies in Belgium. On May 28 the last hope of holding that port was shattered when King Leopold surrendered the Belgian army to the Nazis. His ministers had tried in an all-night session to dissuade him from such action. When it was taken they disavowed it and stated that the Belgian government would continue the fight from exile. Leopold was undoubtedly convinced that the situation was hopeless and that further resistance would mean useless destruction and bloodshed. His act, however, was received by the stunned Allies with understandable bitterness. It appeared to doom the forces at Dunkirk to capture or destruction.

Dunkirk

There followed a triumph of discipline and morale, a saga of bravery and endurance. The environs of Dunkirk were flooded to provide extra protection. Then, in the face of the full might of a superior enemy, flushed with victory,

the British and French armies withdrew to the beaches of Dunkirk in good order, fighting heroic rear-guard actions, so that those in front could be evacuated and saved. From all the nearby harbours of England a vast fleet of craft, large and small, moved across the Channel. For five days the evacuation went on. The sea was calm, and for two days a fog served as partial protection. But constantly the Germans poured shells, bombs and every conceivable instrument of destruction upon the trapped armies and their rescuers. In the end, Prime Minister Churchill was able to announce that the navy, using a thousand ships of all kinds, had carried three hundred and thirty-five thousand men across the Channel. Many ships were sunk and thousands of men were lost, but all told the losses were surprisingly small. The evacuation of Dunkirk was a magnificent feat of human salvage in the face of crushing odds. It will always be writ large in the annals of British heroism. Yet behind was left a vast amount of war supplies, including the bulk of Britain's mechanized equipment. Critical losses these, which could be replaced only by hard labour over a long time. Would that period of time be forthcoming?

The Collapse of France. Armistice Terms

Indeed, those who once had said glibly, "Time is on our side," began to wonder how much time was left. The Germans had the initiative and could use time as they wished. They chose to hurl all their strength against the confused French, whose impregnable Maginot Line was now quite out-maneuvred. Once again the Nazis concentrated overwhelming force. Five days after the start of the drive one hundred divisions, all their available first-line troops, were being used by the Germans. Under such pressure the French and British forces fell back steadily until Paris itself was threatened, then doomed. The French government fled to Tours and on to Bordeaux, over roads clogged with refugees. Paris was undefended to save it from bombing. On June 14 German columns appeared in the silent, sullen capital. Four days before this Italy had ventured into the war. The time had come, it seemed, to pick up the spoils. As President Roosevelt phrased it, "The hand that held the dagger has struck it into the back of its neighbour." Assailed on two sides, with chaos inside the country, France sank rapidly to utter defeat. On June 17 the French government asked for terms of peace.

This French government was not that which had started the struggle. During the stress of the campaigns in Flanders and France, old leaders with honoured names had come to the fore: Marshal Pétain, General Weygand; and some whose honour was more doubtful, like Pierre Laval. They were given a lost cause to care for. Some of them seem to have seen opportunities for themselves in defeat, at least in closer co-operation with a victorious Germany. Men like Reynaud who wanted to carry on the war at all costs were pushed into the background. His last desperate appeals to the United States could bring no effective aid at that time. The peace group would not sanction retiring to the colonies to fight. The astounding British proposal to merge the two empires so as to continue the war in common, alarmed rather than encouraged this group. Britain finally found it necessary to release France from her pledges not to make a separate peace, with the important proviso that the French fleet be sent to British ports and remain there during negotiations.

After Hitler and Mussolini had conferred and after France had been forced into the humiliation of asking an armistice from Italy as well as from

Germany, French envoys were called to the forest of Compiègne. There, on the very spot and in the same railway car where the armistice of 1918 had been signed, they were given both a lecture on German innocence and the German demands. The most important of the harsh terms were these: two-thirds of France was to be occupied by the Nazis at French cost, this territory to include all the important industrial areas except Lyons, and the entire west coast; the French army was to be demobilized, forts and military equipment surrendered, air activity forbidden, and airfields turned over to the Nazis, even in unoccupied France; French prisoners-of-war were to remain in



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FRANCE, SHOWING OCCUPIED ZONES
(Dotted line shows point of furthest German advance.)

German prison camps until peace was concluded; France was to give up all German citizens, i.e. refugees, on the demand of the Nazi government; the French fleet was to be disarmed in French ports under German and Italian control, with the assurance that it would not be used by these powers. These were only armistice terms and could be revoked at any time that the conquerors decided that France was not fulfilling its obligations. Final peace would be dictated to France when the Axis victory was won. It was a crushing disappointment to Britain, and to France's friends, that the Pétain government

chose to accept these terms rather than continue the fight from bases somewhere in the vast French empire.

Vichy France. Free France

The Pétain government established at Vichy represented those elements in France which had always been opposed to the principles of the Revolution, and those of totalitarian inclination. This regime proceeded to turn back the clock as far as possible towards the era before 1789. Work, Family and Fatherland became the national slogan in place of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. The constitution was scrapped, and Pétain became Chief of State, a dictator. In this transformation France moved not only backward but more in line with Germany. There was a strong pro-German minority, led by Laval, but in all honour neither Pétain nor Weygand, despite terrific pressure, wanted to act as cats' paws for the Nazis. There began then the hazardous see-saw between those who wanted to preserve some semblance of independence for France and those who wanted to make France a full ally of Germany, which still goes on. Both Canada and the United States maintained diplomatic relations with the Vichy government. Outside of France another French group, bent on continuing the fight and on the restoration of the Republic in France, organized a military command, but not a government-in-exile, with substantial land forces and part of the French fleet to co-operate with Britain. These became known as the Free French. Their leader was General de Gaulle, who had been one of the very few military leaders in France to recognize the importance of mechanized warfare. French Equatorial Africa and some of the French islands in the Pacific soon came under Free French control. But the bulk of the French navy remained a grim potential menace to British sea power should the Germans and Italians choose to disregard their promises. Neither their word nor that of Admiral Darlan was very reassuring. Consequently it was decided to ensure the immobilization of this fleet. Units in British harbours, at Alexandria, and in the West Indies could be controlled, but the large squadron at Oran in Algeria was another matter. On July 3 a British squadron appeared. An ultimatum was issued to the French admiral, offering him five choices of action. He turned them all down, and the British had with great reluctance to open fire. In a short battle the major portion of the French fleet was disabled or destroyed. A few encounters occurred elsewhere. These tragic conflicts between the former allies brought a break in formal relations and the two countries moved to the brink of war. In these unhappy hours the Battle of Britain was beginning.

Britain Alone. Rejection of Hitler's Peace Offer

As the danger to Britain increased during the black months after April, so the trimming of the British government better to meet the strong winds ahead went steadily on. The new War Cabinet had only five members, and two were representatives of Labour. Not all the persons suspected of lack of energy were yet eliminated from the ranks of British administration; but new, vigorous leadership was coming to the fore, as was shown by the placing of Lord Beaverbrook in charge of the newly created department of aircraft production. Late in May, Parliament passed the extremely drastic Emergency Powers Defence Act, giving the government control over all the property and manpower of Britain, thus empowering it to conscript both wealth and labour in the service of the state. Under these powers munition factories were immedi-

ately placed on a twenty-four-hour, seven-day production basis, local defences and home defence forces were greatly strengthened, and possible fifth-column leaders were arrested. Confronted with a peril greater even than that offered by Napoleon, Britain was suspending her traditional liberties in the interests of national security. Well she might, for, with the exception of the loyal member nations of the British Commonwealth and the material aid of the United States, Britain stood alone before the Nazi threat. In any event Britain alone would have to bear the brunt of the German attack so soon to come.

Before setting the assault upon Britain into motion, Hitler tried a new peace feeler which he called his "last appeal to reason" and "common sense." If unanswered he proclaimed that this would relieve his "conscience with regard to the things to come." Hard beset as they were, the British doggedly refused to listen. Any peace at that moment would have meant abject acquiescence in Nazi triumph. All for which Britain stood would have been lost. Lord Halifax pointed this out in words in a broadcast, but the real answer came in a shower of bombs on German objectives, and in the voting of a new war budget that would absorb seventy per cent of the normal national income, midst the loud acclaim of the British people. Those same people, the common men and women of Britain, had now to withstand the full force of German savagery. They learnt in bitter experience what Winston Churchill had meant in May when he said, "I have nothing to offer but blood and toil and tears and sweat."

Britain Faces Invasion

Despite all courage and determination, Britain might have succumbed had not the English Channel at this moment again served its historic function as shield and buckler. Germany had masses of mechanized equipment and numbers of trained men such as Britain could not then muster. Consequently, had the blitzkrieg been able to roll into Britain as it had into France the ability of even a determined people to resist effectively was, to say the least, dubious. Britain's second advantage was her navy, much more powerful than the naval forces of Germany and Italy combined. Forced now to assume the burden of war in the Mediterranean without the aid of the French fleet, to continue and to expand the blockade, and to keep the sea lanes open for the passage of men, food and supplies to and from Britain, it was required to strain its strength to the limit. But unless it could be destroyed the Nazis had little hope of landing an army of invasion upon English soil. That an invasion would be attempted seemed certain, if only because a Nazi victory could not be complete without the ruin of Britain. And so the British people lived for months in the shadow of that ugly possibility. It was well that Britain had better planes and better pilots to meet the enemy's greater numbers, for the greatest threat was to come from the air.

Britain Withstands Nazi Air Assault. Morale

Bombs began to fall daily upon Britain as early as June 18, but for a month air raids were mostly confined to military objectives and reconnaissance flights. For the time being the Nazis were consolidating their new gains, preparing air bases, getting used to flying over Britain, and making ready for invasion. After the rejection of Hitler's second peace proposal the air raids became more intense. Greater numbers of planes, coming now from nearer

bases, hammered day and night at their objectives. One of these was now clearly to destroy ports and shipping, and so complete the counter-blockade upon which the submarines were engaged. The Royal Air Force retaliated with heavier and heavier raids upon German ports and communications, especially upon the industrial cities of the Ruhr. It was a desperate struggle of attrition. Who could last longer? To Nazi astonishment British convoys continued to use the English Channel, and British ports, even London, continued to receive all-important cargoes. And British morale did not crack. On August 8 the Germans began mass daylight raids, with hundreds of planes coming over in waves. Their bombing became indiscriminate. Time bombs and incendiary bombs were used. Residential quarters and slum areas were deliberately destroyed. A great effort was made to wipe London off the map. Even Buckingham Palace was hit: a serious error, as it only served to bring the Royal Family and the people closer together. Indeed, British morale still refused to break. Out of all these awful trials the British common people emerged as heroes, undaunted and unbeaten.

British Victory in Air. Danger to Sea Lanes

When improved British air defences made German mass daylight raids extremely costly the Nazis once more relied primarily upon night attacks. How frightful these could be was attested by the concentrated bombings of Coventry, Plymouth and Liverpool. Nevertheless, the abandonment of efforts to strike a knock-out blow in favour of the slower process of attrition was evidence of the magnitude of the British victory in the air. Even while German attacks were at their height the Royal Air Force was striking at Germany itself and the possible invasion ports. During these trying months Britain was transforming her island into a fortress where every person—soldier and civilian—had his part to play, and every beach and moor was made ready to receive any foe that had the audacity to try invasion. By 1941 Britain had four million men under arms, and home troops were being steadily reinforced with troops from Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and other parts of the Empire. The prime need was to keep a steady stream of food and supplies coming to this fortress island. The sinking of shipping rose to alarming heights as the Germans began to make full use of their new bases. Indeed, the strain on the merchant marine and the navy became oppressive as sinkings overtopped replacements. Britain and Canada were building more ships than ever before, but it became increasingly clear that, in this respect as in so many others, the one hope of decisive aid lay with the United States.

Drawing Together of English-Speaking Peoples. Canada's War Effort

One of the heartening aspects, in fact, of a struggle that had so far been very discouraging for the British people was the steady drawing together of Britain, the United States and Canada. The Canadian effort in the raising and equipping of large numbers of troops; in the extensive, quite unprecedented manufacture of munitions and other war supplies; in the production of food, and in the highly successful development of the great air-training scheme, was magnificent. When Canada's population and resources are taken into account, her contribution to the war effort is seen to be astounding. Her rapidly growing navy was participating far and wide in convoy duty, and in the grim Battle of the Atlantic against submarine, airplane and raider. Halifax

naval base was the key to the North Atlantic, and new Canadian air bases were vital links in the supply lines to Britain. Yet withal, Canada could not replace all the supply centres that had been lost nor provide adequate supplies and men for this titanic struggle. Not Britain and Canada together, even with the aid of the rest of the Empire could do it, so great had the German advantage become. Hence the help of the United States was vital.

Roosevelt and Changing Views in the United States

It was well, therefore, that the vast mass of the American people favoured Britain and the Allied cause from the outset. True, isolation was still strong, the war seemed far away, and the United States remote from danger. The attitudes of a generation could not be dissipated over night, as the reactions of many other peoples were to show. But if the American people were reluctant to translate sympathy into action, the Roosevelt administration was not. It saw more clearly than the people where basic American interests lay. President Roosevelt, step by step, often against strong opposition, led the United States into closer and closer co-operation with Britain, turned sympathy into deed. By the summer of 1940, however, the American people realized more fully the real danger to themselves, at least from Germany. The fall of France brought to their eyes the grim spectre of possible British defeat and of the Atlantic Ocean open to the Nazis. And a world under Nazi domination would mean the end of the American way of life just as it would that of Britain, for in essence they are the same. The response of the American people was the overwhelming vote of confidence in Roosevelt's leadership, and his election for a third term, the first in American history.

The United States Prepares for War. Hemispheric Defence. Lend-Lease

The reorganization of government and industry in the United States for maximum war aid to Britain and all foes of the Axis went on apace, based in many ways on Canadian and English precedents. Enormous expenditures for war production were followed by the establishment of compulsory military service in September, 1940, under which sixteen million men registered for the draft in October. Careful steps were taken to enlist the co-operation of all the countries of the American hemisphere in the efforts to check Axis fifth-column activities which were very dangerous in Latin America, and in the general preparation of hemispheric defences. The evident sincerity of the Hull-Roosevelt Good Neighbour policy, and the broadening concept of the Monroe Doctrine as a co-operative instrument of hemispheric international policy, gave to such efforts a prospect of success they would not otherwise have had. Loss of European markets, and increasing economic dependence upon the United States, also made things easier, perhaps, for such a policy. The Nazi menace, however, was becoming apparent to all. Argentina and Chile were less willing than other Latin-American countries to co-operate, but through the Pan-American Union a substantially united front was created. Canada, indeed, did not belong to this body, but President Roosevelt had let it be known that the United States would join in the defence of Canada. This promise became a fact when the President and Prime Minister Mackenzie King agreed at Ogdensburg, New York, on August 18, 1940, to create a Permanent Joint Board on Defence for the two countries. This was followed quickly by an agreement between Britain and the United States whereby the

United States turned over fifty destroyers to Britain, and received lease rights to naval and air bases in Newfoundland, Bermuda, the British West Indies and Guiana. These measures, along with increasing economic co-operation between Canada and the United States, emphasized the growing cohesion of the English-speaking peoples in the face of adversity and the development of North America as the arsenal of democracy. To this structure of growing British-American co-operation, the passage of the Lend-Lease Bill in March, 1941, was a magnificent contribution. By ingeniously avoiding the existing legal restrictions upon the granting of credits to belligerents, an almost unlimited source of war supplies was opened to Britain and other Axis foes at a moment of great need. Prospects of future quarrels over repayment, moreover, were reduced to a minimum by the provision in the bill that "the benefit to the United States may be payment or repayment in kind or property, or any other direct or indirect benefit." This is a good example of how free peoples can learn by experience.

The Atlantic Charter

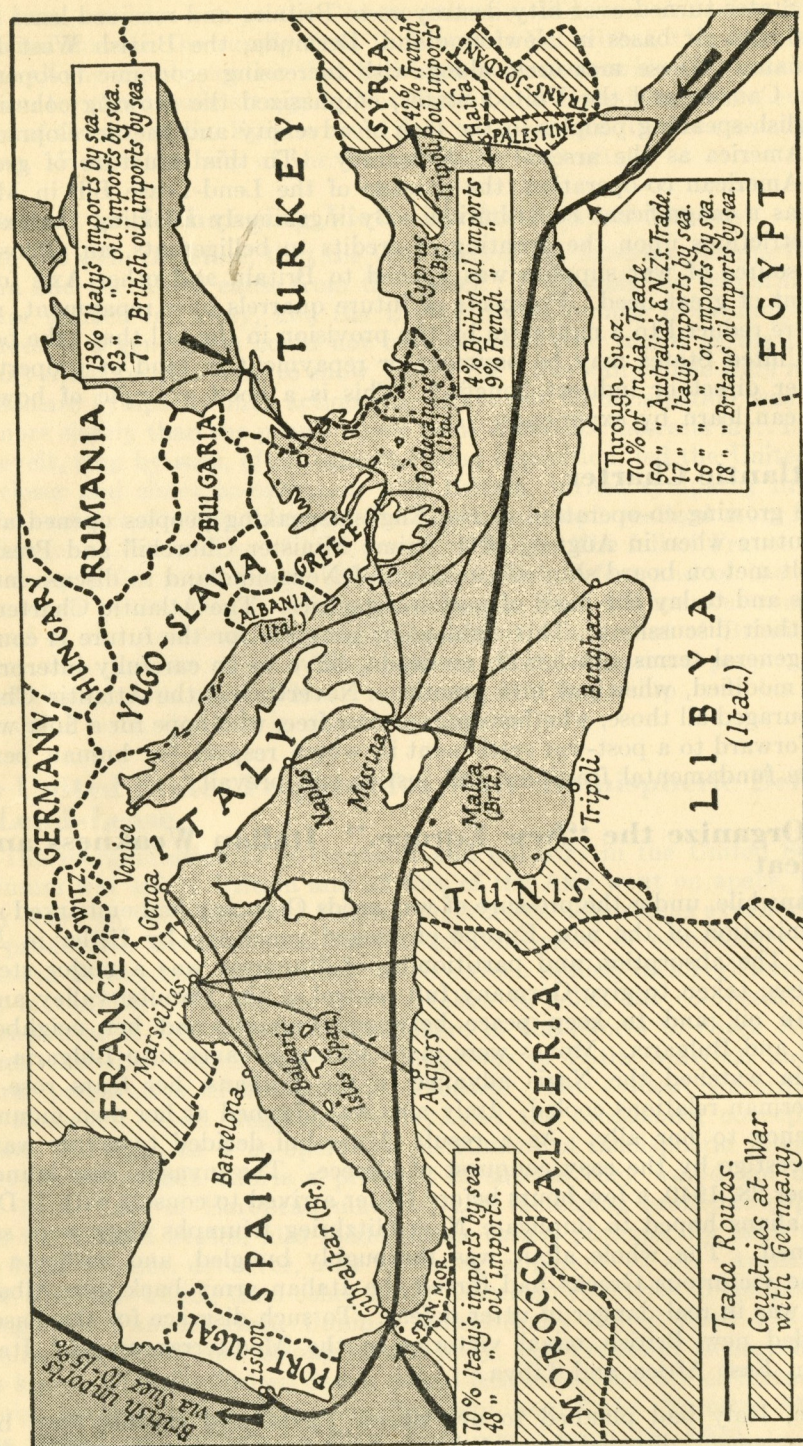
The growing co-operation of the English-speaking peoples opened a gate to the future when in August, 1941, Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt met on board ship off the coast of Newfoundland to discuss mutual problems and to lay the basis of post-war policies. The Atlantic Charter was born of their discussions. This eight-point program for the future is couched in very general terms which will, no doubt, have to be carefully interpreted, perhaps modified, when put into practice. Nevertheless the Atlantic Charter has encouraged all those, whether oppressed or free, who hope for a finer world, to look forward to a post-war settlement in which respect for human personality, the fundamental freedoms and justice will prevail.*

Nazis Organize the "New Europe." Italian Weakness and Defeat

Meanwhile, under the pressure of war needs Germany had embarked upon the organization of the new Europe envisaged years ago by Hitler in *Mein Kampf*. The absorption and partitioning of Rumania was a major step in the process; taken to give Germany full control of the Danube valley and of Rumanian oil, and to keep peace between Rumania and her neighbours, Hungary and Bulgaria. Moves were made for an advance into Bulgaria, too. As Russia watched the Nazis advance in the Balkans, her fears rose and Russo-German relations cooled. Italy also was alarmed at her own mounting subservience to her ally. As a result, Mussolini decided to revive waning Italian prestige by the easy conquest of Greece. The invasion was launched on October 28, 1940, a few hours before Hitler arrived to consult with Il Duce. If the Italians hoped to duplicate Nazi blitzkrieg triumphs they were sadly disillusioned. The whole affair was thoroughly bungled, and within a few weeks the victorious Greeks had forced the Italian army back into Albania, where it was in real danger of utter defeat. To such disgrace for the Fascists were added new British naval victories in the Mediterranean and Italian defeats in East Africa and Libya.

Once, Italy had planned to overwhelm Egypt and capture Suez by a pincer movement directed from Ethiopia and Libya. In December, 1940,

*NOTE: The terms of the Atlantic Charter are given in Appendix A, p. 33.



THE MEDITERRANEAN, JUNE 1940

McIntire: The War, First Year (Oxford)

Italian forces suddenly found themselves on the defensive in Libya as General Wavell's blitzkrieg roared across the desert in a well-timed, beautifully co-ordinated mechanized attack. In two months British forces, composed to a large extent of Anzac troops, advanced five hundred miles and captured one hundred and thirty-three thousand prisoners. The Italians were shattered, and the road to Tripoli was open. In East Africa, where the South Africans played a prominent part, British advances were equally well executed, and Italian defeat equally decisive. By April, 1941, there was little left to Italy there but isolated fragments of forces that were to be mopped up in the following months. The daring bombardment of Genoa and the victory won off Cape Matapan by the British Mediterranean fleet emphasized the crumbling of Italian strength. Italy was clearly the weak flank of the Axis. In these circumstances Germany brought pressure to bear upon France to become an active ally, but in spite of the Dakar incident in September, 1940, when British and Free French forces had tried to occupy that strategic port, Pétain was yet unwilling to play that game, as Laval's dismissal from the government indicated.

Nazi Conquest of the Balkans. Yugoslavia, Greece, Crete

Germany, however, had no intention of allowing Italy to be forced out of the struggle. While waging relentless war on the sea and in the air against Britain, the Nazis were not occupied seriously on the land. Hence, they could throw their whole weight into the Balkans when their interests seemed to demand it. Having consolidated her position in Rumania, Germany proceeded to take Bulgaria under her benevolent protection. In the first week of March, 1941, Nazi troops occupied the country by pre-arrangement with the government. Germany was now ready to interfere in the Greco-Italian war. This made it necessary for General Wavell to weaken his forces in Libya and to send reinforcements to Greece. German pressure upon Yugoslavia brought the rulers of that country to the point of complete submission, only to have a heroic people repudiate the signatures of its ministers. This defiance threw German plans somewhat out of joint, but Nazi forces were already poised for attack. On April 6, 1941, they drove across the frontiers of both Greece and Yugoslavia.

Hopes in Britain that an eastern front could be created in the Balkans as in the First World War, were quickly disappointed. The German smash into Yugoslavia, in full force from Bulgaria rather than from the north, took the Yugoslavs by surprise. They were not fully mobilized and had no means of coping with Nazi mechanized might. In five days after the savage bombing of undefended Belgrade, the fall of Yugoslavia was in sight, though sustained guerrilla warfare was to remain a permanent thorn in the German flank. The Yugoslav collapse opened a serious gap in Greek defences, and the full weight of the Nazi onslaught now fell on the war-weary Greeks and their British allies. One-half of the latter were Anzac troops withdrawn from Africa. Again lack of equipment and lack of numbers made the outcome inevitable. Despite bitterly courageous fighting the Greeks were forced to capitulate on April 23. By May 1 all the British forces that could be evacuated, some forty-five thousand out of fifty thousand, had been taken off at heavy cost to the navy and under conditions nearly as difficult as those at Dunkirk.

The Germans did not stop in Greece proper, as the moment seemed to have come to snap the British life line in the Mediterranean. German forces

and equipment were dispatched to Tripoli to bolster the weakening Italians there. Some of these Nazi mechanized units, while feeling out the British lines, discovered how weakened they had become. A drive immediately developed which swept the British right back across Libya to the Egyptian frontier, excepting only at the port of Tobruk, where Anzac and Imperial troops were to hold on grimly with the help of the Mediterranean fleet for many bitter months in one of the most heroic episodes of the war. Large British forces were held in East Africa where Italians were still fighting a hopeless battle. German intrigue tried to create still further dispersal of British strength by stirring up revolt in Iraq. Fortunately this broke out before the Germans were ready to give much help, and Britain was able to master it after some fighting. It was none too soon as the Germans had already made themselves masters of Crete in a bitterly contested campaign in which parachute troops and airborne supplies played a very important part. This method of attack was not successfully combatted because of British lack of air power. In the end another costly evacuation had to be made by the British fleet, without air protection, during which it suffered most serious losses. The strategic importance of Crete to Germany explains itself from a study of the map.

Failure of Nazi Pincer Thrust Towards Suez

It could provide, for one thing, a stepping-stone to Syria, the strategic key of the Middle East, from which a drive towards Suez might be launched. In fact, under the cloak of Vichy protection, the Germans were fast filling Syria with German airmen, planes and supplies. The danger was too clear to be disregarded. Hence, British and Free French forces were ordered to invade Syria on June 8, when no satisfaction could be had from the Vichy government. Fortunately the Germans were not in a position to send strong help to Vichy's forces in Syria, so that though the fighting was unduly protracted it was eventually settled in favour of Britain in July, 1941. They definitely closed the Nazi pincer thrust towards Suez, as the Libyan drive had been held at the Egyptian border. It gave Britain satisfactory direct means of contact with Turkey, which could now be more urgently pressed to hold firm against Nazi blandishments and threats. It also meant a great strengthening of the eastern defences of Suez. At any rate the war now moved its central focus far away from the Mediterranean into the plains of Russia.

Nazi Decision to Invade Russia

The mutual distrust with which Nazi and Bolshevik, Russian and Teuton, always regarded each other, no matter what agreements they signed, rose rapidly to the point of hostility as Germany established herself in the Balkans. Preparations for immediate war began in the late spring of 1941. Russia had no more desire for war then than she had in 1939, and Stalin apparently was ready to continue a policy of appeasement. But Hitler had made up his mind. Russia was becoming too strong and too uncertain. Until such a potential threat was removed he could not throw the full weight of Germany against the prime enemy—England. Then, too, Russian territory was suited to German blitzkrieg methods and Russia had made a rather poor showing in the Finnish war. Possible British and American aid to Russia was discounted. Finally, the conquest of Russia had always been a fundamental part of Hitler's plan for the organization of a German-dominated continent. It would free



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THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN

Germany from fears of blockade pressure by ensuring her of adequate supplies, and give her a vast realm for future exploitation. It fitted the age-old Teutonic tradition of *Drang nach Osten*. So on June 22, 1941, huge Nazi forces plunged into Russia bent upon the conquest of the largest country in the world.

War in Russia

On and on rolled the German machine across the plains and marshes, through the forests of the Soviet Union. Here and there it was slowed by savage Russian counter-attacks, by strong rear-guard actions, by stubborn stands behind natural obstacles, in fortified cities. But always the Germans

had the initiative and moved steadily ahead towards Moscow, towards Leningrad, towards the rich Donetz basin and the oilfields of the Caucasus. Yet in a few weeks it became evident that for the first time on land the Nazis were meeting a foe that knew their methods, and knew how to use them against the invader. Long-prepared defences, designed to meet just these tactics, exacted a terrific toll of Nazi manpower and equipment. The Russians revealed incredible reserves of mechanical equipment, airplanes and tanks; their staff work was excellent. Their long retreat was carried out, despite extremely heavy losses, with masterly discipline and organization. To their surprise and disquiet the invaders found no fifth-column upon which they could rely to confuse the defenders. The Russians fought desperately for their homeland and for a regime they regarded as beneficial. Even as their ancestors had done before the armies of Napoleon, they scorched the earth, destroying all, so as to make the invader more dependent upon lengthening lines of communication, difficult to keep open in the face of numerous guerrilla attacks. And the Russians had space into which they could fall back, enticing the Germans into more and more exposed positions.

Yet, sound as this policy was, they could not retreat forever. By the end of November, 1941, the Nazis had conquered a large part of Russia's best industrial area, and were threatening the Donetz basin. Pincer arms were reaching around Moscow; Leningrad was besieged with Finnish help; the Crimea was invested, and the Caucasian oilfields seemed to lie open to the invader. Never before had any country sustained such a battering and survived. The length of the battle line and the numbers of men engaged were hitherto unknown. Though the campaign had cost the Nazis dearly, it was doubtful whether the Russians could hold out much longer.

Japan Strikes. Pearl Harbor. Hong Kong

At this moment, when all the energies and attention of the Western Powers seemed focussed upon the struggle in Russia and on the Atlantic, Japan chose to strike. At dawn on December 7, 1941, Japanese planes and submarines made a savage and treacherous attack upon the great American naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. Simultaneously, attacks were made on Hong Kong, which Canadian troops were helping to garrison; on the Philippines and other American islands; and thrusts into Thailand and towards Malaya were launched. The extent of these attacks showed that they had been planned for a long time and actually set into motion some weeks before, while a show of diplomatic negotiations was being carried on with Britain and the United States. The militarists were now in full control in Japan. They were determined to use what seemed Japan's greatest opportunity to encircle China and eliminate the China Incident, and to drive the Europeans from Eastern Asia. Japan desired to create in this region a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere," just as Germany was setting up the "New Order" in Europe. With these attacks the war became a world war to a greater degree than any previous struggle.

The first onslaught of the Japanese was so well planned, so savage and so unexpected that the unprepared Allies were forced to retreat from one position to another in the Pacific. There was new disappointment among Allied peoples and some fear over these retreats. But eventually these peoples began to realize their own greater strength, and hope rose anew. There were, indeed, strong reasons for hope and confidence, though the utmost efforts would be needed to realize those hopes.

The United States at War. The United Nations

The United States was now fully engaged in the war everywhere, since war with Germany and Italy followed automatically upon Japanese action. Moreover, the American people were thoroughly aroused to their own danger and angered to a fighting pitch and a national solidarity not seen in the First World War. It was not many weeks before American warships and troops, as well as supplies, began to make their presence felt in all parts of the world. Closest co-operation between the United States, the British Empire, Russia and China was worked out. Unified commands were created, and officers of all the United Nations worked harmoniously together. Supplies and equipment were allocated to the points of need rather than to the forces of the country of origin. War production reached peaks hitherto unrealized, and the forces of the United Nations at last began to have mechanized equipment adequate to their needs.

The Turn of the Tide

There were still many defeats to be endured and many losses to face. The war at sea reached to the shores of America, and shipping destruction remained dangerously high, but satisfactory curbs were being placed on this threat. Canadian-American co-operation in this phase of defence was of highest importance. Japanese thrusts in the Pacific could not be countered quickly, since the forces of the United Nations had to be assembled in this new area of war. Nevertheless, slowly but surely the barriers to further Japanese expansion were drawn and the means for counter-offensives brought together. In the Atlantic the British navy in May, 1941, had won a brilliant *coup* in the sinking of the *Bismarck*, Germany's largest and newest battleship, and had demonstrated once more British command of the sea. Now the British navy was joined by the United States navy, and though these fleets must meet tasks the world over, it was felt they were equal to the burden. British air attacks upon Germany reached a crescendo never equalled by the Germans in their attacks upon Britain. In Europe the conquered peoples became increasingly restive and sabotage spread. They awaited the day of release, in which they now had hope. In Russia a miracle happened. At least so it seemed to the rest of the world, for with the onset of winter the Soviet forces ceased to retreat, took the initiative in their own hands and battered the Germans back through a long winter campaign. It was beginning to appear that Hitler may have made the same fatal error as Napoleon in choosing to invade Russia. Indeed, for all the defeats yet to come it seemed that 1942 would bring the turn of the tide.

Forward to Victory

The peoples of the United Nations, awakened to the full horror of an Axis triumph and believing in their own ultimate victory, were prepared for the greatest sacrifices which that victory might require. Destruction and ruin spread across Europe and Asia, as one hapless nation after another was systematically looted of food, clothing and the supplies of normal life for the benefit of the invaders. It was not this physical devastation, not even the awful suffering endured by these subject peoples which moved the peoples of the United Nations to utmost efforts to win the victory. Rather it was the barbaric and impious renunciation by the Nazi and other Axis leaders of the fundamental importance of the individual, from which basic belief all our

hard-won "freedoms" have sprung: freedom of thought, freedom of religion, freedom of association, and the rest. The Nazi overlords of Europe worked steadily to break the spirit of the conquered peoples, to create a servile "New Order" over which the German master-race should rule. They aimed at the total destruction of ideas like the value of human personality and the brotherhood of man, upon which, under the guidance of Christianity, European civilization with great struggle and sacrifice has been constructed, and which in Britain, Canada, the United States and some other countries has flowered into democracy. From such a spiritual death the peoples of the United Nations were prepared to make every sacrifice to save themselves and those who had fallen beneath the Axis heel. In 1942 they looked forward, not counting the cost, to ultimate victory.

Appendix A

THE ATLANTIC CHARTER

- I. Their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or otherwise.
- II. They desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned.
- III. They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.
- IV. They will endeavour, with due respect for their existing obligations, to further the enjoyment by all states, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity.
- V. They desire to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field, with the object of securing, for all, improved labour standards, economic adjustment and social security.
- VI. After the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny, they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want.
- VII. Such a peace should enable all men to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance.
- VIII. They believe that all of the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons, must come to the abandonment of the use of force. Since no future peace can be maintained if land, sea or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten, or may threaten, aggression outside of their frontiers, they believe, pending the establishment of a wider and permanent system of general security, that the disarmament of such nations is essential. They will likewise aid and encourage all other practicable measures which will lighten for peace-loving peoples the crushing burden of armaments.

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

For Chapter I: The Way to War

- Benns, F. L.: *Europe Since 1914*, 5th ed., pp. xvi, 998. Crofts, 1941, \$4.50. This is the most helpful of the books available.
- Langsam, W. C.: *The World Since 1914*, 3rd ed., pp. xvi, 888. Macmillan, 1937, \$3.50.
- Langsam, W. C., and Eagan, J. M.: *Documents and Readings in the History of Europe Since 1918*, pp. xxvii, 865. Lippincott, 1939, \$3.75.
- Lee, D. E.: *Ten Years, 1930-1940*, pp. xviii, 442. Houghton Mifflin, 1942, \$3.75.
- Slosson, P. W.: *Europe Since 1870*, pp. xiii, 810. Houghton Mifflin, 1935, \$4.25.
- Swain, J. W.: *The Beginning of the Twentieth Century—A History of Europe from 1870 to the Present*, rev. ed., pp. xv, 772. Norton, \$4.75.

For Chapter II: The Second World War

- McInnis, E. W.: *The War: First Year*, pp. xvi, 312. Oxford Press, \$2.00.
- McInnis, E. W.: *The War: Second Year*, pp. ix, 318. Oxford Press, \$2.00.
- McInnis, E. W.: The same, published quarterly as *The Oxford Periodical History of the War*, under the sponsorship of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, at 25c. an issue.

This is an excellent book with particularly useful maps, date lists and bibliography. It is in fact the only book available, and the writer of this pamphlet has relied heavily upon it.

The following pamphlets will be of some use, though they are limited in scope:

- Langsam, W. C.: *Since 1939—A Narrative of War*; supplement to *The World Since 1914*; pp. 103, with maps. Macmillan, 60c.
- Slosson, P. W.: *War Returns to the World, 1938-1941*; supplement to *The Growth of European Civilization*, by Boak, A. E. R., Hyma, A., and Slosson, P. W.; pp. 22, with maps. Crofts, 25c.

Addresses of publishers' representatives:

- Crofts (Clarke, Irwin & Co., Ltd. 480 University Ave. Toronto).
- Houghton Mifflin (Renouf Publishing Co., 1433 McGill College Avenue, Montreal).
- Lippincott (Longmans, Green & Co., 215 Victoria St., Toronto).
- Norton (Geo. J. McLeod, Ltd. 266 King St. W., Toronto).

TIME CHART

Date	Britain, France and Western Europe	Germany, Italy and Central Europe	Russia and Eastern Europe	United States, Japan and Rest of World
1929	Great Depression -	- - - - -	- - -	- - -
1930	- - - - - Increasing Expenditure upon Armaments	Economic Nationalism - - - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -
1931	Britain Adopts Protective Tariff	Decline of Weimar Republic		Japan Conquers Manchukuo
1932	Disarmament Conference - - - - - -	Failure of Danubian Federation Plan	- - - - -	Japanese Attack on Shanghai
1933	World Economic and Monetary Conference - Nazi Party—Sole Party in Germany Germany Announces Withdrawal from Disarmament Conference and League of Nations	End of Weimar Republic—Nazis in Control in Germany Reichstag Fire Nazi Party—Sole Party in Germany Germany Announces Withdrawal from Disarmament Conference and League of Nations	- - - - -	Franklin Roosevelt as President The New Deal
1934	February Riots in Paris Franco-Czech-Soviet Pact Plan	German-Polish Non-aggression Pact Balkan Pact - - - Nazi Purges Hitler as Der Fuehrer Abortive Nazi Putsch in Austria	- - - - - Baltic Entente Russia Enters League	
1935	Laval-Mussolini Agreements - - - Stresa Front - - - Franco-Czech-Soviet Pact Signed - - - Anglo-German Naval Agreement - - - Hoare-Laval Agreements Hoare-Laval Agreements Revealed	Germany Creates Air Force—Restores Universal Military Service Italy Invades Ethiopia Nazi Purges Hitler as Der Fuehrer Abortive Nazi Putsch in Austria	- - - - -	
1936	Death of King George V Popular Front Government in France Civil War in Spain Abdication of King Edward VIII	Hitler Denounces Locarno Pact Reoccupation of Rhineland Nazi-Austrian Treaty of Friendship Rome-Berlin Axis German-Japanese Anti-Comintern Pact	Unrest in Near East Montreux Convention Japs Attack Russian Defences -	Japan Forces Concessions from China East and N. Africa Siberian
1937	Coronation of King George VI Neville Chamberlain, Prime Minister			

TIME CHART—Cont'd

Date	Britain, France and Western Europe	Germany, Italy and Central Europe	Russia and Eastern Europe	United States, Japan and Rest of World
1937	Fall of Popular Front Government in France Brussels Conference	Italy Joins Anti-Comintern Pact - - - Italy Leaves League of Nations	Purges in Soviet Russia	Japan and the China Incident
1938	Great War Scare	Nazi Absorption of Austria Nazi Threats to Czechoslovakia Munich Conference - First Partition of Czechoslovakia		Lima Conference
1939	Opening of Second World War	Nazi Occupation of All Czechoslovakia Italian Protectorate of Albania Nazi-Soviet Non-aggression Pact - - - Nazi Attack upon Poland		Roosevelt Asks Repeal of Arms Embargo
	Sinking of <i>Athenia</i> B.E.F. in France Rejection of Hitler Peace Offer Sinking of <i>Royal Oak</i> Anglo-French-Turkish Pacts	Collapse of Poland Nazi-Soviet Partition of Poland - - -	Poland - - - Soviet Pacts with Baltic States Turkey Signs Mutual Assistance Pacts	Amendment of U.S. Neutrality Law
	War of Fortified Lines Savage Submarine Warfare <i>Graf Spee</i> Battle	in West - - - fare and Blockade - - -	Russo-Finnish War	
1940	Ration Cards in Britain Reorganization of Government and Economic Life			
Mar.	Air Raids on Scapa Flow and Sylt - - - Reynaud Cabinet in France Changes in Chamberlain Ministry	Nazi Invasion of Denmark and Norway	Russians Victorious in Finland; Peace	
	Allied Forces in Norway - - - Allied Evacuation of Norway—Nazi Conquest -			
May	Churchill, Prime Minister	Nazi Invasion of Low Countries		Britain Occupies Iceland
	- - - - - - - - - -	The Netherlands Succumbs Nazis Penetrate France; Sedan		Roosevelt Asks New Defence Appropriations

TIME CHART—Cont'd

Date	Britain, France and Western Europe	Germany, Italy and Central Europe	Russia and Eastern Europe	United States, Japan and Rest of World
1940	Evacuation of Dunkirk - - - -	- - - - Italy Declared War on Britain and France	Russia Occupies Baltic States	
July	Collapse of France Pétain Reorganizes Remainder of France—Vichy	Signing of Armistice with Germany and Italy	Russia Acquires Bessarabia	Havana Conference Ogdensburg Agreement Canada-U.S. Joint Defence Board
Sept.	- - - - Anglo-American, Destroyer-Naval-Air Base Agreement The Dakar Incident	Nazi Air Blitzkrieg on Britain	Partition of Rumania	- - - - - -
Nov.	Heavy Air Raids on Coventry, London, Birmingham, Plymouth	Italy Invades Greece		Roosevelt Gains Third Term
1941	- - - -	Britain Opens Libyan Campaign Heavy Italian Defeats in Albania, Africa, Battle of Cape Matapan		Lend-Lease Bill
Mar.	- - - -	British Retreat in Libya Nazi Attack on Yugoslavia and Greece Collapse of Greece—Withdrawal of British Troops		Canada-U.S. Agreement on Economic Co-operation Britain Ends Revolt in Iraq United States to Train British Fliers
May	- - - - Sinking of H.M.S. Hood	and Bismarck - - British Withdrawal from Crete		British-Free French Invade Syria
July	British-Russian Mutual Aid Pact	Nazi Invasion of Soviet Union	- - -	United States Occupies Iceland
Sept.	The Atlantic Charter Heavy British Air Raids	Costly but Steady Nazi Advance in Russia	Anglo-Russian Occupation of Iran Siege of Leningrad	U.S. Arms Merchant Ships, Permits Entry to War Zones
Dec.	- - - - Britain at War with Japan Japan Attacks Britain—Hong Kong	New British Advances in Libya Finland, Hungary, Rumania Germany and Italy Declare War on United States	- - -	Japan Attacks United States—Pearl Harbor