

HIS FRIENDS ARE TRAITORS

Dorothy Thompson Looks At Hitler

Dorothy Thompson's address to the Men and Women of Canada aroused so much interest when it was broadcast recently in New Zealand that we have obtained permission to print it. Dorothy Thompson is the wife of Sinclair Lewis the novelist, but is famous in her own right as a lecturer and journalist.

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. That, I think and feel, is not unique. It is shared, 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 the 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 would only resign and a Government come in which is acceptable to Mr. Hitler, he would 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 really only honest men seeking peace. That is Mr. Hitler's argument. Now, of course, we have all become familiar with this. Mr. Hitler had no quarrel with Austria, only with Dr. Schuschnigg. So the moment Dr. Schuschnigg resigned, he made peace with Austria by annexing it. He had no quarrel with Czechoslovakia, only with Mr. Benes, so when Mr. Benes resigned he made peace with Czechoslovakia 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.

No Quarrel with Traitors

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

In a poetic sense, I might say in a Shakespearean sense, it really is a struggle between Hitler and 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 poetic 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 civilised man. The upward surge in Germany was accompanied by the wailing and the groaning of those honest men of peace who once lived in Germany, too, but were seized in their homes and old estates and hurled into concentration camps or the barracks or the dungeons, there to be beaten insensible with steel rods and forced upon their knees to kiss a heated hooked cross. That is what Germany did to pacifists long before the war began.

Hitler Looked at Britain

Followers of Hitler laid their hands upon British and American money lent to Germany to help her rebuild for peace after the last war, and with it began grinding out guns and cannon, ships and tanks, airplanes, crying war, crying revenge, crying dominion. They stood in armour plate from their heads to their feet, their belts full of hand grenades, their pockets full of bombs, calling across their borders, "Warmongers! Warmongers!" He who stood atop this pyramid of steel-clothed men, stretched out his right hand and grabbed a province, and his left hand snatched another. The pyramid grew higher and higher amid 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 this world, he thought. How easy to conquer. Look down upon these rich democracies. They possess most of this earth. Their youth play their cricket and baseball, and go to the movies. Their lives are the dull round of buying, 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 fearful joy, crying down to the serried rows on 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 had 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 vulnerable little island. Britain

was a world, a good world, a free world, as it had been, so it would remain, world without end, Amen. It was a place where they packed brief-cases and went fishing and shooting on week-ends. No one wanted war. War was unthinkable there.

In England There was a Man

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. It was a good life, the best life any man can have, a life of action and a life of intellect. His father was a son of the Duke of Marlborough. His ancestors had served England in the cause of war and in the cause of peace for as far back as anyone can remember. Not in generations have such words of passionate love and measured indignation issued from the lips of an English statesman as Churchill uttered in the series of speeches called "While England Slept." But 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 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."

"Haves" and "Have-Nots"

And who to-day is the plutocrat, who is the "have" nation, and who is the "have not" nation? The greatest "have not" nation in the world to-day is Great Britain. Forty-two million people on an island assailed from the coast of violated Norway, from the coast of violated Holland, from the coast of violated Belgium and from defeated France, without resources of food or war materials except as they can buy them or obtain them from their 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 lick-spittle or some cheap pocket imitation of yourself? Who is the plutocratic nation—Britain, where live to-day the children of the London slums and whose people pay 45% of their incomes in taxes, 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 ring on every finger? The plutocratic England you attack is to-day a socialist state, a socialist state created without class war, created without blood, and led by an aristocrat, for whom England builds no eagle's nests, nor palaces out the taxes of her people.

In your speech this week, Mr. Hitler, you said it caused you pain to think that you should be chosen by destiny to deal



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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 by imponderable elements of credit and prestige, experience and skill, written and unwritten laws, food and habits. This remarkable and artistic thing, the British Empire, part Empire, part Commonwealth, is the only world-wide stabilising force for law and order on this 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.

Ghosts

You spend your sleepless nights in vain, I think, Mr. Hitler. 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, Mr. Churchill. I don't know what spirits surround Hitler. I don't hear the great harmonies of Beethoven but only the music of Wagner—the music of chaos. I do not see the ghost of Goethe or the ghost of Bismark, the last great German who knew when to stop. But around you, Winston Churchill, there is a gallant company of ghosts; Elizabeth is there, and simple Shakespeare, the man who made the English Renaissance the World Renaissance. Drake is there and Raleigh, 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 continent. And Jefferson is there who died again the other day in Holland. All the makers of a world of freedom and law are there and when you speak, Churchill, brave men's hearts everywhere go out to you. There are no neutral hearts except those that have stopped beating or gone into neutral, and no neutral Press. So our hearts and our prayers, many of our hearts and our prayers in America, the United States, say "God give you strength. God bless you. May you live to cultivate your garden in a free world liberated from terror and persecution and war and fear."