

Adolf Hitler's Speech to the Workers of Berlin (10 December 1940)

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My fellow-countrymen, workers of Germany,

Nowadays I do not speak very often. In the first place I have little time for speaking, and in the second place I believe that this is a time for action rather than speech. We are involved in a conflict in which more than the victory of only one country or the other is at stake; it is rather a war of two opposing worlds. I shall try to give you, as far as possible in the time at my disposal, an insight into the essential reasons underlying this conflict. I shall, however, confine myself to Western Europe only. The peoples who are primarily affected - 85 million Germans, 46 million British, 45 million Italians, and about 37 million Frenchmen - are the cores of the States who were or still are opposed in war. If I make a comparison between the living conditions of these peoples the following facts become evident:

Forty-six million British dominate and govern approximately 16 million square miles of the surface of the earth. Thirty-seven million Frenchmen dominate and govern a combined area of approximately 4 million square miles. Forty-five million Italians possess, taking into consideration only those territories in any way capable of being utilized, an area of scarcely 190,000 square miles. Eighty-five million Germans possess as their living space scarcely 232,000 square miles. That is to say: 85 million Germans own only 232,000 square miles on which they must live their lives and 46 million British possess 16 million square miles.

Now, my fellow-countrymen, this world has not been so divided up by providence or Almighty God. This allocation has been made by man himself. The land was parceled out for the most part during the last 300 years, that is, during the period in which, unfortunately, the German people were helpless and torn by internal dissension. Split up into hundreds of small states in consequence of the Treaty of Muenster at the end of the Thirty Years' War, our people frittered away their entire strength in internal strife.... While during this period the Germans, notwithstanding their particular ability among the people of Western Europe, dissipated their powers in vain internal struggles, the division of the world proceeded beyond their borders. It was not by treaties or by binding agreements, but exclusively by the use of force that Britain forged her gigantic Empire.

The second people that failed to receive their fair share in this distribution, namely the Italians, experienced and suffered a similar fate. Torn by internal conflicts, devoid of unity, split up into numerous small states, this people also dissipated all their energy in internal strife. Nor was Italy able to obtain even the natural position in the Mediterranean which was her due.

Thus in comparison with others, these two powerful peoples have received much less than their fair share. The objection might be raised: Is this really of decisive importance?

My fellow-countrymen, man does not exist on theories and phrases, on declarations or on systems of political philosophy; he lives on what he can gain from the soil by his own labor in the form of food and raw materials. This is what he can eat, this is what he can use for manufacture and production. If a man's own living conditions offer him too little, his life will be wretched. We see that within the countries themselves, fruitful areas afford better living conditions than poor barren lands. In the one case there are flourishing villages; in the other poverty-stricken communities. A man may live in a stony desert or in a fruitful land of plenty. This handicap can never be fully overcome by theories, nor even by the will to work.

We see that the primary cause for the existing tensions lies in the unfair distribution of the riches of the earth. And it is only natural that evolution follows the same rule in the larger framework as it does in the case of individuals. Just as the tension existing between rich and poor within a country must be compensated for either by reason or often if reason fails, by force, so in the life of a nation one cannot claim everything and leave nothing to others....

The great task which I set myself in internal affairs was to bring reason to bear on the problems, to eliminate dangerous tensions by invoking the common sense of all, to bridge the gulf between excessive riches and excessive poverty. I recognized, of course, that such processes cannot be consummated overnight. It is always preferable to bring together widely separated classes gradually and by the exercise of reason, rather than to resort to a solution based on force. . .

Therefore, the right to live is at the same time a just claim to the soil which alone is the source of life. When unreasonableness threatened to choke their development, nations fought for this sacred claim. No other course was open to them and they realized that even bloodshed and sacrifice are better than the gradual extinction of a nation. Thus, at the beginning of our National Socialist Revolution in 1933, we set forth two demands. The first of these was the unification of our people, for without this unification it would not have been possible to mobilize the forces required to formulate and, particularly, to secure Germany's essential claims...

For us, therefore, national unity was one of the essential conditions if we were to co-ordinate the powers inherent in the German nation properly, to make the German people conscious of their own greatness, realize their strength, recognize and present their vital claims, and seek national unity by an appeal to reason.

I know that I have not been successful everywhere. For nearly fifteen years of my struggle I was the target of two opposing sides. One side reproached me: 'You want to drag us who belong to the intelligentsia and to the upper classes down to the level of the others. That is impossible. We are educated people. In addition to that, we are wealthy and cultured. We cannot accept this.'

These people were incapable of listening to reason; even today there are some who cannot be converted. However, on the whole the number of those who realize that the lack of unity in our national structure would sooner or later lead to the destruction of all classes has become greater and greater.

I also met with opposition from the other side. They said: 'We have our class consciousness.' However, I was obliged to take the stand that in the existing situation we could not afford to make experiments. It certainly would have been simple to eliminate the intelligentsia. Such a process could be carried out at once. But we would have to wait fifty or perhaps a hundred years for the gap to refill - and such a period would mean the destruction of the nation. For how can our people, its 360 per square mile, exist at all if they do not employ every ounce of brain power and physical strength to wrest from their soil what they need? This distinguishes us from the others. In Canada, for example, there are 2.6 persons per square mile; in other countries perhaps 16, 18, 20 or 26 persons. Well, my fellow-countrymen, no matter how stupidly one managed one's affairs in such a country, a decent living would still be possible.

Here in Germany, however, there are 360 persons per square mile. The others cannot manage with 26 persons per square mile, but we must manage with 360. This is the task we face. That is why I expressed this view in 1933: 'We must solve these problems and, therefore, we shall solve them.' Of course that was not easy; everything could not be done immediately. Human beings are the product of their education, and,

unfortunately, this begins practically at birth. Infants are clothed in different ways. After this has been going on for centuries, someone suddenly comes along and says: - 'I want to unwrap the child and remove all its clothing so that I may discover its true nature' - which is, of course, the same in every case. You have only created the difference by the external wrappings; underneath these they are all alike.

However, it is not so easy to do this. Everyone resists being unwrapped. Everyone wishes to retain the habits he has acquired through his upbringing. But we will carry out our task just the same. We have enormous patience. I know that what has been done for three, four, or five centuries cannot be undone in two, three, or five years. The decisive point is to make a start...

It has been a tremendous task. The establishment of a German community was the first item on the program in 1933. The second item was the elimination of foreign oppression as expressed in the Treaty of Versailles, which also prevented our attaining national unity, forbade large sections of our people to unite, and robbed us of our possessions in the world, our German colonies.

The second item on the program was, therefore, the struggle against Versailles. No one can say that I express this opinion for the first time today. I expressed it, my fellow countrymen, in the days following the Great War when, still a soldier, I made my first appearance in the political arena. My first address was a speech against the collapse, against the Treaty of Versailles, and for the re-establishment of a powerful German Reich. That was the beginning of my work. What I have brought about since then does not represent a new aim but the oldest aim. It is the primary reason for the conflict in which we find ourselves today. The rest of the world did not want our inner unity, because they knew that, once it was achieved, the vital claim of our masses could be realized. They wanted to maintain the Dictate of Versailles in which they saw a second peace of Westphalia. However, there is still another reason. I have stated that the world was unequally divided. American observers and Englishmen have found a wonderful expression for this fact: They say there are two kinds of peoples - the 'haves' and the 'have-nots.' We, the British, are the 'haves.' It is a fact that we possess sixteen million square miles. And we Americans are also 'haves,' and so are we Frenchmen. The others - they are simply the 'have-nots.' He who has nothing receives nothing. He shall remain what he is. He who has is not willing to share it.

All my life I have been a 'have-not.' At home I was a 'have-not.' I regard myself as belonging to them and have always fought exclusively for them. I defended them and, therefore, I stand before the world as their representative. I shall never recognize the claim of the others to that which they have taken by force. Under no circumstances can I acknowledge this claim with regard to that which has been taken from us. It is interesting to examine the life of these rich people. In this Anglo-French world there exists, as it were, democracy, which means the rule of the people by the people. Now the people must possess some means of giving expression to their thoughts or their wishes. Analysing this problem more closely, we see that the people themselves have originally no convictions of their own. Their convictions are formed, of course, just as everywhere else. The decisive question is who enlightens the people, who educates them? In those countries, it is actually capital that rules; that is, nothing more than a clique of a few hundred men who possess untold wealth and, as a consequence of the peculiar structure of their national life, are more or less independent and free. They say: 'Here we have liberty.' By this they mean, above all, an uncontrolled economy, and by an uncontrolled economy, the freedom not only to acquire capital but to make absolutely free use of it. That means freedom from national control or control by the people both in the acquisition of capital and in its employment. This is really what they mean when they speak of liberty. These capitalists create their own press and then speak of the 'freedom of the press.'

In reality, every one of the newspapers has a master, and in every case this master is the capitalist, the owner. This master, not the editor, is the one who directs the policy of the paper. If the editor tries to write other than what suits the master, he is ousted the next day. This press, which is the absolutely submissive and characterless slave of the owners, molds public opinion. Public opinion thus mobilized by them is, in its turn, split up into political parties. The difference between these parties is as small as it formerly was in Germany. You know them, of course - the old parties. They were always one and the same. In Britain matters are usually so arranged that families are divided up, one member being a conservative, another a liberal, and a third

belonging to the labor party. Actually, all three sit together as members of the family, decide upon their common attitude and determine it. A further point is that the 'elected people' actually form a community which operates and controls all these organizations. For this reason, the opposition in England is really always the same, for on all essential matters in which the opposition has to make itself felt, the parties are always in agreement. They have one and the same conviction and through the medium of the press mold public opinion along corresponding lines. One might well believe that in these countries of liberty and riches, the people must possess an unlimited degree of prosperity. But no! On the contrary, it is precisely in these countries that the distress of the masses is greater than anywhere else. Such is the case in 'rich Britain.'

She controls sixteen million square miles. In India, for example, a hundred million colonial workers with a wretched standard of living must labor for her. One might think, perhaps, that at least in England itself every person must have his share of these riches. By no means! In that country class distinction is the crassest imaginable. There is poverty - incredible poverty - on the one side, and equally incredible wealth on the other. They have not solved a single problem. The workmen of that country which possesses more than one-sixth of the globe and of the world's natural resources dwell in misery, and the masses of the people are poorly clad.. In a country which ought to have more than enough bread and every sort of fruit, we find millions of the lower classes who have not even enough to fill their stomachs, and go about hungry. A nation which could provide work for the whole world must acknowledge the fact that it cannot even abolish unemployment at home. For decades this rich Britain has had two and a half million unemployed; rich America, ten to thirteen millions, year after year; France, six, seven, and eight hundred thousand. Well, my fellow-countrymen - what then are we to say about ourselves?

It is self-evident that where this democracy rules, the people as such are not taken into consideration at all. The only thing that matters is the existence of a few hundred gigantic capitalists who own all the factories and their stock and, through them, control the people. The masses of the people do not interest them in the least. They are interested in them just as were our bourgeois parties in former times - only when elections are being held, when they need votes. Otherwise, the life of the masses is a matter of complete indifference to them.

To this must be added the difference in education. Is it not ludicrous to hear a member of the British Labor Party - who, of course, as a member of the Opposition is officially paid by the government - say: 'When the war is over, we will do something in social respects'?

It is the members of Parliament who are the directors of the business concerns - just as used to be the case with us. But we have abolished all that. A member of the Reichstag cannot belong to a Board of Directors, except as a purely honorary member. He is prohibited from accepting any emolument, financial or otherwise. This is not the case in other countries.

They reply: 'That is why our form of government is sacred to us.' I can well believe it, for that form of government certainly pays very well.. But whether it is sacred to the mass of the people as well is another matter.

The people as a whole definitely suffer. I do not consider it possible in the long run for one man to work and toil for a whole year in return for ridiculous wages, while another jumps into an express train once a year and pockets enormous sums. Such conditions are a disgrace. On the other hand, we National Socialists equally oppose the theory that all men are equals. Today, when a man of genius makes some astounding invention and enormously benefits his country by his brains, we pay him his due, for he has really accomplished something and been of use to his country. However, we hope to make it impossible for idle drones to inhabit this country.

I could continue to cite examples indefinitely. The fact remains that two worlds are face to face with one another. Our opponents are quite right when they say: 'Nothing can reconcile us to the National Socialist world.' How could a narrow-minded capitalist ever agree to my principles? It would be easier for the Devil to go to church and cross himself with holy water than for these people to comprehend the ideas which are accepted facts to us today. But we have solved our problems.

To take another instance where we are condemned: They claim to be fighting for the maintenance of the gold standard as the currency basis. That I can well believe, for the gold is in their hands. We, too, once had gold, but it was stolen and extorted from us. When I came to power, it was not malice which made me abandon the gold standard. Germany simply had no gold left. Consequently, quitting the gold standard presented no difficulties, for it is always easy to part with what one does not have. We had no gold. We had no foreign exchange. They had all been stolen and extorted from us during the previous fifteen years. But, my fellow countrymen, I did not regret it, for we have constructed our economic system on a wholly different basis. In our eyes, gold is not of value in itself. It is only an agent by which nations can be suppressed and dominated.

When I took over the government, I had only one hope on which to build, namely, the efficiency and ability of the German nation and the German workingman; the intelligence of our inventors, engineers, technicians, chemists, and so forth. I built on the strength which animates our economic system. One simple question faced me: Are we to perish because we have no gold; am I to believe in a phantom which spells our destruction? I championed the opposite opinion: Even though we have no gold, we have capacity for work.

The German capacity for work is our gold and our capital, and with this gold I can compete successfully with any power in the world. We want to live in houses which have to be built. Hence, the workers must build them, and the raw materials required must be procured by work. My whole economic system has been built up on the conception of work. We have solved our problems while, amazingly enough, the capitalist countries and their currencies have suffered bankruptcy.

Sterling can find no market today. Throw it at any one and he will step aside to avoid being hit. But our Reichsmark, which is backed by no gold, has remained stable. Why? It has no gold cover; it is backed by you and by your work. You have helped me to keep the mark stable. German currency, with no gold coverage, is worth more today than gold itself. It signifies unceasing production. This we owe to the German farmer, who has worked from daybreak till nightfall. This we owe to the German worker, who has given us his whole strength. The whole problem has been solved in one instant, as if by magic.

My dear friends, if I had stated publicly eight or nine years ago: 'In seven or eight years the problem of how to provide work for the unemployed will be solved, and the problem then will be where to find workers,' I should have harmed my cause. Every one would have declared: 'The man is mad. It is useless to talk to him, much less to support him. Nobody should vote for him. He is a fantastic creature.' Today, however, all this has come true. Today, the only question for us is where to find workers. That, my fellow countrymen, is the blessing which work brings.

Work alone can create new work; money cannot create work. Work alone can create values, values with which to reward those who work. The work of one man makes it possible for another to live and continue to work. And when we have mobilized the working capacity of our people to its utmost, each individual worker will receive more and more of the world's goods.

We have incorporated seven million unemployed into our economic system; we have transformed another six millions from part-time into full-time workers; we are even working overtime. And all this is paid for in cash in Reichsmarks which maintained their value in peacetime. In wartime we had to ration its purchasing capacity, not in order to devalue it, but simply to earmark a portion of our industry for war production to guide us to victory in the struggle for the future of Germany.

My fellow-countrymen, we are also building a world here, a world of mutual work, a world of mutual effort, and a world of mutual anxieties and mutual duties. It did not surprise me that other countries started rationing only after two, three, five, and seven months, and in some cases only after a year. Believe me, in all these countries, this was not due to chance but to policy. Many a German may have been surprised that food cards appeared on the first morning of the war. Yet, there are, of course, two sides to this food card system. Some people may say: 'Wouldn't it be better to exclude this or that commodity from rationing? What use are a few grams of coffee when nobody gets much anyway? Without rationing, at least a few would get more.' Now that

is exactly what we want to avoid. We want to avoid one person having more of the most vital commodities than another. There are other things - a valuable painting, for instance. Not everybody is in a position to buy a Titian, even if he had the money. Because Titian painted only a few pictures, only a few can afford his work. This or that man can buy one if he has enough money. He spends it, and it circulates through the country. But in the case of food, everybody must be served alike.

The other countries waited to see how things would develop. The question was asked: 'Will meat be rationed?' That was the first sounding of a warning. In other words: 'If you are a capitalist, cover your requirements, buy yourself a refrigerator and hoard up a few sides of bacon.'

'Shall we ration coffee? There are two opinions as to whether it should be rationed or not. It might be possible that in the end those who think that coffee should be rationed might triumph.' They devote four whole weeks to the discussion and everybody who has a spark of egotism - as they have in the democracies - says to himself: 'Aha, so coffee is to be rationed in the near future; let us hoard it.' Then, when the supplies are exhausting themselves, it is at last rationed.

It was just this that we wanted to avoid. That is why in order to ensure equal distribution, we have had to impose certain restrictions from the very start. And we are not well disposed toward those who do not observe regulations.

One thing is certain, my fellow-countrymen: All in all, we have today a state with a different economic and political orientation from that of the Western democracies.

Well, it must now be made possible for the British worker to travel. It is remarkable that they should at last hit upon the idea that traveling should be something not for millionaires alone, but for the people too. In this country, the problem was solved some time ago. In the other countries - as is shown by their whole economic structure - the selfishness of a relatively small stratum rules under the mask of democracy. This stratum is neither checked nor controlled by anyone.

It is therefore understandable if an Englishman says: 'We do not want our world to be subject to any sort of collapse.' Quite so. The English know full well that their Empire is not menaced by us. But they say quite truthfully: 'If the ideas that are popular in Germany are not completely eliminated, they might become popular among our own people, and that is the danger. We do not want this.' It would do no harm if they did become popular there, but these people are just as narrow-minded as many once were in Germany. In this respect they prefer to remain bound to their conservative methods. They do not wish to depart from them, and do not conceal the fact.

They say, 'The German methods do not suit us at all.'

And what are these methods? You know, my comrades, that I have destroyed nothing in Germany. I have always proceeded very carefully, because I believe - as I have already said - that we cannot afford to wreck anything. I am proud that the Revolution of 1933 was brought to pass without breaking a single windowpane. Nevertheless, we have wrought enormous changes.

I wish to put before you a few basic facts: The first is that in the capitalistic democratic world the most important principle of economy is that the people exist for trade and industry, and that these in turn exist for capital. We have reversed this principle by making capital exist for trade and industry, and trade and industry exist for the people. In other words, the people come first. Everything else is but a means to this end. When an economic system is not capable of feeding and clothing a people, then it is bad, regardless of whether a few hundred people say: 'As far as I am concerned it is good, excellent; my dividends are splendid.'

However, the dividends do not interest me at all. Here we have drawn the line. They may then retort: 'Well, look here, that is just what we mean. You jeopardize liberty.'

Yes, certainly, we jeopardize the liberty to profiteer at the expense of the community, and, if necessary, we even abolish it. British capitalists, to mention only one instance, can pocket dividends of 76, 80, 95, 140, and even 160 per cent from their armament industry. Naturally they say: 'If the German methods grow apace and should prove victorious, this sort of thing will stop.'

They are perfectly right. I should never tolerate such a state of affairs. In my eyes, a 6 per cent dividend is sufficient. Even from this 6 per cent we deduct one-half and, as for the rest, we must have definite proof that it is invested in the interest of the country as a whole. In other words, no individual has the right to dispose arbitrarily of money which ought to be invested for the good of the country. If he disposes of it sensibly, well and good; if not, the National Socialist state will intervene.

To take another instance, besides dividends there are the so-called directors' fees. You probably have no idea how appallingly active a board of directors is. Once a year its members have to make a journey. They have to go to the station, get into a first-class compartment and travel to some place or other. They arrive at an appointed office at about 10 or 11 A.M. There they must listen to a report. When the report has been read, they must listen to a few comments on it. They may be kept in their seats until 1 P.M. or even 2. Shortly after 2 o'clock they rise from their chairs and set out on their homeward journey, again, of course, traveling first class. It is hardly surprising that they claim 3,000, 4,000, or even 5,000 as compensation for this: Our directors formerly did the same - for what a lot of time it costs them! Such effort had to be made worth while! Of course, we have got rid of all this nonsense, which was merely veiled profiteering and even bribery.

In Germany, the people, without any doubt, decide their existence. They determine the principles of their government. In fact it has been possible in this country to incorporate many of the broad masses into the National Socialist party, that gigantic organization embracing millions and having millions of officials drawn from the people themselves. This principle is extended to the highest ranks.

For the first time in German history, we have a state which has absolutely abolished all social prejudices in regard to political appointments as well as in private life. I myself am the best proof of this. Just imagine: I am not even a lawyer, and yet I am your Leader!

It is not only in ordinary life that we have succeeded in appointing the best among the people for every position. We have Reichsstatthalter who were formerly agricultural laborers or locksmiths. Yes, we have even succeeded in breaking down prejudice in a place where it was most deep-seated - in the fighting forces. Thousands of officers are being promoted from the ranks today. We have done away with prejudice. We have generals who were ordinary soldiers and noncommissioned officers twenty-two and twenty-three years ago. In this instance, too, we have overcome all social obstacles. Thus, we are building up our life for the future.

As you know we have countless schools, national political educational establishments, Adolf Hitler schools, and so on. To these schools we send gifted children of the broad masses, children of working men, farmers' sons whose parents could never have afforded a higher education for their children. We take them in gradually. They are educated here, sent to the Ordensburgen, to the Party, later to take their place in the State where they will some day fill the highest posts...

Opposed to this there stands a completely different world. In the world the highest ideal is the struggle for wealth, for capital, for family possessions, for personal egoism; everything else is merely a means to such ends. Two worlds confront each other today. We know perfectly well that if we are defeated in this war it would not only be the end of our National Socialist work of reconstruction, but the end of the German people as a whole. For without its powers of coordination, the German people would starve. Today the masses dependent on us number 120 or 130 millions, of which 85 millions alone are our own people. We remain ever aware of this fact.

On the other hand, that other world says: 'If we lose, our world-wide capitalistic system will collapse. For it is we who have hoarded gold. It is lying in our cellars and will lose its value. If the idea that work is the decisive factor spreads abroad, what will happen to us? We shall have bought our gold in vain. Our whole claim to

world dominion can then no longer be maintained. The people will do away with their dynasties of high finance. They will present their social claims, and the whole world system will be overthrown.'

I can well understand that they declare: 'Let us prevent this at all costs; it must be prevented.' They can see exactly how our nation has been reconstructed. You see it clearly. For instance, there we see a state ruled by a numerically small upper class. They send their sons to their own schools, to Eton. We have Adolf Hitler schools or national political educational establishments. On the one hand, the sons of plutocrats, financial magnates; on the other, the children of the people. Etonians and Harrovians exclusively in leading positions over there; in this country, men of the people in charge of the State.

These are the two worlds. I grant that one of the two must succumb. Yes, one or the other. But if we were to succumb, the German people would succumb with us. If the other were to succumb, I am convinced that the nations will become free for the first time. We are not fighting individual Englishmen or Frenchmen. We have nothing against them. For years I proclaimed this as the aim of my foreign policy. We demanded nothing of them, nothing at all. When they started the war they could not say: 'We are doing so because the Germans asked this or that of us.' They said, on the contrary: 'We are declaring war on you because the German system of Government does not suit us; because we fear it might spread to our own people.' For that reason they are carrying on this war. They wanted to blast the German nation back to the time of Versailles, to the indescribable misery of those days. But they have made a great mistake.

If in this war everything points to the fact that gold is fighting against work, capitalism against peoples, and reaction against the progress of humanity, then work, the peoples, and progress will be victorious. Even the support of the Jewish race will not avail the others.

I have seen all this coming for years. What did I ask of the other world? Nothing but the right for Germans to reunite and the restoration of all that had been taken from them - nothing which would have meant a loss to the other nations. How often have I stretched out my hand to them? Ever since I came into power. I had not the slightest wish to rearm.

For what do armaments mean? They absorb so much labor. It was I who regarded work as being of decisive importance, who wished to employ the working capacity of Germany for other plans. I think the news is already out that, after all, I have some fairly important plans in my mind, vast and splendid plans for my people. It is my ambition to make the German people rich and to make the German homeland beautiful. I want the standard of living of the individual raised. I want us to have the most beautiful and the finest civilization. I should like the theater - in fact, the whole of German civilization - to benefit all the people and not to exist only for the upper ten thousand, as is the case in England.

The plans which we had in mind were tremendous, and I needed workers in order to realize them. Armament only deprives me of workers. I made proposals to limit armaments. I was ridiculed. The only answer I received was 'No.' I proposed the limitation of certain types of armament. That was refused. I proposed that airplanes should be altogether eliminated from warfare. That also was refused. I suggested that bombers should be limited. That was refused. They said: 'That is just how we wish to force our regime upon you.'

I am not a man who does things by halves. If it becomes necessary for me to defend myself, I defend myself with unlimited zeal. When I saw that the same old warmongers of the World War in Britain were mobilizing once more against the great new German revival, I realized that this struggle would have to be fought once more, that the other side did not want peace.

It was quite obvious: Who was I before the Great War? An unknown, nameless individual. What was I during the war? A quite inconspicuous, ordinary soldier. I was in no way responsible for the Great War. However, who are the rulers of Britain today? They are the same people who were warmongering before the Great War, the same Churchill who was the vilest agitator among them during the Great War; Chamberlain, who recently died and who at that time agitated in exactly the same way. It was the whole gang, members of the same group, who believe that they can annihilate nations with the blast of the trumpets of Jericho.

The old spirits have once more come to life, and it is against them that I have armed the German people. I, too, had convictions: I myself served as a soldier during the Great War and know what it means to be fired at by others without being able to shoot back. I know what it means not to have any ammunition or to have too little, what it means always to be beaten by the other side. I gained my wholehearted faith in the German people and in the future. During those years, from my knowledge of the German soldier, of the ordinary man in the trenches. He was the great hero in my opinion. Of course, the other classes also did everything they could. But there was a difference.

The Germany of that time certainly seemed quite a tolerable country to anybody living at home amid wealth and luxury. One could have his share of everything, of culture, of the pleasures of life, and so on. He could enjoy German art and many other things; he could travel through the German countryside; he could visit German towns and so forth. What more could he wish for? Naturally, he defended it all.

On the other hand, however, there was the ordinary common soldier. This unimportant proletarian, who scarcely had sufficient to eat, who always had to slave for his existence, nevertheless fought at the front like a hero for four long years. It was in him that I placed my trust, and it is with his help that I won back confidence in myself. When the others had lost their faith in Germany, I regained mine, never losing sight of the ordinary man in the street. I knew that Germany could not perish.

Germany will not perish so long as she possesses such men. I have also seen how these combatants, these soldiers again and again faced an enemy who could annihilate them simply by his superior material. I was not of the opinion at that time that the British were personally superior to us. Only a madman can say that I have ever had any inferiority complex with respect to the British. I have never had any such feeling of inferiority.

The problem of the individual German against the individual Englishman did not present itself at all at that time. Even at that time they went whining round the whole world until they found support. This time I was determined to make preparations throughout the world to extend our position, and secondly, to arm at home in such a manner that the German soldier would no longer be obliged to stand alone at the front, exposed to superior forces.

The trouble has come. I did everything humanly possible - going almost to the point of self-abasement - to avoid it. I repeatedly made offers to the British. I had discussions with their diplomats here and entreated them to be sensible. But it was all in vain. They wanted war, and they made no secret of it. For seven years Churchill had been saying: 'I want war.' Now he has got it.

It was regrettable to me that nations whom I wished to bring together and who, in my opinion, could have cooperated to such good purpose, should now be at war with one another. But these gentlemen are aiming at destroying the National Socialist State, at disrupting the German people and dividing them again into their component parts. Such were the war aims they proclaimed in the past and such are their war aims today. However, this time they will be surprised, and I believe that they have already had a foretaste of it.

There are among you, my fellow-countrymen, many old soldiers who went through the Great War and who know perfectly well what space and time mean. Many of you fought in the East during that war, and all the names which you read about in 1939 were still quite familiar to you. Perhaps many of you marched in bad weather or under the burning sun at that time. The roads were endless. And how desperate was the struggle for every inch of ground. How much blood it cost merely to advance slowly, mile by mile. Think of the pace at which we covered these distances this time. Eighteen days, and the state which wished to cut us to pieces at the gates of Berlin was crushed.

Then came the British attack on Norway. As a matter of fact, I was told by those Englishmen who always know everything that we had slept through the winter. One great statesman even assured me that I had missed the bus. Yet we arrived just in time to get into it before the British. We had suddenly reawakened. In a few days we made sure of this. We took Norwegian positions as far north as Kirkenes, and I need not tell you that no one will take the soil on which a German soldier stands.

And then they wanted to be cleverer and speedier in the West - in Holland and Belgium. It led to an offensive that many, especially among our older men, envisaged with fear and anxiety. I am perfectly well aware of what many were thinking at that time. They had experienced the Great War on the Western Front, all the battles in Flanders, in Artois, and around Verdun. They all imagined: 'Today the Maginot line is there. How can it be taken? Above all, how much blood will it cost; what sacrifices will it call for; how long will it take?' Within six weeks this campaign too, had been concluded.

Belgium, Holland, and France were vanquished; the Channel Coast was occupied; our batteries were brought into position there and our bases established. Of these positions, too, do I say: 'No power in the world can drive us out of this region against our will.'

'And now my fellow-countrymen, let us think of the sacrifices. For the individual, they are very great. The woman who has lost her husband has lost her all, and the same is true of the child that has lost its father. The mother who has sacrificed her child, and the betrothed or the sweetheart who have been parted from loved ones never to see them again have all made great sacrifices. However, if we add all these losses together and compare them with the sacrifices of the Great War, then - however great they may be for the individual - they are incomparably small. Consider that we have not nearly so many dead as Germany had in 1870-71 in the struggle against France. We have broken the ring encircling Germany by these sacrifices. The number of wounded is also extremely small, merely a fraction of what was expected.

For all this, our thanks are due to our magnificent army, inspired by a new spirit and into which the spirit of our national community has also penetrated. The army now really knows for what it is fighting. We owe thanks to our soldiers for their tremendous achievements. But the German soldier gives thanks to you, the munitions workers, for forging the weapons for his use. For this is the first time that he has gone into battle without feeling that he was inferior to the enemy in numbers or that his weapons were of poorer quality. Our weapons were better in every respect.

That is your doing; the result of your workmanship, of your industry, your capacity, your devotion. Millions of German families still have their breadwinners today and will have them in the future, innumerable fathers and mothers still have their sons - and their thanks are due to you, my munitions workers. You have forged for them the weapons with which they were able to go forward to victory, weapons which today give them so much confidence that everyone knows we are not only the best soldiers in the world but that we also have the best weapons in the world. Not only is this true today; it will be more so in the future.

That is the difference between today and the Great War. But not only that. Above all, this time the German soldier is not short of ammunition. I do not know, my fellow countrymen, but it may be that when exact calculations are made after the war, people will perhaps say: 'Sir, you were a spendthrift. You had ammunition made which was never used. It is still lying about.' Yes, my fellow-countrymen, I have had ammunition made because I went through the Great War, because I wished to avoid what happened then and because shells are replaceable and bombs are replaceable but men are not.

And thus the problem of ammunition in this struggle was no problem at all; perhaps only a supply problem. When the struggle was over we had scarcely used a month's production. Today we are armed for any eventuality, whatever Britain may do. Every week that passes Britain will be dealt heavier blows, and if she wishes to set foot anywhere on the Continent she will find us ready once more. I know that we are not out of practice. I hope that the British have also forgotten nothing.

As far as the war in the air is concerned, this too, I hoped to avert. We accepted it. We shall fight it to the finish. I did not want it. I always struggled against it. We did not wage such a war during the whole of the Polish campaign. I did not allow any night attacks to be carried out. In London they said: 'Yes, because you couldn't fly by night.'

In the meantime, they have noticed whether we can fly by night or not. Naturally, it is not possible to aim so well at night and I wanted to attack military objects only, to attack at the front only, to fight against soldiers, not against women and children. That is why we refrained from night attacks. We did not use this method in France. We carried out no night attacks from the air. When we attacked Paris, only the munitions factories were our objectives. Our airmen aimed with wonderful precision. Anybody who saw it could convince himself of that.

Then it occurred to that great strategist, Churchill, to commence unrestricted war from the air by night. He began it in Freiburg im Breisgau and has continued it. Not one munitions plant has been demolished. Yet according to British news reports, the one in which we are at present assembled is nothing but a mass of craters. They have not even caused a single munitions factory to cease production. On the other hand, they have unfortunately hit many families, helpless women and children. Hospitals have been one of their favorite objectives. Why? It is unexplainable. You yourselves, here in Berlin, know how often they have bombed our hospitals.

Very well, I waited for a month, because I thought that after the conclusion of the campaign in France the British would give up this method of warfare. I was mistaken. I waited for a second month and a third month. If bombs were to be dropped I could not assume the responsibility before the German people of allowing my own countrymen to be destroyed while sparing foreigners. Now, this war, too, had to be fought to its end. And it is being fought; fought with all the determination, with all the materials, with all the means and all the courage at our disposal. The time for the decisive conflict will arrive. You may be sure it will take place. However, I should like to tell these gentlemen one thing: It is we who shall determine the time for it. And on this point I am cautious. We might perhaps have been able to attack in the West during the autumn of last year, but I wanted to wait for good weather. And I think it was worth while waiting.

We ourselves are so convinced that our weapons will be successful that we can allow ourselves time. The German people will certainly hold out. I believe that they will be grateful to me if I bide my time and thus save them untold sacrifices.

It is one of the characteristics of the National Socialist State that even in warfare, at times when it is not absolutely necessary, it is sparing of human life. After all, the lives of our fellow-citizens are at stake.

In the campaign in Poland we forbade many attacks or rapid advances, because we were convinced that a week or a fortnight later the problem would solve itself.

We have gained many great successes without sacrificing a single man. That was also the case in the West. It must remain so in the future. We have no desire to gain any successes or to make any attacks for the sake of prestige. We never wish to act except in accordance with sober military principles. What has to happen must happen. We wish to avoid everything else. As for the rest, all of us hope that reason will again be victorious and peace will return. The world must realize one thing, however: Neither military force, economic pressure, nor the time factor will ever force Germany to surrender. Whatever else may happen, Germany will be the victor in this struggle.

I am not the man to give up, to my own disadvantage, a struggle already begun. I have proved this by my life in the past and I shall prove to those gentlemen - whose knowledge of my life until now has been gathered from the emigre' press - that I have remained unchanged in this respect.

When I began my political career, I declared to my supporters - they were then only a small number of soldiers and workers - 'There is no such word as capitulation in your vocabulary or mine.'

I do not desire war, but when it is forced upon me I shall wage it as long as I have breath in my body. And I can wage it today, because I know that the whole German nation is behind me. I am the guardian of its future and I act accordingly.

I could have made my own life much more easy. I have been fighting for twenty years, and I have assumed the burden of all these anxieties and of this never-ceasing work, convinced that it must be done for the German people. My own life and my own health are of no importance. I know that, above all, the German Army, every man and every officer of it, supports me in the same spirit. All those fools who imagined that there could ever be any disruption here have forgotten that the Third Reich is not the same as the Second. The German people stand behind me to a man. And at this point I thank, above all, the German workman and the German peasant. They made it possible for me to prepare for this struggle and to create, as far as armaments were concerned, the necessary conditions for resistance. They also provide me with the possibility of continuing the war, however long it may last.

I also give special thanks to the women of Germany-to those numberless women, who must now perform part of the heavy work of men, who have adapted themselves to their war duties with devotion and fanaticism and who are replacing men in so many positions. I thank you all - you who are making this personal sacrifice, who are bearing the many restrictions that are necessary. I thank you in the name of all those who represent the German people today and who will be the German people of the future.

This struggle is not a struggle for the present but primarily a struggle for the future. I stated on September 3, 1939, that time would not conquer us, that no economic difficulties would bring us to our knees, and that we could still less be defeated by force of arms. The morale of the German people guarantees this.

The German people will be richly rewarded in the future for all that they are doing. When we have won this war it will not have been won by a few industrialists or millionaires, or by a few capitalists or aristocrats, or by a few bourgeois, or by anyone else.

Workers, you must look upon me as your guarantor. I was born a son of the people; I have spent all my life struggling for the German people, and when this hardest struggle of my life is over there will be new tasks for the German people.

We have already projected great plans. All of our plans have but one aim: to develop still further the great German State, to make that great German nation more and more conscious of its existence and, at the same time, to give it everything which makes life worth living.

We have decided to break down to an ever-increasing degree the barriers preventing individuals from developing their faculties and from attaining their just due. We are firmly determined to build up a social state which must and shall be a model of perfection in every sphere of life....

When this war is ended, Germany will set to work in earnest. A great 'Awake!' will sound throughout the country. Then the German nation will stop manufacturing cannon and will embark on peaceful occupations and the new work of reconstruction for the millions. Then we shall show the world for the first time who is the real master, capitalism or work. Out of this work will grow the great German Reich of which great poets have dreamed. It will be the Germany to which every one of her sons will cling with fanatical devotion, because she will provide a home even for the poorest. She will teach everyone the meaning of life.

Should anyone say to me: 'These are mere fantastic dreams, mere visions,' I can only reply that when I set out on my course in 1919 as an unknown, nameless soldier I built my hopes of the future upon a most vivid imagination. Yet all has come true.

What I am planning or aiming at today is nothing compared to what I have already accomplished and achieved. It will be achieved sooner and more definitely than everything already achieved. The road from an unknown and nameless person to Fuehrer of the German nation was harder than will be the way from Fuehrer of the German nation to creator of the coming peace.

Once I had to fight and struggle for your confidence for a decade and a half.

Today I can fight and struggle for Germany thanks to this confidence.

And one day there will come a time when all of us will join the fight for this Reich with confidence, for this Reich of peace, of work, of welfare, of culture, which we want to erect and which we will erect.

I thank you!

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