

LET'S FACE THE FACTS

No. 1

**Address to the Men and Women
of Canada**

BY

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**over a national network of
the Canadian Broadcasting
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Information for Canada**

Text of Dorothy Thompson's address over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation national network Sunday night follows:

Men and women of Canada:

In speaking to you this evening over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, I am exercising the prerogative that is still enjoyed by the citizens of free nations: the right to have an opinion of one's own, a view of affairs of one's own, and express it, I am in the happy position of holding no public office, of speaking for nobody but myself. Yet what I think and feel is not unique. It is shared, as I well know, by many thousands of citizens of the United States.

This week we read of a peace offer that has been made by Hitler to Great Britain—made in his usual way of an open speech broadcast on the radios of the world, couched in now familiar terms, launched for purposes of international propaganda, and vague except for one thing.

It seems that Germany has no quarrel with Great Britain. Hitler's quarrel is exclusively with this particular British Government and especially with its head, Mr. Churchill. If Mr. Churchill will only resign and a Government come in which is acceptable to Mr. Hitler, he will be glad to make peace immediately. He has no desire to destroy the British Empire. The man standing in the way of peace is Churchill, and the so-called fifth columnists are "only honest men, seeking peace." That is Hitler's argument.

Now, of course, we have all become familiar with this. Mr. Hitler had no quarrel with Austria, only with Mr. Schuschnigg. So the moment Schuschnigg resigned he made peace with Austria by annexing it. He had no quarrel with Czecho-Slovakia, only with Mr. Benes. So when Mr. Benes resigned he made peace with Czecho-Slovakia by turning it into a Nazi Protectorate. He had no quarrel with any of the countries he has absorbed—only with those leaders who opposed the absorption. Mr. Hitler has no quarrel with traitors in any country on earth. They are his agents, and, as his agents, are honest men seeking peace. His quarrel is only with patriots.

I think we may expect that the whole force of the German propaganda in the immediate future will be concentrated on trying to break down Britain by removing her leadership. But in this strug-

gle, as in all great struggles, nations do become embodied in the persons of the men who lead them.

CHURCHILL IS BRITAIN.

In a poetic sense, I might say in a Shakespearean sense, it really is Hitler who faces Churchill. For if Hitler has made himself the incorporation of Germany, Churchill really is the incorporation of Britain.

These two men are the very symbols of the struggle going on in the world.

If we can detach ourselves for a moment from all the pain of this struggle, and look at these two men, we see one of those heroic dramas which literature can never approximate. On the one side is the furious, unhappy, frustrated and fanatic figure who has climbed to unprecedented power on the piled up bodies of millions of men, carried and pushed upward by revolutionary forces, supported by vast hordes of youth crying destruction to the whole past of civilized man. Their upward surge in Germany was accompanied by the wailing and the groans of those "honest men of peace" who once lived in Germany, but were seized in their homes or on the streets and hurled into concentration camps or the barracks of the gangs, there to be beaten insensible with steel rods, or forced upon their knees to kiss a hated hooked cross. That is what Germany did to pacifists long before the war began. Out of Germany poured hordes of refugees, "scattered like leaves from an enchanter fleeing pestilence stricken multitudes." The followers of Hitler laid their hands upon British and American money loaned to Germany to help her rebuild after the last war and with it began grinding out guns and cannons and ships and tanks and airplanes, crying war, crying revenge, crying dominion. Only when others reluctantly turned their hands to the making of hated cannon, did they yell, peace, peace. They stood in armor plate from their heads to their feet, their belts full of hand grenades, their pockets full of bombs, crying across their borders to those who, seeing, took a rifle from the wall: warmonger, warmonger!

He who stood atop this pyramid of steel-clothed men, stretched out his right hand and grabbed a province, and his left, and snatched another. The pyramid grew higher and higher. It made a mountain of blood and steel

from the top of which the furious and fanatic one could see all the kingdoms of the earth. How small is the world, he thought, how easy to conquer. Look down upon these rich democracies. They possess most of the earth. Their youth play cricket and baseball and go to movies. Their life is a dull round of buying and selling, of endless discussion in silly parliaments and congresses. They have lost the will to power and domination. They have been scrapping their battleships and arguing against budgets for armaments. And for a quarter of a century in all their schools and colleges they have been preaching to their youth peace, fellowship, reconciliation. And he laughed, a wild laugh of thirsty joy, crying down to the serried rows of rows of uniformed fanatic youth: strike, and the world will be yours!

He looked across at Britain, and was satisfied. Britain was ruled by business men and bureaucrats. They were cautious men. The business men thought in terms of good bargains; the bureaucrats thought in terms of conferences and negotiations. They were decorous and they were old. They were very sure of Britain. Nobody has ever beaten Britain, not for hundreds of years. Britain was safe. The Germans were annoying again. The Germans were perennially annoying. But Britain was not a tight little island. Britain was a world, a good world, a free world. As it had been, so it would remain—world without end, amen. And so they closed their briefcases and went fishing or shooting on week-ends. Nobody wanted war. War was unthinkable, really.

Yes, but in England there was a man.

Winston Churchill was no longer young. He was in his sixties. Yet, there was something perennially youthful about him, as there is always something youthful about those who have done what they wanted to do, and have been happy. He had had a good life, the best life any man can have, a life of action and a life of intellect. His father was the son of the Duke of Marlborough. His ancestors had served England and fought her wars and led her peace for as far back as one could remember. But he was the younger son of a younger son and therefore and fortunately, poor. What does a young man of spirit do, with quick blood in his veins, no money and a great tradition behind him? He goes to

his country's wars. Young Winston was a soldier of fortune, a fighter on two Continents, a war correspondent, his heart mettlesome, his eye keen, living in his times, living in them up to the hilt, preserving every impression on paper, and seeing everything against the colored tapestry of the great history of Britain. O, yes, he was in love with life. He had no complexes and no neuroses. Shakespeare has described his kind. He called them "this happy breed of men!"

CHURCHILL TOLERANT

And what did he stand for in the history of England? Light and generosity; Home Rule for Ireland; tolerance and equality for the defeated Boers, generosity to the defeated Germans—he was no lover of the Treaty of Versailles; social reform and the rights of labor, as President of the Board of Trade; Imperial preference for the Dominions, for Canada.

He was no ascetic. He loved good food, good wine, pretty and witty women, gifted men, action and pleasure, color and sound. He was the great life-affirmer. Life was not buying and selling; life was not this margin of profit here or that margin of loss there; life was not the accumulation of riches; life itself was riches—the lovely sight of ships—nothing more beautiful than a ship, nothing more English than a ship, the ships of explorers, of traders, of fighters. To be First Lord of the Admiralty was a job for a man who loves ships, and because he loves ships, loves both their harbors and the oceans of the world.

The lovely forms of landscapes! Home from war and out of responsible office, he took himself a palette and colors and began to paint—like you, Mr. Hitler—to paint the world he loved. He loved this world with the catholic appetite of the artist of life. For he was, and is, a soldier, a sailor, an artist and a poet. Is not a man rich if he is born with the English language in his mouth? What a language! A glorious and imperial mongrel, this great synthesis of the Teutonic and the French, the Latin and the Greek, this most hospitable of tongues, this raider of the world's ideas, full of words from the Arabic desert and the Roman forum and the lists of the Crusades. The English language fell from his tongue with that candid simplicity which is its genius, and with that grandeur

which is its glory. But people said, "the trouble with Winston is he is too brilliant."

When a man is sixty, and has lived life to the fullest, when he has loved life and treated it gallantly, he has the right to retire, and be quiet and cultivate his garden among his old friends. That is what civilized men have always done and always will do: "leave action and responsibility now to the young ones." That's what he thought.

PASSION AROUSED.

Ah, but what was wrong with the young ones? The trained eye cannot be closed. The quick mind moves and thinks even if the body lies upon its back watching the clouds move lazily across an English sky. The poet sees what the commercial trader and the common politician does not. And suddenly the soldier-poet leaps to his feet. Something is about to happen! That which he loves more than food and wine and color and sound and action and rest and his garden; something that he loves more than life—that which is his life: his blood, his soul—that which is ancestry and friendship, family and friends, that which is the future—all the great past, all the stumbling present, all the future, the great future, of a language, of a race, is threatened. There is a cloud creeping over the landscape, the shadow of the growing pyramid grows higher. And the old passion for his greatest love wells up in the man's heart—the passion of his childhood, of his adolescence, of his youth, of his maturity, to which never, for an instant, was he fickle. For England! For Britain! For the Britain of the English soil and the far-flung Navy! For the Britain of the world language and the world commonwealth. For the Britain with her deathless attachment to law and to freedom.

What is this world, he thinks, if Britain falls? What will become of the ever-expanding Commonwealth of Nations and the commonwealth of man?

It is too early to retire and cultivate one's garden. "If I forget thee, oh, Britain," he must have cried to himself, "let my right hand forget its cunning and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth."

So he puffed his way back to where the politicians were holding their conferences. Yes, he puffed his way. He was quite portly now, and not so young as

he had been. But the tongue in his head was the old, great English tongue, and it had something to say.

ENGLAND AWAKE.

Do you know what he said, Mr. Hitler? What Winston Churchill said? You once said something like that, too. You said, "Deutschland Erwache!" Germany Awaken! Churchill said, "England, Awaken!" You don't like Mr. Churchill, Herr Hitler. But you would have liked him, I think, if he had been a German.

But it was very hard to wake up England. Still, everybody listened to him—listened interestedly, admiringly, politely. You can't help listening to that tongue. Month in and month out he said, "Britain Awaken!" Month in and month out, with nothing but one seat in Parliament, and with words, he rediscovered for Britain what Britain in her greatest moments is: the parent of the world citizen; the home of the chivalrous; the defender of the faith. The defender of what faith? Of faith in God and in man, in his common destiny, in his common right to citizenship on this planet.

Not in generations have such words of passionate love and measured indignation fallen from English lips as Churchill uttered in the series of speeches called "While England Slept."

And while he spoke to them, while he spoke mostly to unheeding ears, the shadow was lengthening and finally loomed so tall and menacing that all the world could see. And then, when it was over them with all the full darkness of its horror and destruction, the people of England, the common people of England, lifted Churchill on their hands, crying, "Speak and fight for us!"

INHERITED "HOLY MESS."

It was very, very late, when Churchill took up his last fight for Britain. He inherited an unholy mess. Let us tell the truth. He inherited all that the men of little faith, the money-grubbers, the windy pacifists, the ten-to-five o'clock bureaucrats had left undone. But he said no word against them. He did not do what you, Hitler, have done to your predecessors—hold them up to ridicule and contempt. No word of complaint crossed his lips. He is half a generation older than Hitler, but he took up the fight for the sceptered isle, that precious stone, set in a silver sea, he

took up the fight for the world-wide commonwealth of men, held together by the most slender thread of common language and a common way of life—and he fights his last fight, for the ways and the speech of men who have never known a master.

Why don't you take your hat off to Churchill, Mr. Hitler, you who claim to love the leadership principle? Why don't you take your hat off to a member of that race you profess to serve, the race of fair and brave and gallant northern men? By what irony of history have those who oppose you become those very men of the north, the Dutch and the Norwegians, Frenchmen and those half-German, half-Norman folk who call themselves Britons?

Who is the friend of the white race? You, who have ganged up with Japan to drive the white race out of Asia, or Churchill who believes in the right of white men to live and work wherever they can hold their own on this planet?

You, who have waged war upon the white race, and attempted to divide it into superior white folks and inferior white folks, masters and slaves, or Churchill, who stands for the idea of commonwealth and equality?

Who is the prototype of the white man of the future, the world citizen, Churchill, or the world enemy? What do you hate in Churchill that you would not love in a German man? Do you despise him because he is a soldier, and a writer, and an artist? What has become of your charges of English money grubbers in the face of this rosy old warrior-artist?

And who today is the plutocrat, who is the have nation, and who is the have-not nation?

The greatest have-not nation in the world today is the British Isles. Forty-two million people on an island, assailed from the coasts of violated Norway, from the coasts of violated Holland, from the coasts of violated Belgium, and from defeated France, without resources of food or raw ma-

terials except as she can buy them or obtain them from her Allies across the oceans of the world. Does not the heroism of this embattled and impoverished Isle impress you, Hitler, you who praise heroism? Would you have more respect for some lickspittle or some cheap pocket imitation of yourself? Who is the plutocratic nation—Britain, in whose great houses live today the children of the London slums, or Nazi Germany, the great nouveau riche kidnapper of provinces, collector of ransoms, stuffed with the delicatessen of the Danes and the Czechs and the Dutch, heavy hands spread out upon huge knees, with a gun like a gangster's diamond on every finger!

The plutocratic England you attack is today a socialist state—a socialist state created without class war, created out of love and led by an aristocrat for whom England builds no eagle's nests or palaces out of the taxes of her people, a man who cares nothing for money, or ever has, but only for Britain, and for the coming world that a free and socialist British society will surely help to build if ever it is built.

In your speech this week, Mr. Hitler, you said that it caused you pain to think that you should be chosen by destiny to deal the death blow to the British Empire. It may well cause you pain. This ancient structure, cemented with blood, is an incredibly delicate and exquisite mechanism, held together lightly now, by imponderable elements of credit and prestige, experience and skill, written and unwritten law, codes and habits. This remarkable and artistic thing, the British Empire, part Empire and part Commonwealth, is the only world-wide organization in existence, the world equalizer and equilibrator, the only world-wide stabilizing force for law and order on the planet, and if you bring it down the planet will rock with an earthquake such as it has never known. We in the United States will shake with that earthquake

and so will Germany. And the Britons, the Canadians, the New Zealanders, the Australians, the South Africans, are hurling their bodies into the breach to dam the dykes against world chaos.

SLEEPLESS HITLER.

I think that often in your sleepless nights you realize this, Mr. Hitler, and sweat breaks over you, thinking for a moment, not of a Nazi defeat, but of a Nazi victory.

And the master of the dyke against world chaos is you, Churchill, you gallant, portly little warrior. I do not know what spirits surround Hitler. I do not hear the great harmonics of Beethoven, but only the music of Wagner, the music of chaos. I do not see the ghost of Goethe nor the ghost of Bismarck, the last great German who knew when to stop.

But around you, Winston Churchill, is a gallant company of ghosts. Elizabeth is there, and sweetest Shakespeare, the man who made the English Renaissance the world's renaissance. Drake is there, and Raleigh, and Wellington. Burke is there, and Walpole, and Pitt. Byron is there, and Wordsworth and Shelley. Yes, and I think Washington is there, and Hamilton, two men of English blood, whom gallant Englishmen defended in your Parliament. And Jefferson is there, who died again, the other day, in France. All the makers of a world of freedom and of law are there, and among them is the Shropshire lad, to whom his ghostly author calls again: Get ye the men your fathers got, and God will save the Queen."

And when you speak, Churchill, brave men's hearts everywhere rush out to you. There are no neutral hearts, Winston Churchill, except those that have stopped beating. There are no neutral prayers. Our hearts and our prayers say, "God give you strength. God bless you." May you live to cultivate your garden, in a free world, liberated from terror, and persecution, war, and fear."