



Paul Whitman

1509-9th Ave, Apt. 45

Seattle 1, Wn.

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**HE WANTED
TO SLEEP IN THE KREMLIN**

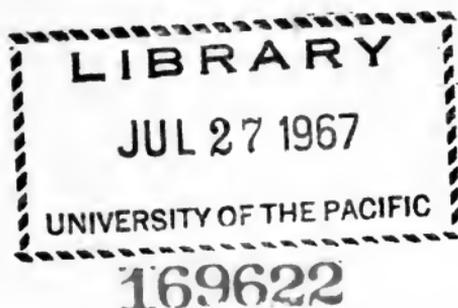
**HE WANTED
TO SLEEP
IN THE
KREMLIN**

GERHARD SCHACHER

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PREFACE

by DR. JAN MASARYK

**Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign
Minister of the Czechoslovak Gov-
ernment in Exile.**

FOR a lifetime Dr. Gerhard Schacher studied the danger created for the peace of Europe and the world by the successors to the Teutonic knights—the German Junkers and their master and utensil Adolf Hitler. In this book he describes ably the background of the Hitler menace.

For many years Dr. Schacher lived in Czechoslovakia and observed for British newspapers the methods of the Nazis which resulted in Munich, and he knows how and why Hitler's mad plan to invade Russia came about.

The fact that Russia is the great and successful ally of the United Nations and that the knowledge of the Nazi-Junker problem should be understood by a great many more people will make "He Wanted to Sleep in the Kremlin" important and very interesting reading for Americans.



INTRODUCTION

THE day after Germany's invasion of Russia on June 22, 1941, the day when Adolf Hitler told the world that he was going to be in Moscow within a few weeks, I declared in a radio broadcast: "Now Mr. Hitler is going to get the surprise of his life." That prophecy, so very different from what was being said on every side, even by presumably informed commentators, was neither hasty nor hesitant. It came from a long-standing and intimate acquaintance with the circumstances of the European scene and profound convictions concerning the people involved. What that acquaintance and those convictions were is what I propose to make clear in the pages that follow.

To understand the Nazi invasion of Russia and the memorable failure of a campaign which in the final analysis will lead to the military collapse of Nazi Germany, it is necessary to realize not only

why and how the military forces of Russia were underestimated in the Western world, but also why Hitler undertook the supreme risk in June, 1941.

Beyond this, to comprehend the true nature of Nazism and Hitler's power, it is essential to appreciate the fact that Hitler is the hired servant of a certain clique in Germany. This clique is that of the Prussian Junkers, the German war lords who prepared World War II even as they prepared World War I. They are the men who, either behind the scenes or as the presidents, the generals, or the diplomats of Germany, were convinced from the very day of the signing of the Versailles Peace Treaty that everything possible had to be done to revenge the defeat of 1918. And it was, unfortunately, the Allies of World War I who made it possible for this faction to spread the idea that Germany had been "stabbed in the back" and to convince the German people that their army had never really been defeated.

Anyone who, like the writer, has lived in Germany and in neighboring countries, and has worked there as a journalist and correspondent for many years, has had a rare opportunity to understand what has really happened since 1918. Such

an observer, however, could fully understand what he saw only if he also knew the traditional rôle of the Prussian Junkers in German and European history. Only then could he appreciate to the fullest extent the terrible consequences of any treaty which gave the Prussian Junkers a free hand. Those who did not see what such an observer saw are perhaps not to be blamed if they never quite grasped the situation. Only after we have realized the function of the Prussian Junkers and their connection with their hireling, Adolf Hitler, can we understand the tension which developed between employer and employee, and the climax in which the latter committed what will surely go down in history as the greatest of military blunders.

The record of the Prussian Junkers makes sensational reading. Every social group makes some contribution to civilization; the essential contribution of the Prussian Junkers has been, to put it briefly, five wars of aggression in seventy-five years—an average, that is, of a war every fifteen years.

It all started with Otto von Bismarck who, despite a notable lack of interest in all the nobler phases of German culture, in all the music, art, and poetry which had flourished for centuries in the

south, was called "the most German of Germans." Actually, Bismarck was an aristocrat, almost a textbook model of the species of Prussian Junker who piloted Europe from one war to another for the honor and aggrandizement of a family of kings known as the Hohenzollerns.

The first assault which Bismarck arranged was on Denmark in 1864. The Danes were a quiet, peace-loving people, but Bismarck thought it necessary to acquire the southern part of their tiny country for the kings of Prussia. He waged this war in conjunction with the Hapsburgs, who furnished a flimsy pretext for it—a dubious claim of hereditary rights. As victor he promptly annexed Schleswig-Holstein. Only two years later, in 1866, Bismarck tackled Austria, claiming Prussia's divine right to all the booty of the Austro-Prussian campaign against Denmark. He defeated the unprepared Austrians in the battle of Sadova, took his plunder, and then prepared for new aggression. Aspiring with each step to increase the scale of his conquests, he now cast greedy eyes on a large section of France. This needed a bit more preparation than the previous campaign, but in 1870 he was ready: he defeated France, took over the precious provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, dic-

tated the peace at Versailles and proclaimed his King of Prussia, William I, Emperor of all Germany.

It was part of Bismarck's basic philosophy that man was still essentially a huntsman—a kind of huntsman, he might have added, who need not distinguish between human beings and animals. "Prisoners?" he exclaimed at Versailles. "They ought to have lined them up and shot them down!" He was no less scornful of religion, of the common people, and of democracy. He actually waxed indignant when a Prussian general entered into negotiations with the population of Tours after they had hoisted the white flag. He simply ordered his men to keep firing until the enemy should send out sufficient hostages. That was the decree of a Junker, a kind of decree which has, with its icy inhumanity, become all too familiar. He knew only "practical" measures—following the "instinct of nature without scruples." The rise to power of Bismarck and of his attitude meant that bestiality no longer need hide its head in shame—it had become an insolently flaunted philosophy.

The aggressions of the Junkers were repeated without regard for international order and always on a greater scale. While the war against Denmark

aimed at gaining relatively little territory from a relatively small and helpless neighbor, the attack on Austria of 1866 was an attack on a major power. Austria may have been the weakest of the great powers, but it was, on the other hand, the only Germanic power which could interfere with the Prussian plans of prussifying Germany and establishing the rule of the Hohenzollerns and of such great Junker families as the Bismarcks, the Keitels, the Oldenburg-Janushaus, and the Kleists. The war of 1866, in other words, not only was aggression on a larger scale, but it undermined the Hapsburg power, conquered Germany for Prussia, and prepared the way for aggression on a European scale.

When this first aggression on a European scale was launched in 1870, there was no longer any other German dynasty which could either prevent the war or ask for a considerable part of the booty. Only a few small or middle-sized states remained, and after the defeat of Austria there was no German house to whom they could appeal for a policy of peace.

The policy of the Junkers was that of a small privileged class furnished with comparatively little education but with a limitless will to power. It

was the policy of a few families who regarded Prussia as their monopoly and the King of Prussia—in spite of all their oaths of office—as their hireling. From the time of the early Middle Ages, when they had fought to subjugate the Slavic tribes, it had been their firm belief that their own wealth and property would grow only as did the power of the King of Prussia.

When Bismarck undertook his initial attack on a European scale against France, it was the first attempt to expand Prusso-Germany westward. But it was also an attempt to consolidate the gains of 1866. After the defeat of Austria and the Hapsburgs, Prussia was the leading power in Germany, but it was not identical with Germany. Only expansion on a European scale, only the defeat of a really important non-Germanic power could give Bismarck the excuse to crown his King of Prussia the “Emperor of the Germans.”

When William I took the crown of an emperor from the hands of Otto von Bismarck at Versailles in 1871, Bismarck had fulfilled his promise that the German Empire would be founded on “Blood and Iron.” Bismarck’s work was done. The German Empire was feared by all the European powers and, last but not least, by Germany’s own

subjects. It pretended to have a Reichstag, but the ministers and the chancellor were at the beck and call of the Kaiser and the Kaiser himself was subject to the Prussian Junkers. Prussia had become Germany—a Germany which included the most precious industrial provinces of France. Bismarck had done yeoman work for his Junker compatriots.

Throughout, the Iron Prince had been too good a strategist not to recognize that the one great military weakness of Prussia and Germany was the fact that they were, because of their geographically central position, always in danger of having to fight a two-front war. Only after he had neutralized Russia, his eastern neighbor, did Bismarck even think of running the risk of a conflict with France. Neutralizing Russia before launching an attack in the West became, in fact, the supreme aim of German strategy after 1870. What Bismarck had called *le cauchemar de coalition*, “the nightmare of a coalition,” became a bogey facing all German strategists. Above all, Bismarck bequeathed to the Hohenzollerns, to the Army, and to the Junkers the idea that they should never under any circumstances fight on two fronts. It became a maxim that was hammered into the head of every German lieutenant from that time on.

Even Adolf Hitler was, up to a certain point, able to grasp that rule.

During the World War, however, the Kaiser chose to violate this rule, this major Bismarck heritage, for the first time. He fought France and Russia simultaneously. And he lost. "Never again" was surely the vow of the Prussian Junkers when they once more began to prepare for revenge immediately after the Peace of Versailles. It would be France *or* Russia; no one they hired could ever again hope to get permission to fight on two fronts. It may be said that for forty years after Bismarck no German militarist had a real chance to exploit Bismarck's principle. Then Neville Chamberlain with a single stroke of the pen at Munich sold out Czechoslovakia, undermined the Eastern front against Germany and gave Hitler exactly the opportunity the Junkers had been waiting for—the perfect set-up for a one-front war in the West.

But how did it happen that such stiff-necked barons and Markgrafs, whose last leader had been an aristocratic Hohenzollern, a king-emperor, could have stooped to using a creature like Hitler? How did they come to entrust their monopoly to a foreigner, a man who was not even born in Germany, not to mention Prussia? How did it happen,

finally, that a man with such a past became the trustee of a coterie which was accustomed to treating the people as serfs, giving them the right to vote only on the basis of income and education?

The answer is that the war and the Peace at Versailles had wrought a great change in Germany's social system. When the Allies won World War I, two of the greatest powers, America and Russia, either failed to coöperate in securing peace or were banned from the table of the masters. The wise suggestion of Allied generals that their armies march on Berlin and show the German people that they had actually been defeated in the field, that they had utterly lost one of their wars of aggression, fell on deaf ears. Those who knew the psychology of the German people, those who watched them in Berlin and in other parts of Germany in 1919 realized that they did not regard themselves as defeated, and that it would therefore be easy enough for someone to tell them that revenge was necessary and possible, that the Socialists, the Jews, or other groups had betrayed them at Versailles, and that a great new Germany, not a "*Juden-Republic*," had to be built.

And that was exactly what happened. A few months after the signing of the Versailles Treaty

the Prussian Junkers started their first putsch. I saw them marching through the streets of Berlin in their rigid columns—those Prussian officers and those former soldiers of World War I who had never learned to work at any job except soldiering. I heard them screaming their slogans—slogans that were later to be screamed by the storm troopers of Adolf Hitler. And I heard them singing that Germany had never lost the war, that the “Jewish Republic” and the Versailles Treaty must be torn to shreds.

That putsch, it is true, ended in failure. The regular army or so-called Reichswehr had far broader plans. This little army of the German Republic, limited to 100,000 men, did not want the Allies to finish the job. They wanted to go through the whole play of the Weimar Republic with its democratic constitution and seeming fulfillment of the Versailles Treaty. Their real aim, the aim of the domineering Prussians, was to take over the German Republic bit by bit, to dominate it by dominating the Reichswehr, and to prepare behind the scene the day of reckoning, the new war of aggression, aggression on a world scale.

The appointment of Adolf Schicklgruber as Chancellor was only the last of many steps taken

in the restoration of the Junkers to power after Versailles. First, all those in the Weimar Republic who wanted to work sincerely for international collaboration, for collective security, for disarmament, and a democratic Germany were eliminated. A major step, thus, was getting rid of a man like Walther von Rathenau, head of the greatest German electrical enterprise, Foreign Minister of the Republic, a Jew, and a believer in international collaboration. I remember when, before the Versailles Treaty had been signed, he said to me: "Imagine what would have happened if the Kaiser had been the victor! None of us here would have been able to breathe freely." Such was his attitude toward the emperor of the Prussian Junkers. When, therefore, as Foreign Minister he tried with all the power of intellectual persuasion to dissipate the nationalistic prejudices of the Allied powers in Geneva, he was virtually sentenced to death by the nationalists. The bullet aimed at him in a Berlin suburb found its mark.

As a young reporter I was covering the Berlin Stock Exchange during those hours after the assassination of my friend—I saw not the slightest sign of grief anywhere around me. The German Reichsmark went down because New York, Paris,

and London were selling German currency. But the stock of German corporations rose. A profitable day on the market—that was all I saw on the afternoon of the murder of a man who had tried to serve Germany without a special permit from the Junkers.

Little by little now the Schwarze Reichswehr, “the black army behind the army,” began to grow. During the first stage, the Prussian interests invested money for meetings, newspaper publicity, and other types of propaganda. In the next stage they appointed agents to sell the idea of what they called “national liberation” to the industrialists and bankers, and most of all to the middle classes, to the “little man” who had neither job nor future. The victims were told that they had to join the great work to make Germany once more victorious and to do away with Versailles. Of all their propaganda at this time, that among the middle classes was undoubtedly the most important and successful. Salesmen and speakers of the Schwarze Reichswehr were also used in espionage against the victorious powers and were well paid. And one of those speakers and salesmen, an obscure paid agent of the Black Reichswehr, was Adolf Schicklgruber, then an Austrian. He was a very successful

salesman. After his attempted putsch in 1923, his followers increased rapidly and he soon attracted the attention of his powerful employers.

Thus Adolf Hitler, the man who finally became the choice of the Junkers, was paid for every deed he performed for the sake of what was called "the Liberation of the Fatherland."

The greatest blunder committed by the Allies in 1918 was that they did their thinking only in political terms and did not take into account the peculiar social structure and militarized nature of their defeated opponent. Their only aim was to make another war impossible by disarming Germany. What really happened was that Germany, after she had been "disarmed," built a new streamlined army—an army more powerful than that of the Kaiser because it was built on the basis of all the military experiences of World War I. In purely military terms, the disarmament imposed at Versailles did not, in the long run, weaken Germany's military might but actually strengthened it: Versailles made it possible for the Junkers, preparing for new aggressions on an even greater scale, to get rid of all their old generals and outmoded armaments. If ever German militarism got

a fresh start, this was it—a new modernized army to serve as a perfect nucleus for the great machine that was to follow.

The Allies forgot that they were not dealing with more or less reliable and democratic German statesmen, but with militarists indoctrinated for centuries with only one idea—to create a Prussian machine which would dominate first Germany, then Europe, and finally the world.

The simple fact is that German disarmament as it was planned by the Allies at Versailles turned into the most gigantic rearmament the world has ever seen. This is understandable only when we realize how mistaken the Allies were in their conception of disarmament. They believed their ends could be attained by destroying German tanks, guns, and planes, and by confiscating the German navy or by its sinking in Scapa Flow. Nothing could have been more shortsighted from a military and industrial point of view. Disarmament has no meaning if it does not prevent a defeated foe from manufacturing new and ever more modern guns, tanks, and planes. The British realized this but not until long after Versailles. (The Russians, incidentally, knew it all along.) In a speech made on March 18, 1942, after Hitler's disastrous winter

campaign in Russia, the British Minister of Information, Brendan Bracken, made this belated admission:

“The German General Staff, the greatest breeder and hatcher of war known to history, was not eradicated after the last war. . . . It concentrated on remedying the causes which brought about Germany’s defeat in 1918. It ceaselessly prepared for vengeance, enlisted the aid of scientists to develop the tank, airplane, and submarine and finally succeeded in turning Germany into the greatest war machine the world has ever known.

“No country ever entered a war more thoroughly prepared than Germany in 1939. Her civilians were almost as carefully groomed for total warfare as her soldiers. . . . A succession of British governments ignored these brutal facts. We are paying the price of their folly.”

Although it is not the aim of this book to deal in detail with the problem of disarmament, it may be said that only in a truly democratic Germany could disarmament have been realized. As long as the Junkers’ will to sabotage the disarmament agreement reigned, there was always a way to turn disarmament into rearmament. German militarism was certainly not destroyed by the Versailles treaty; with the tacit consent of the signatories it

was quietly handed back to the Prussian Junkers. And that was done because the fear of surrendering Germany to the so-called Red Peril was far stronger at Versailles than the will to establish a German democracy.

The Allies looked on complacently as the henchmen of the Junkers and militarists murdered those who sought to establish democracy in Germany, and they did not lift a finger to prevent German rearmament; only after Hitler's *coup d'état* did they begin to "view with alarm." At first, the appointment of Adolf Hitler as Chancellor was regarded as only such a democratic act as the election of a president of the United States. The Allies of 1914 to 1918 had arrived at a point where they preferred a Hitler-ruled Germany to a democratic republic, although the former pointed toward another war while the latter would have meant the end of a clique which had driven Europe from one war to another.

Hitler, with all his insane lust for power and all his absurd theories about race and religion, stood under only one last restraint—his tacit oath of obedience to his employers and to their theories of aggression. Only when he would start to rebel

against them would his situation become critical. That time came when he defied all the military experience and wisdom of his overlords, the German Junker generals, and turned to invade Russia.

CHAPTER I

HITLER AND THE GENERALS

WHEN Adolf Hitler was chosen by the Junkers as the leader of the new war of aggression on a world scale, it was surely not because of his military knowledge. As a corporal in World War I, Hitler was stationed for the most part far behind the battle line, and hardly became an expert in military science.

Of course, like the least soldier in Germany he knew that it was a gross blunder to wage a two-front war, that that blunder had sealed the fate of the Kaiser and the Imperial Army. He had also obviously learned that stabilized trench warfare meant certain defeat for a nation like Germany which did not have sufficient raw material and foodstuffs to endure a long war. That is why, when he wrote *Mein Kampf*, Hitler stressed the idea that Germany should never engage in trench

warfare but only in a war of position and movement. These two very simple rules were the sum total of what Hitler learned about strategy; in the end, when political and ideological considerations pressed him hard enough, he forgot even these. Beyond this, Hitler is the model of a military amateur. There is virtually no standard principle of strategy which he has not thrown overboard for the sake of party and politics.

After the start of the war the Junker generals watched Hitler's moves carefully and succeeded in preventing him from committing major errors. In eliminating Czechoslovakia, the only strongly armed force on Germany's eastern border, he adhered to their policy of avoiding a two-front war. The Polish campaign was apparently also acceptable to the generals because Hitler had already neutralized Russia, and because it was common knowledge in German military circles that Poland would not be able to put up a strong fight against a mechanized army. Furthermore, before the Polish campaign, Hitler had succeeded in bribing important members of the Polish government. A few, like the Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck, acted virtually as German agents from 1936 on.

In all my contacts with Polish officials and jour-

nalists in Czechoslovakia during the years 1933-1938, I never felt the slightest doubt that they were entirely sympathetic to Axis attitudes. They did all they could to help Hitler in the carving of Czechoslovakia. And yet, although it secured Czech territory, Poland itself was strategically defeated on the day the Munich Pact was signed.

There was no chance for Chamberlain to fulfill the guaranty given to Poland. There was no Polish armament industry of any importance, no fortification line and, most of all, no modern army. Almost fifty per cent. of the Polish budget went to the army, but only a minute portion of this was used to modernize the fighting forces: enormous sums went either for corruption or for supporting the owners of the great Polish estates.

So the basic Prussian doctrine, never again to risk a two-front war, was not really violated by Hitler's Polish campaign. In spite of the heroic defense put up by the ill-equipped and ill-trained Polish army, Poland was overrun in a few weeks. The only hope of the Polish generals was rain, and rain, rather belated in 1939, did not come before Hitler had occupied all of Poland up to the old Curzon Line. The Polish campaign also served the important purpose of lulling France to sleep dur-

ing the winter months of the so-called "phony war." Before Hitler undertook his war in the West in collaboration with his Junker overlords, he tried to make sure that it would be a one-front war by knocking out Poland and neutralizing Russia.

This one-front war in the West was won in a relatively short time. Many factors were involved, and this is not the place for a discussion of the strategy of the war in France, or of fifth-column activity, or of the disaster at Dunkirk. What must be stressed is the fact that the French, British, Dutch, and Belgian armies were prepared and trained for the methods of the war of 1918, not of 1940. While Russia and Germany had recognized in the early 'twenties that what they called the "war of the future" would be a highly mechanized war, with entirely new equipment and entirely new tactics, very few strategists in the West seem to have discovered this vital truth. And even these few, including General de Gaulle of France, were called mad when they expounded the theory that tanks and airplanes must replace or supplement infantry and that fortifications and Maginot Lines could never do the job of a highly trained army of specialists.

When Hitler did not succeed in invading

Britain, when he tried again and again to crack this nut without mass-produced corvettes, amphibian tanks, and special invasion weapons, the Generals wanted to finish the victorious continental war rather than risk a long stalemate. But Hitler and his Luftwaffe insisted that Britain could be conquered by air raids alone. The result was a stalemate that detracted considerably from the success on the continent. The time seemed to be ripe to get rid of their employee who had an *idée fixe* of conquering the British Empire by endless air raids. The tension began to grow.

The wish to liquidate the Nazi party and its Fuehrer gained ground among the German militarists because this seemed to be the best way to prepare for peace negotiations, for negotiations that would permit Germany to dominate the continent during another period of so-called peace. The campaign against Britain could easily be resumed at some later and more favorable time. At the moment, with a neutralized Russia on the right flank and a conquered France on the left flank, the German militarists could really expect to get just the terms they wanted from the British appeasers.

But all this would have meant the liquidation of the Nazi party. And that was the reason that Mr.

Hitler began to turn against his employers. Hitler's own attempt at negotiations with Britain, the Hess flight, failed, and then, with his invasion of Russia, the tension began to grow really great and dangerous.

To understand the origin and growth of the tension between Hitler and the generals on the Russian issue it is necessary to turn back for a moment to the history of the relations of the German and Russian armies after the Peace of Versailles.

For the first time after the Peace an attempt was made at the Conference of Genoa in April, 1922, to establish some kind of real agreement in military matters between European nations. But the trouble was that not only Germany but also Russia was treated as an outcast by the Western powers. This incidentally was one of the greatest blunders made during the peace treaties, and Dr. Edward Beneš, President of Czechoslovakia, certainly was right when in a speech at Aberdeen University on November 10, 1941, he declared:

“A great shortcoming in the political structure of Europe after the last war lay in the fact that the Soviet Union, which was not invited to coöperate in its foundation and direction, was involved when it was

already very late, in 1934, in the collective defense of this post-war system. In this way the Soviets, rightly or wrongly, felt themselves to be isolated and threatened. If Soviet Russia were again to be excluded from the organization of Europe, the new collaboration of the organized political units in Europe would lose their equilibrium through the fact that the German influence in the East would again be unduly strengthened. In addition, this would almost inevitably lead to attempts to isolate the Soviet Union from European influences.

“This policy has been more than once unfavorable to the Soviet Union during the past twenty years, though it is clear that its internal pacification and economic development could be achieved more rapidly and easily with the help of the rest of Europe. But it has been still more unfavorable to Europe itself. The Russian European continent belongs geographically and politically to Europe, just as do the British Isles. This is an inescapable fact. The continental disturbance of equilibrium and the exposure of Soviet Russia to isolation was one of the reasons for the second European war. And if the error were repeated, it would probably lead to a third and, still more disastrous, European and World War.”

The failure of the conference at Genoa was evident when the representatives of the two outcast nations suddenly went off by themselves. Germany's Foreign Minister, Gustav Stresemann, and

Russia's Foreign Commissar, Georgy Chicherin, preferred to meet at Rapallo and, with large staffs of experts, discuss what they called "commercial problems." These "commercial problems" dealt more with tanks, planes, and war industries than with ordinary questions of commerce; the treaty which they signed as an agreement of "purely commercial nature" was in fact the basis of a very intensive military coöperation between Russia and Germany. The main conference at Genoa broke down almost immediately, the French offering as an excuse the fact that the Russians did not want to pay their pre-war debts. The actual reason was that an entirely new European problem had developed: it had become painfully clear that there was practically no chance of preventing a military collaboration between the two outcast nations—except by a war for which no one was ready.

The German chief of the delegation of military experts, General von Seeckt, realized immediately that the new leaders of the Russian Army were afraid of being encircled again and that this threat was a golden opportunity for the new German Army. The secret arrangements into which the Russian and the German army chiefs entered was revealed some time after the Conference of Rapallo

in the *Manchester Guardian*. Germany had pledged herself to manufacture in Russian plants those weapons which had been barred to her by the Treaty of Versailles. On the other hand, according to the newspaper story, German commissioned and noncommissioned officers were to train themselves in the use of these weapons on Russian soil, and German officers were to teach strategy and tactics to Russian army officers in special Russian military schools.

The collaboration between the Russian and German generals became greater and greater as the time of Hitler's ascension to power approached. Moreover, it continued even after he had ascended. This Russian-German collaboration had, after all, become a kind of tradition in the circles of the German General Staff. With only one goal in mind, a great war of revenge, the Junker generals could hardly be expected to pay too much attention to the curious political ideas of their new leader.

By the peace treaties of 1919, Germany had been deprived of eighty per cent of its iron ore. Only with the help of Russian war material could Germany rearm for its new one-front war in the West. The fact that there would be peace with Russia fitted perfectly into the schemes of the German

Junker generals who remembered all too clearly how the Kaiser, acting as his own board of strategy, had involved them in the double-front blunder of 1914. It is significant that the general who became the chief of the Reichswehr at this time, von Seeckt, represented the pro-Russian bloc of German generals, and that the commander who replaced him in 1933, von Fritsch, was of the same persuasion. Hitler, thinking not in terms of strategy but of "ideology" and especially of anti-Bolshevism, tried his best to get rid of these men. But he had no success; the stubborn masters of the Reichswehr actually ridiculed his fantasies of the Ukraine as a future colony for men and women of the German master race.

The relations between the leading Russian generals (especially Marshal Tuchachewsky) and the German chiefs remained most cordial. When, for example, the new German Army arranged one of its gigantic demonstrations following the Nazi party meeting in Nuremberg in September, 1936, one of the Russian marshals, finding himself "by accident" on a visit to Germany, was invited to watch the maneuvers. When, finally, these relations reached a limit which seemed positively dangerous to Russia's allies, and especially to Czechoslovakia,

the Czech secret service decided to bring all their information concerning this strange friendship to the attention of the Russian OGPU.

Stalin's swift response to the uncovering of this fifth column was of course the famous Moscow Trials; for many years these have been referred to as massacres by those who either did not understand or did not want to understand the nature of the relationship between certain Russian and German generals. These observers were naturally amazed when, during Hitler's campaign in Russia, it became evident that the Russian Army had not only not been weakened by the "purges" but greatly strengthened.

The Russian side of the story is already a chapter of history; just as interesting and far less familiar is the German side. The German generals, although regretting the bad luck that had befallen their friends, the purged Russian generals, still clung to that aim of collaboration with Russia which they had developed at Rapallo. An official magazine of the German Army, the *Militaer Wochenblatt*, declared in January, 1939, in unmistakable terms that any campaign in the East would encounter great difficulties in the terrain and climate, and that a war of movement was possible in that direction only

from late April to late September. That meant simply that only a German Army which could conquer Russia in five months dared risk a war with her. Otherwise such a campaign spelled doom.

Even more explicit was the statement in the same periodical that the German Army was trained and equipped exclusively for combat in the Western theater of war. To quote the same source once more, Captain Schoeneich, one of the leading transport experts of the Reichswehr, concluded a series of articles written two years before the Russian campaign with the declaration: "If motor transport is used beyond September on a Russian front, supply lines are likely to break down." It is unnecessary to multiply such evidences. They have but one trend—a single-front war in the West and positively no campaign in Russia. It would be hard to contend that the German Junker generals kept Mr. Hitler guessing about their attitudes.

The German generals knew what the Russian war machine was really like. They did not know it in all details because, after the honeymoon between certain German and Russian generals which led to the trials of 1937, their sources of information were gone. Nevertheless they had learned during the years of coöperation after the Treaty of Rapallo

that the Russians were pastmasters in mechanized warfare and that the successes of the German Army in the West meant little to them. A typical expression of the true attitude of the German General Staff toward the Russian Army can be found in the *Deutsche Militaerwissenschaftliche Rundschau*, the German review of military science, in an article published as early as 1936. This is the most trustworthy organ of Germany's military experts, and this article, written by General Gebhard von Schroeder, was published at a time when the German General Staff was more interested in objective information about Russian military problems than in propaganda.

“In the event of a war from the West, the Soviet General Staff has so organized its mobilization plans that a gigantic army of 293 divisions, complete with tanks, aircraft and artillery regiments will gather behind Moscow and under no circumstances will enter the action until the enemy actually threatens the capital or is in a position to upset the balance of the entire front.

“The Soviet General Staffs are convinced that the sustaining armies which have been assigned to the national frontiers must fight a delaying action and contest every mile of ground in the hope of weakening the adversary to such a point that it will fall easy

victim to the Russian counter-attack when that blow finally is launched. Although we look upon our neighbor to the East with only peaceful intentions, we owe it to ourselves to examine his dispositions in this respect.

“To those who feel that such a grouping is beyond the capacity of the Soviet military establishment, I would like to point out that at the end of last year it was calculated that Russia had 18,000 tanks, 18,800 military aircraft, 142,000 military motor vehicles, and a mobilization strength of twenty-six million men.”

The tension between the German Junkers who had read military history and Hitler who preferred to read the stars, had grown steadily, and even before the invasion of Russia the position of the latter had become precarious.

In 1917, when the war already seemed lost the Prussian Junkers chose to establish Bolshevism in Russia, right on their own eastern frontiers, rather than go on with a two-front war. Once General von Ludendorff and the entire German General Staff had agreed that it was the imperial blunder of a two-front war which had brought the German military machine to the brink of surrender, they sought the elimination of the Russian front at any cost—even to allowing Lenin and Trotsky to be

smuggled into Russia. It was the hope of the German General Staff that the revolutionaries would overthrow Kerensky's regime and, with it, the Kerensky-supported movement to continue the war. Just as they were ready in 1917 to do anything which would neutralize Russia, so were they again ready in 1939 when they saw the possibility of a nonaggression and friendship pact with the Soviet Union.

It would be a grave mistake to believe that Hitler and the other leaders of the Nazi party wanted such a pact with Russia. They signed it only under pressure from a group of Junker generals who were willing to pay any price to keep Germany's backyard quiet. All this was purely the result of the sober military calculations of the generals and involved no change of heart whatsoever on the part of Hitler. Mentally and emotionally Hitler and such of his lieutenants as Rosenberg remained utterly opposed to the Soviet system and all its works; it seems certain that he felt that any alliance with Russia would actually be Germany's doom. But the generals thought otherwise.

It is psychologically interesting to note that Hitler not only preached hate against Russia, the Russian people and "Bolshevism," but even developed

pseudo-military doctrines aimed at proving that an alliance with Russia, even temporarily and for purely realistic reasons, would be disastrous for Germany. He makes this abundantly clear in such a passage from *Mein Kampf* as:

“Either a Germano-Russian coalition remains on paper, in which case it would be pointless and worthless for us, or it would be transformed from the words of a treaty into a visible reality—and the rest of the world would be warned. How naïve to think that, in such an event, England and France would wait a decade until the Germano-Russian alliance had finished its technical war preparations. No, the storm would break over Germany with the speed of lightning.

“Thus the fact of the conclusion of a treaty with Russia would embody the declaration of the next war. Its outcome would be the end of Germany.”

And this was the same Adolf Hitler who, in obedience to his masters' wishes, signed a pact of nonaggression and friendship in Moscow in 1939.

In spite of the attitude of his Junker employers and perhaps because of German military successes in the first rounds of the war—successes really produced by Junker strategy and preparation—Adolf Hitler felt in 1941 that the time had come when the ideas of *Mein Kampf* for gaining *Lebensraum*

in the East and the pet notions of his chief adviser on Russian issues, Arthur Rosenberg, should displace plain everyday military strategy.

Incidentally, Rosenberg's rôle in preparing this invasion should not be underestimated. A Russian by birth, but really one of the German aristocrats educated in the Baltic provinces, he played an important part in Russian administration in Czarist days. His class thought of itself as a kind of privileged set and administered only for the sake of good pay and of empire. When this empire vanished, these Baltic Barons were interested only in two things: first, in saving their great manors from Bolshevism by establishing sovereign states in the Baltic provinces, and second, in finding ways to make Russia once more a profitable province for their exploitations. To manage these things they were perfectly ready to accept German aid. It was Rosenberg who tried again and again to sell Hitler the idea that internal conditions in Russia were so rotten that a German army could take Moscow in a few weeks and easily arrange to have the Russian people themselves drive out Stalin. It is hardly necessary to point out Mr. Rosenberg's miscalculations.

When they heard about Hitler's new and sur-

prising intention of invading Russia, the generals immediately turned to Goering. Goering had already done at least one important piece of work for the *Militaers* when he had, during the purge of June 30, 1934, prevented Hitler from replacing the Reichswehr with a "party man" as desired by Captain Roehm. But this new situation was far more serious, because Hitler, convinced of his infallibility as a strategist, had become a law unto himself and was moving forward without asking questions.

It should be pointed out that there was always discord between the professional generals and those rubber-stamp field marshals who owed their rank not to professional training and ability but only to activity in the Nazi party. From the very start of the Russian campaign the professional generals warned Hitler that the war in Russia would be drawn out into the winter and would end in disaster; only the party bigwigs in uniform, those who secured their glorious titles by yessing Hitler at every turn, approved of the invasion.

Inside this circle of rubber-stamp field marshals, Goering had been the only one who, out of a knowledge of air war, had cautioned Hitler. The consequence, as usual, was that Goering fell out

of favor and was compelled to stay at home during the period that Hitler's legions were making their first inroads into Russia. A Nazi victory would probably have sealed Hermann Goering's fate.

While the German generals were hoping for some miracle to save Germany from losing the war, while they were even hoping that this miracle would be Russia's coming to the aid of Germany, while they were hugging such vain hopes, their employe was plunging headfirst into a little miracle of his own—the invasion of Russia.

CHAPTER II

THE CZECH POSITION AND THE FLIGHT OF HESS

THE Czechoslovak Government in London, informed of the growing tension between the army and the Nazi party in Germany, was in close touch with Moscow from the early part of February, 1941, on. As much as three months before Rudolf Hess made his historic flight to Scotland on May 10, and well before it became obvious that the tension between the Junker army command and Hitler had come to a head, the Czechoslovak leaders in exile were informed of Hitler's intention of invading Russia, and even of his plan to offer Britain a separate peace.

The rôle of the leaders of the Czechoslovak Republic, now in exile, may too easily be underestimated by history. I distinctly remember President Beneš telling me, in the course of a conversation in Chicago in March, 1939, many months before the

outbreak of the war, that in the final analysis Russia would fight on the side of the Allies. This was not idle talk but the direct consequence of what he had observed of the Russian attitude in those tragic hours of Czechoslovakia during the Munich crisis. The Russians wanted not only to live up to their treaty but even to go beyond their obligation to protect Czechoslovakia.

Dr. Beneš and all those intimate with the Czech situation knew that from the start Russia looked upon the war with Nazi Germany as unavoidable and was most concerned only with the timing of the clash. When Czechoslovakia was surrendered to the Nazis, the British government of Chamberlain and the French government of Daladier were convinced or wanted to be convinced of the essential weakness of the Russian Army. They chose to trust the Polish Army rather than accept the assertion of Dr. Beneš and the Czechoslovak General Staff that the Russian Army had the greatest man power, the most modern equipment, and the most highly trained leadership of any force capable of meeting Hitler.

But the Western powers still continued to omit Russia even from all-European conferences. When, before the Munich meeting, the Russian Ambassa-

dor to London, Ivan Maisky, asked why his country (undoubtedly a more interested party than Italy) had not been invited to the conference, Lord Halifax answered that Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini "would almost certainly be reluctant to sit in conference" with a Bolshevik. Thus, in the opinion of those responsible for Britain's foreign policy, the hostility of Berlin and Rome towards Moscow was apparently sufficient reason to exclude Russia from the entire field of European politics.

It is true that the British and French general staff officers held staff talks with the Russians. The Russians, however, never trusted them: they did trust the Czechs and entered into military collaboration with them after the conclusion of the Moscow-Prague pact. The Czech generals and Dr. Beneš were informed of the strength of the Russian Army and they put faith in this information. When they saw that Stalin had come to realize that collaboration with Chamberlains and Daladiers was impossible, that it would be better for Russia to stay out of the war than be sacrificed to the Nazis, the Czech leaders began to regard the Russo-German pact of August, 1939, as a mere makeshift. They knew that Russia could never feel safe with

the Nazi aggressor in power. They also knew that Hitler would go to any lengths—even to opposing his Junker masters—for the sake of “living space” in the East.

At that time I was in frequent contact with the Russian envoy to Prague, Mr. Alexandrowsky, and there never was a doubt in my mind that the Soviet Union recognized the great strategic value of Czechoslovakia and would do its utmost to save it. When Hitler conquered Austria, Maxim Litvinoff, then Russian Foreign Commissar, uttered these prophetic words:

“First and foremost arises the threat to Czechoslovakia, and then, as aggression is infection, the danger promises to grow into new international conflicts. . . . The present international situation, puts before all peaceable states, and large states in particular, the question of their responsibility for the subsequent destinies of the peoples of Europe, and not only of Europe. I can say on behalf of my government that, for its part, it is ready as before to join in collective actions which, decided jointly with it, would have the purpose of arresting and of removing the accentuated danger of a new world shambles. It agrees to proceed immediately to discuss practical measures.”

On March 24, 1938, England rejected this offer as “inopportune.” And when, a few months later,

on August 24, 1938, Litvinoff again asked the League of Nations for a "firm stand against the aggressors" to save Czechoslovakia, England and France simply ignored the proposal. On September 2 and 11, in the zero hours before the Munich Pact was signed by Britain, France, and the Axis dictators, Litvinoff intervened once more at Geneva and declared:

"We intend to fulfill our obligations under the pact and, together with France, to offer assistance to Czechoslovakia by the ways open to us. Our War Department is ready immediately to participate in a conference with representatives of the French and Czechoslovak War Departments, in order to discuss the measures appropriate to the moment."

Even after the stabbing of Czechoslovakia at Munich, Russian patience in the fight for collective security against the aggressors was not yet exhausted. On March 18, 1939, after Hitler had scrapped his own Munich Pact and had marched into Prague, Litvinoff, speaking for the Russian Government, proposed a conference between Britain, France, Russia, Poland, and Turkey to be held at Bucharest. That proposal, had it been accepted, might still have prevented the war. It was turned

down by the British Government on the ground that it was "premature." Poland even went further, refusing to sign any document whatsoever with the U.S.S.R. Only then was Litvinoff, as the faithful champion of collective security, dismissed to make way for the unhappy Nazi-Russian alliance.

The Czechs knew full well what it meant when the Russians, their truest allies, were not asked to join the conference at Munich, when it became evident that Chamberlain and his followers were maneuvering to drive Germany into a war with Russia. They knew the strength of Russia and they knew that the Trials had not impaired the military efficiency of the Soviet Union but had in fact increased it markedly. When a certain American pilot, who was regarded as an expert in aviation because he had once crossed the Atlantic, came out with statements belittling the military might of the U.S.S.R. they listened with disbelief.

Unlike Charles Lindbergh, the Czechs and the German General Staff knew the actual facts about Russian air and army strength. As far back as 1935, General Guderian, Hitler's foremost tank expert, writing in the *Militaerwissenschaftliche Rundschau*, the organ of the German war ministry, declared:

“The Russians have the best foreign models for ordinary commercial motors and also for tanks. They have bought Ford, Garden-Lloyd, Vickers, Renault, and Christie patents and adapted them to their own purposes. They have produced their best and most modern motor vehicles in masses, they have thoroughly trained their troops in the use of them, and they have adapted their tactical and operative aims excellently to the performance of these troops. The Cavalry Army of Budenny of 1920 has developed into the Tank Corps of Voroshilov of 1935 . . . 10,000 tanks, 150,000 military tractors and over 100,000 military motor vehicles of various kinds put the Red Army at the head of Europe in the question of motorization. Great Britain and France have been left far behind.”

And Colonel von Bülow, one of Germany's chief airplane experts and later air attaché in Rome, had declared (in the December, 1935 issue of the same periodical):

“The necessary basis for war production in the aero-industry must be laid in time of peace by a planned economy of positively prophetic foresight. In this connection those countries which are economically dependent on foreign sources either in the matter of productive preparedness or of raw material supplies are at a disadvantage as compared with those countries which are economically self-sufficient. Today there are only two countries in the world which are com-

pletely economically independent and in a position to produce aeroplanes and aero-engines on a mass scale indefinitely, namely Russia and America.

“There is probably no other country in the world which has such a network of experimental stations, laboratories and training centers as Russia, and all its efforts are exclusively directed to developing the Soviet air arm to the highest possible level of technical perfection.”

Similar quotations from German military literature could be adduced by the score.

The Junker generals as well as the Czechs knew something about Russia.

When I asked a leading colleague of Dr. Beneš, a member of the Czechoslovak Government in Exile, concerning the inside knowledge which the Czechs had had of the growing tension with Germany, he replied that Dr. Beneš had had the information for a long time and had passed it on to both the British and American governments. It had been made clear to all concerned that the discord between the generals and the Nazis was increasing steadily. Concerning official Czechoslovak connections with Moscow after the start of the war in 1939 he pointed out that although the German-Soviet pact caused a considerable cooling-off be-

tween the Czech Government in London and the people in Czechoslovakia and Moscow, contact was never interrupted, and when the war broke between Russia and Germany a Czech military mission was firmly established in Moscow.

When I went on to ask this high official about what the Czechs knew of the flight of Hess he declared that they knew that Hess came to England convinced that he could persuade the Tories to make peace and join forces against Bolshevism. Hess, he said, was also known to have been under the impression that the food situation in Great Britain was calamitous and that British public opinion could be brought to see eye to eye with him. He simply revealed an utter lack of knowledge of British character.

I knew, too, that Dr. Beneš had never, in all the years between 1933 and the time of the Russian invasion, wavered in his conviction that Russia would fight on the side of the Allies. The Czech minister answered categorically that after his visit to Moscow and his conversations with Stalin in 1935 Dr. Beneš had never had any doubts whatever on this score. Dr. Beneš, he said, returned from Moscow much impressed by Russian preparations. Needless to say, he met violent opposition

to his opinions, and many of those who disagreed with him, especially among the British conservatives, tried to brand him a Red. All of this of course ended as soon as the war started; he was then hailed as the one man who had understood the situation.

Although newspaper stories to the effect that Dr. Beneš had actually made a visit to Moscow just before the Nazi invasion of Russia were pure fabrications, the Czech leader had enough evidence about Russia to make him absolutely confident of his position. On one occasion he said to me that the Czechs were convinced before and after the Munich crisis that Russia would fight if France would take some action. He said the Czechs had proof of this, and had information, moreover, that Russian preparation was infinitely greater than most people suspected. "In other words," he added, "the Czechs were objective in their estimates of Russian military strength and were not indulging in wishful pro- or anti-communist thinking."

It is not difficult to establish the fact that Czech military experts were of the same mind. In 1936, I had occasion to discuss the question with General Lužs, a former director of the Czechoslovak War College and commander of the Fourth Czech

Army Corps in Moravia. As chief of the Czechoslovak Military Mission to Moscow he had returned from observing Russian maneuvers in Minsk. He declared that the Red Army was liberally equipped with modern technical resources and that in his opinion it led the world in this respect. He felt that there was not another force anywhere which could compare with it in the matter of equipment. Contrast this with the attitudes of the military men of the Western powers.

Similarly, Colonel Oldrich Spaniel, a leading Czech strategist and one who had been intimately concerned in the collaboration of the Russian and Czechoslovak armies, told me that the Czechs were thoroughly informed of Russian preparations because the Czechoslovak Army after 1931 had kept in touch with the Red Army, interchanging officers in many branches of their forces. Czechoslovak officers visited the Soviet air corps and mechanized units in particular, and their experiences were of course utilized by the Czechoslovak Army.

From my experience, I can confirm that both military and political circles in Czechoslovakia believed that in case of a conflict between Germany and the Soviet Union, the Red Army, backed by the inexhaustible resources of its land, would

prove the decisive force in defeating Nazism. On the day the Germans attacked the U.S.S.R., I declared on the radio that the Germans had set foot on a road which must inevitably lead to their destruction, and that Russia, like England and the United States, was such a colossus that even a military defeat of great magnitude could not eliminate it from the conflict. I pointed out that its enormous population, size, and resources constituted a bulwark sufficient to consume the basic fighting energy of the German Army, the army of a state with only half the population of Russia. I tried to show why the exploitation of a country of such vast expanses, such poor means of communication, and such intense national spirit as Russia was practically impossible. I suggested that the Russian Army would handle the Germans as Napoleon had been handled, and it would wear them down until they cracked. The Russians' stand, I said, would be invaluable in another way: it would give the United States and the Allies the precious months necessary to complete their vital arms programs.

The Czechs knew quite a bit indeed.

Thus, if there was anyone in London who was not amazed by the sudden arrival in Scotland of

Rudolf Hess and the subsequent rumors of internal discord in Germany, it was surely the Czech Government in Exile. Months before, Dr. Beneš had said to me, "Don't worry. . . . The time will come." And the time came on that day in May, 1941, when, not far from the Duke of Hamilton's estate, Rudolf Hess stepped from an airplane and was captured by a Scotch farmer with a pitchfork. Although later court investigations, as reported in British newspapers, made the rôle of the Duke of Hamilton seem insignificant, they failed to give a satisfactory explanation of the flight itself.

It must be understood first of all that Hess took this climactic step because his very life was at stake. He knew that the clique of generals, and Goering too, was determined to prevent the invasion of Russia at any cost, that although it was not ready to try to liquidate the Nazi party and take over the entire government, it was contemplating getting rid of those two whose efforts disturbed them most, Hess and Rosenberg.

Hess and Rosenberg were menaced even before Hitler, Goebbels, and Himmler, partly because the former were prodding Hitler into his crusade against communism and a campaign eastward, and partly because the latter three could be sacrificed

even more effectively when the Junkers might later on decide to bargain for peace terms with the Western powers.

Hess had shared with Hitler the "honorable imprisonment" in the Landsberg jail after the ill-starred Bierkeller putsch of 1922, and had helped instill in the house painter that longing to conquer the Ukraine which was to become a central motif in *Mein Kampf*. In fact, Hess' part in the writing of Hitler's bible is so great that it is doubtful if historians will ever really be able to decide which theories were the products of Hess' thinking and which of Hitler's. We may be fairly certain, however, that most of the ideas dealing with Germany's future foreign policy were actually developed by Hess, because these are the ideas of a writer with some, even if distorted, education, and some knowledge of the problems of Eastern Europe, and because they were put down at a time when Hitler, as an agent of the Black Reichswehr, was busy only with racial theories.

The chiefs of the Nazi party in May, 1941, were depressed by the growing unrest in the conquered countries, by the stalemate in the war with Britain, and most of all by the effects on the German people of these two situations. The generals had shown

the Nazi chiefs that the German Army could work miracles; so, being military novices and more interested in public opinion than anything else, they wanted to perform new miracles—with or without the sanction of the Junkers.

From the psychological point of view, it is curious to note how these so-called “men of the people,”—actually nothing but hirelings—began to believe that the German successes were the result of their own efforts. Equally curious was the conviction of these politicians that the whole of Europe was fundamentally anti-Bolshevik and would rush to join Germany against the Soviet Union. Seeing the unrest in the conquered countries, in Germany proper, in the so-called neutral countries, and in Britain, they began to believe that all that was necessary to crystallize this into support for themselves was to declare war on the U.S.S.R.

There is no doubt that when German military leaders first realized, in 1941, what the Frankenstein which they had fostered was about to do they were horrified. As I have shown in quotation after quotation from German military literature, the members of the General Staff knew enough about Russia's military strength to regard a war in the

East as a piece of lunacy which must be prevented at any cost. Right up into 1941 they gave warning after warning. But sober military explanations availed nothing. One of their last warnings was given publicly when the *Militaer Wochenblatt* declared that the Army was prepared only for the combat in the West. Then the Junker generals apparently realized that the only arrow left in their quiver was, if not the liquidation of the entire Nazi group, at least Hitler's most dangerous advisers. And that is why Hess hopped to Scotland in May, 1941.

But when he tried to make a bargain with Britain, to buy "peace in our time" once more, and also a free hand in Russia, he found a Britain very different from the one he had anticipated. Although there were still some appeasers in the British Cabinet—unhappy mementos of the Munich days—the era of Chamberlain had passed. These residues of appeasement were not completely drained off until the shake-up of February, 1942, but their influence had waned, and the British, harking to sound advice, especially from Dr. Beneš and his Czech aides, remained firm against the Nazis.

Sir Stafford Cripps, exceptionally able British

Ambassador, had been informed of Germany's menacing attitude toward Russia, and as early as March, 1941, Prime Minister Winston Churchill had indicated to the British people that he had been told that the Germans would turn on Russia after the conquest of the Balkans. The first warnings of the Russo-German difficulties were given to the Allies in March: further details were added after the Hess hearings in May.

But the Russians, on the surface, appeared to be apathetic in the face of the German menace. They seemed still to be appeasing Hitler, although it was evident that their delivery of materials to Germany was peculiarly slow. Under the surface, however, they were preparing feverishly. In order to have strategic buttresses against German attack they secured buffers for their right flank by taking over their old Baltic provinces, those which had been made into supposedly "sovereign states" by the German Junkers and the Baltic Barons.

They had, in addition, pushed back the Finnish frontier in order to be able to defend Leningrad, their second largest city. The Finnish frontier had been only thirty miles from Leningrad and, if the Soviets had not blasted the Mannerheim Line, the Nazis would have captured the Russian city in a

few weeks. With Leningrad exposed to a German blitz and to the German puppet general, von Mannerheim, the entire Russian right flank would have been rolled up in the first weeks of the war. Russia's central frontiers had already been pushed back to the Curzon Line in Poland—which, incidentally, had been promised to Russia after World War I by the League of Nations. Now, with the breaking of the Mannerheim Line, Russia's right flank was protected. That is why, from a strategic point of view, the Russo-Finnish War was a defensive war if ever there was one.

More important than all these factors were the warnings that came from London. The warnings gave Russia time to prepare for the onslaught, and time was certainly of the essence for Russia, where vast distances made transportation and mobilization extremely complex.

Churchill's warnings, the Czechs keeping contact between Britain and Russia, and, far from the least, the Hess flight to Scotland had given Russia about three precious months to prepare for the blitz.

In fine, the situation was this: Hitler, faced by a stalemate in the West, was itching to turn East,

encouraged particularly by Hess and Rosenberg. The Junkers, faced by the same stalemate but dreading even more a two-front war, were seriously considering asking for a negotiated peace with the British in which they would sacrifice the Nazis in return for continued control over conquered Europe. Hess, recognizing that he would be the first to be sacrificed, fled, partly in fear and partly with the hope that he might do a little negotiating of his own. The British, having been informed of Hitler's imminent westward campaign, rebuffed Hess and it became apparent to everyone that the day of appeasement was past. A few weeks later Hitler—accompanied by the Junkers because they had no alternative—was on his way into Russia.

CHAPTER III

**A FEW THINGS
HITLER FORGOT**

AS SOON as the news of Hitler's invasion of Russia was flashed around the world, I declared, in contrast to the doleful predictions of most observers, that Hitler had made the mistake of his life. I added that we might expect Russian setbacks, great setbacks, in the first few weeks of the war but that they would mean little in the long run. It was evident that Hitler would seek to conquer Russia with blitz rapidity in order to avoid a sustained two-front war. But the Russian Army, I pointed out at that time, is itself trained for blitzkrieg warfare and would probably start heavy counter-attacks and a little lightning of its own. These, I felt, might soon decide the fate of the Nazi Army.

All that was far from being an expression of wishful thinking. During the pre-war period in Europe,

and especially during the Czech crisis, I had seen so much of this sort of thinking that I took every conceivable precaution to avoid becoming a victim of it myself, especially where the solid and observable facts of strategy and warfare were available. I was firmly convinced that an Austrian day-dreamer had ignored or tossed to the winds all the logical counsel of military advisers who really knew Russia and the Slavic world. I was firmly convinced that this desperate attack on Russia was not to be compared with the perfectly calculated hammer blows the Germans had dealt in the West.

But there were other facts besides purely military ones that Hitler and his dilettante Nazi tacticians forgot; these may not have been of a military nature in themselves but they had great bearing on the outcome of crucial military activities.

While the Prussian Junker generals were learning the truth about Russia and the East, Hitler had simply woven fantasies about these regions. He did not know the condition or nature of the Russian people or of the Red Army soldiers. He had never visited Russia, Poland, or any one of the great Slavic countries. Even his years of military service had been spent exclusively on the Western front. Moreover, the kind of people of Slavic descent

whom he had met in his Vienna years probably served to distort his conception of Slavs rather than clarify it. The Viennese circles which influenced Hitler in those years entertained a romantic admiration for the Germans as a master race and, as corollary, a deep contempt for all non-Germanic peoples, including Slavs and Jews.

In reading Hitler's memoirs of that period, we repeatedly encounter the fanciful notion that the Germans and only the Germans are the people of the future, and that all other European races, especially the Slavs, have only one function—to act as servants to this Teutonic master race. In the case of men like Hitler these romantic and unreal ideas, closely resembling the anti-Slav attitudes of the Rosenbergs, the Mannerheims and the other Baltic Barons, were only increased by German defeat in the first World War, becoming, so to speak, the stubborn expression of a sense of inferiority. After the German defeat and the very unheroic behavior of the Kaiser, German youth, clinging desperately to the theories instilled in it, decided that Germany had not really been defeated, and, by the same kind of reasoning, that it could not be defeated. The future, they vowed, would and must prove them right. From their posts behind the scenes the Prus-

sian Junkers applauded this attitude, and after a while decided to capitalize on it by making use of such a tool as Adolf Hitler.

But all this was sectarian theory and wishful thinking: most of it was very far removed from sober facts about Germany and its possible destiny. For years and years, Herr Hitler and his Nazis have been pounding away at us with the notion that the future of Europe and of the whole world belongs to the "Nordic Race" and to the "German peoples," but cold statistics seem to tell a somewhat different story about the Germanic peoples of Europe.

These statistics tell us bluntly that the Germanic peoples are a steadily declining race and that, in spite of all the exhortations to Nazi mothers to bear and raise more and more Nazi children, the birth rate in "Greater Germany" has declined steadily. It fell from 24.4 per thousand in 1911-1914 to 19.1 per thousand in 1938. At the same time the death rate increased about as steadily; it has risen from 10.6 per thousand in 1932 to 13.4 per thousand in 1939. By 1938, then, the birth rate was only 5.7 greater than the death rate. In other words Germany is approaching the situation of France, where deaths surpass births and where

you can come across dozens of communities, as I have, in which not a single birth has been recorded in a month. It might be added that British mortality tables are also slowly approaching an unfavorable ratio.

Now let us take a look at the countries containing the largest Slav populations. In Russia, a country of 170,000,000 people, the increase has been approximately 3,500,000 each year, while Poland increased her population by almost one-third between the end of the World War I and the beginning of World War II. While in an average German community of 1000 inhabitants the annual increase in population is less than six, in a comparable Russian community it is twenty-three. In such essentially Slavic countries* as former Poland, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria, the surplus of births is at least twice as large as it is in Germany.

Thus while the percentage of Germans (and of French and British, too) in Europe is diminishing year by year, the number of Slavs is increasing,

* The main Slavic groups of Europe, differing in some respects but strongly tied together by language, institutions, and culture, are the Poles, Czechs, and Slovaks to the west, the Serbs, Slovenes, Croats, and Bulgars to the south, and the Great Russians and the Little Russians (also called Ruthenians and Ukrainians) to the east.

both absolutely and relatively. There can be little question that sooner or later this will have a profound effect on all the political and cultural balances of Europe.

I use the phrase "sooner or later" but it seems clear to me that this shift is approaching with a rapidity that is little short of amazing. I believe the shift will be clear in a matter of decades, that many of us will live to see this tremendous turning-point which is being quietly but inexorably developed by history, even while Hitler rants that Germany needs "breathing space" and intends to spread out over Europe.

The total number of Germans in Europe, including minorities living in the occupied parts of Poland and other neighboring countries, is probably not more than 85,000,000. Even the exaggerated statistics of Nazi propaganda agencies do not indicate more than 88,000,000, and this includes the Swiss and the German-speaking peoples of France and Russia. On the other hand, the number of Russians, Poles, Serbs, Croats, Slovaks, Bulgars, and other Slavs living in non-German countries east and southeast of Nazi Germany amounts to more than 225,000,000, not to mention

the many millions (particularly Czechs, Slovenes, and Poles) living in Germany under Nazi rule.

When such figures are considered in conjunction with the overwhelmingly favorable mortality rates among the Slavic nations, the entire German tradition of a *Drang Nach Osten* begins to seem more and more fantastic. While Russia (without Eastern Poland) had a population of some 135,000,000 after the World War I, it had risen by January, 1939, to 170,000,000. Moreover, the increase is becoming more rapid each year. Such obvious factors as better care of the young, the old, and the sick have not only increased the birth rate but have, since Czarist times, decreased the death rate by a full forty per cent.

But these profound changes in vital statistics seem to be as much a matter of biological forces as of improved government administration. The fact seems to be that basic biological forces are working in favor of the growth of these groups. Russia had an extremely high birth rate even in Czarist times; without any propaganda for larger families but by modernizing facilities the Soviet Union has simply allowed nature a better chance than it has ever had before. That the amazingly rapid increase of Slavic populations is partly independent of political sys-

tems is indicated by Poland's record. Despite very extensive illiteracy, a semi-totalitarian dictatorship, and an armaments program which swallowed half the annual budget, Poland's population rose from 26,500,000 in 1920 to 33,500,000 in 1938—an increase of 7,000,000 in eighteen years.

Thus, estimating conservatively, the territories of Russia and former Poland will have increased their population, between 1915 and 1950, by about 80,000,000—or, in other words, by the equivalent of the entire population of the Reich today.

In the next fifty years, the population of Europe is expected to increase, all things considered, by about 250,000,000. More than 200,000,000 of these will be Slavs, thus giving the Slavic population of Europe an enormous majority of 425,000,000. The biological forces, it seems, are working against the Germanic races in Europe at an ever-increasing speed. Historians in the twenty-first century looking back at our age will probably react to Nazi Germany's adherence to the theory of *Drang Nach Osten* as a last desperate attempt to turn back one of the great inevitable tides of history.

You may, of course, argue that more than once in history a minority has succeeded in building up a great empire. However, it should be noted that

in modern times we have had only colonial empires, and that, even in these, the conquerors did not succeed unless they permitted a certain amount of home rule. The motto of the British, as well as the Romans, has been, "Defeat the stubborn ones, but treat the defeated with humanity." Some attempt has usually been made to avoid ruling by sheer force or without some coöperation from the nobility or privileged classes of the conquered nation.

There is, in addition, some difference between ruling an African tribe through a native chieftain and controlling a European nation by some similar representative. In our era, white men have not been kept for any length of time under foreign rule, and some groups, such as the Slavs, have resisted even indirect domination by foreign conquerors. It is one thing for England to conquer India and the Sudan; it is a vastly different thing for Germany to conquer and rule countries like Czechoslovakia and Poland. Germany, in contrast with Britain, is essentially a continental country and cannot hope to rule overseas until she has conquered the European continent. In 1914, she attempted to expand overseas before mastering Europe and failed. So the first victims of Germany seeking empire must

be her white neighbors. Inability to absorb the white people of many nations helped defeat Napoleon; how much more difficult must it be for a country which has racism theories that make cooperation with foreigners virtually sinful.

The significant test was, and is, what happened when the Nazis attempted to master one of the smallest of Slavic groups, the Czechs. The Nazis really had something to work with after Munich, for the Czechs, betrayed by their friends, were in some circles prepared to entertain German overtures through government by the pro-Nazi Czech "Agrarians." However, once I had seen what happened in Prague when the Nazis began to treat the Czechs like an annoying tribe of natives, it became clear to me that consolidating a continental hegemony was a very different task from building a colonial empire. It was also evident that the only alternative for the Nazis was to turn from the method of indirect rule to the more elementary but dangerous one of rule by main force. This was actually what the Germans resorted to in Prague—with ever-diminishing effectiveness. After a very short period of trying to rule a Slavic people by the methods of real empire builders, the Nazis had

to fall back on the technique of the Spanish conquerors.

Whoever happened to see what took place in Prague when the Nazis tried to consolidate their conquest of only seven million Czechs can easily imagine what would happen if they tried to do the same thing with all the Slavs of Europe. The biological forces cannot be stopped by the brute will of one nation; nothing would be less likely to stop the growth of the Slavs or change their basic character than insolent victorious Nazis.

If Hitler forgot a few facts about the Slavs in general, he forgot, or never realized, just as many facts about warfare in Russia. After his successes—or, to be accurate, the successes of the Junker-trained army—with the blitzkrieg in the West, he became, or remained, indifferent to the fact that the Russians were past masters in the same type of warfare.

The Russians had begun to build very efficient tanks as far back as the early 'twenties and they had, moreover, developed not only a blitzkrieg offensive but a defense against blitzkrieg. The German Army, trained—to use the words of General von Seekt—"to cut through the enemy's ranks and ter-

ritory like a knife through butter," found an entirely different situation in the East, because Russia was prepared for exactly the kind of warfare Hitler's armies had used against France and the Low Countries. What had been miraculously successful in the West was a failure in the East. Not only did the blitzkrieg machinery of the Nazis fail but so did the military tactics they had developed—and this was certainly one of the main reasons why Hitler failed to conquer Moscow, and, incidentally, to sleep in the Kremlin.

Since the time when men began waging wars they have continually invented new and more terrible weapons. Sometimes these new weapons seemed destined to change the march of history, but after a certain time they have invariably stimulated new defenses, one tending to offset the other. The result has been that commanders and armies have frequently had a myth of invincibility associated with them after their first campaigns—only to lose it after a while. And after the myth of invincibility has been shattered, the conquests and empire earned in blood soon follow.

When, after two months of invasion, the situation in Russia seemed depressing to untrained eyes, I called attention to the moral involved in a parallel

situation more than two thousand years ago, the fate of Pyrrhus, King of Epirus. He was a reckless warrior and as crafty as a fox in diplomacy. His main secret, however, was the use of those tanklike monsters, those mechanized divisions of the third century B.C., elephants. Not even those notoriously successful imperialists, the Romans, could figure out how to stop Pyrrhus when he started to roll over Greece and Italy, invited by those fifth columnists of ancient Italy, the citizens of Tarentum.

He almost succeeded in rolling right into Rome, but one action after another slowed him down until finally his many enemies were able to coordinate their attacks and finish him. It was, incidentally, during his march toward Rome, after the battle of Asculum, that he uttered those famous words, "One more such victory and I am lost." These words, and their summation in the phrase a "Pyrrhic victory," have come down through twenty-two hundred years of history as the classical statement of what it means to win a battle but to pay more than the victory is worth. Pyrrhus, who had knocked out the greatest armies, was himself eliminated a few years later when someone who apparently had no respect for what was left of his "mechanized equipment" dropped a millstone on

his head. Based on sheer force and without a single constructive element in it, the empire of King Pyrrhus fell apart in as short a time as it had taken him to put it together.

But let us, in passing, not forget to take a look at the "secret defense" of the Greeks and Romans, the strategy with which they met the seemingly irresistible elephant panzer columns. Well, as we examine their tactics it becomes more and more evident that in Russia today history is only repeating itself, that certain basic ideas, although changed and modernized, still work. In warfare, as in any other field of human activity, it is always the basic idea that counts; that and the genius of those who can apply such ideas to new circumstances. Contrary to all the drivel about a "wave of the future," Hitler is only another "wave of the past"—the very ancient past.

What the Romans did in answer to the challenge of Pyrrhus and his blitz menagerie was to develop what we call a defense in depth, and what the Romans called the "phalanx." The Macedonians had invented it, the Greeks had taken it over, and now the Romans used it to destroy Pyrrhus and his elephant columns. It was relatively simple. Instead of facing the attacker with only one front line and

allowing themselves to be outflanked after a gap had been opened in the line, the Romans built three lines. When Pyrrhus drove his elephants against the defenders, the first line was opened and the elephants with their armored garrisons raged through. Farther along, however, they got a warm welcome from rear contingents who drove the elephants mad by throwing flames, torches, and other unwelcome objects at them. The elephants ran amok behind the Roman fronts and were either killed, together with their garrisons, or captured by the rear guard.

Meanwhile the infantry of King Pyrrhus, accustomed to meeting opponents already softened up by the elephants, found themselves confronted by a crack front line of Roman troops ready for their assault. It then became evident that these Epirotes, far from being the superior soldiers they were reputed to be, were not even well trained. They had been taught to rely on the advance work of the elephants; once the elephants failed, the Epirotes were defeated by the Romans in battle after battle.

And this, in essence, is the way the Russians met the German panzer columns. Once a method had been devised to take care of Hitler's tank divisions, with which he had outflanked the Poles, French, and the Greeks, the effectiveness of the blitzkrieg

was offset. For the first time Hitler was compelled to engage in mass battles in the open field. When it comes to mass battles, it is mass that counts, and if it is mass that counts the Russians have it. And that is why the German people were confronted for the first time by a kind of news with which they were distinctly unfamiliar, great lists of casualties.

The myth of Nazi invincibility was already gone by the end of those first two months of terrible slaughter on the Eastern front. But it was not the territory gained or lost that counted—it was the exploding of the myth of Nazi invincibility. This was of the greatest moral importance not only for the Russians, but also for the conquered nations, for Britain, and for the Allies—for all those, in short, who want to crush Hitlerism. It cannot be repeated too often that there never was and never will be an invincible army, just as there never was an impregnable line of the kind General Maginot tried to build.

There were two other characteristic techniques of Russian warfare which Hitler apparently did not prepare for and which helped set him back on his heels. One was the Russian scorched-earth policy, the other the guerrilla fighters.

The scorched-earth policy is as old as Russia and has no special relation to communism. When Napoleon captured Smolensk and, later on, imperial Moscow, he found nothing but heaps of ruins. The Russian aristocrats of 1812 had burned their palaces to the ground just as did the Russian people of 1941. Even in his all-important address to the Russian people on July 3, 1941, the first radio speech he had made since 1936, Josef Stalin gave the scorched-earth policy special attention. He declared:

“In case of a forced retreat of Red Army units all rolling stock must be evacuated; the enemy must not be left a single engine, a single railway car, a single pound of grain, or gallon of fuel. Collective farmers must drive out all their cattle and turn over their grain to the safe-keeping of authorities for transportation to the rear. All valuable property, including nonferrous metals, and grain and fuel which cannot be withdrawn, must, without fail, be destroyed.

“In areas occupied by the enemy, guerrilla units, mounted and on foot, must be formed; diversionist groups must be organized to combat enemy troops, foment guerrilla warfare everywhere, blow up bridges and roads, damage telephone and telegraph lines and set fire to forests, stores, and transports.

“In occupied regions, conditions must be made unbearable for the enemy and all his accomplices; they

must be harassed and annihilated at every step and their measures frustrated. This war with Fascist Germany cannot be considered an ordinary war. It is not only a war between two enemies; it is also a great struggle of the entire Soviet people against the German Fascist forces.”

As for the other factor, guerrilla warfare, its tradition is as old as the Cossacks. Even though Hitler overlooked this tactic when he began his invasion, he certainly must have become acutely aware of it when he found the steel claws which he had driven into Russia being cut off. For an army which undertakes a drive on so vast a front, it is a major rule of blitzkrieg theory that the encirclement of the enemy and the shattering of his morale must succeed within a certain limited time. If the attack is slowed up and the attacker has to take time out to reorganize for a renewed drive, there will be a pause or lull sufficient to permit the defenders to start their counter-offensive.

The Russian strategists were prepared to wage the war in its first stage mainly by defensive methods and on Russian terrain; after that, as they always emphasized in their military literature, counter-offensive rather than blitz attack would be the cornerstone of their strategy.

Professor Isserson, one of the best Russian strategists and an expert at the Russian Military Academy, once put it this way: "The resistance of defenders has a tendency to increase, and reaches its climax when the attacker is nearing his objective and is compelled to stake everything on his offensive." This, in effect, means that the defender must develop "defense in depth," a strategy very different from purely passive defense. The latter, unfortunately, was the golden rule of the French Maginot generals, and of Captain Liddell Hart who dominated British theory until the British saw how ineffectual passive defense was against a blitzkrieg.

Of course the Russians are always strongly supported by their native terrain in their policy of drawing out the enemy and then striking when the time is ripe. The nature and size of their territory makes it possible for them to force the invader to wear himself out, and then, when his blitz begins to fade, start the counter-attack.

All that, of course, is based on the presumption that the aggressor, despite his territorial gains, does not succeed in breaking down the morale of the defender. On this score, judging from all the evidence of Russian reactions during the first and second Nazi offensives, the defenders seem never even to

have wavered. The attempt to terrorize Moscow with air raids, the threats of poison-gas warfare, and exaggerated propaganda communiqués indicate how far the Germans were ready to go to undermine Soviet morale.

Relying on their experiences in Poland, the Lowlands, France, Norway, Yugoslavia, and even Greece, the Nazis were convinced that in the final analysis no one could resist, first, the terrible attacks of their tank units, or if that were possible, the insidious barrage of their psychological weapons. The U.S.S.R. resisted both. In Russia, it has become increasingly clear to the Germans that even though they made territorial gains, the spirit as well as the strength of the defenders, trained for twenty years for just such an emergency, would make them pay a terrible price.

One thing was clearly evident during the first months of the campaign: Russian resistance to Nazi tank attacks had proved far greater than the German High Command had anticipated. Among other things the Nazi tanks had been forced to cope with an element which they considered obsolete as a means of defense against mechanized attack—human courage.

The great military strategists of the world had

investigated every possibility of mechanical defense against the armored titans of the Nazis, but before the Russians showed the way no method had been found of piercing their heavy armor and halting their advance. Anti-tank units had resorted to mining the ground on which tanks were expected to advance or of preparing head-on collisions with other tanks. But the Russians had evolved a more simple way, a way which revives all those traditions of individual valor which were supposed to have been eliminated completely by modern mechanized warfare. The method of the Russians was the same as that of the heroic Spanish *dinamiteros*, those human fuses who carried flaming sticks of dynamite into the enemy lines and wiped them out, often at the expense of their own lives.

The Russians have adopted this method of anti-tank warfare. Picked squads lie in hiding, waiting until the Nazi tanks come to a stop in order to fire with greater accuracy. Then the dynamiters creep up, unobserved if possible, and affix to the tanks bombs powerful enough to destroy the machines; once the fuse is lit, the dynamiters have about two seconds in which to reach safety. The effectiveness of this method was apparently so great that in July, 1941, the Germans ordered that thereafter all tank

offensives were to be accompanied by low-flying Stuka dive-bombers whose duty it would be to machine-gun dynamiters. But even this did not really solve the problem. Like human beings, tanks must stop to be fed. This stop for fueling usually took place at night, that is, at a time when the planes were least able to cope with guerrilla fighters.

On the whole, this kind of warfare obviously requires enormous sacrifices on both sides. But for one major reason the German casualties may be considered more serious—the Russians have greater man power. In the second place, great losses are more serious for the Nazis because they have to continue on the offensive. A stalemate deep in Russian territory, as Napoleon discovered, is fatal. In his memoirs the Corsican declared, “I could risk everything, except time.” Napoleon and his officers learned that any retreat in Russia, whether in winter or summer, spelled doom.

This whole aspect of Russian strategy and particularly the stopping of tanks, is closely linked with the mobilizing of guerrilla fighters. For the first time in his experience, and in sharp contrast with what happened in Poland and France, Hitler found that in Russia his method of piercing the enemy

with tank units, moving infantry through the gap and outflanking the defender did not work. When the tanks failed along the way, the whole technique failed.

Almost daily during the German offensives of 1941, German communiqués would tell us that the Russian front had been pierced at a certain point and that the German army was “on the road” to some city like Kiev or Leningrad. What really happened was that one of Hitler’s steel tentacles, one of his mechanized columns and tank units had broken through, or perhaps had been permitted to break through, the Russian front defense lines. It was usually cut off the following day. The story generally ended with a brief Russian communiqué to the effect that a German panzer battalion had been annihilated several hundred miles east of the actual fighting front.

The question is, why were the Russians in 1941 able to do what the French and British in Flanders during early 1940 had found impossible. The answer is that first of all the French anti-tank guns were too weak and the British guns too few, and, second, that the men who knew how to destroy German tanks, who had done the job before and were proud of the fact, the International Brigadiers,

were Spanish refugees locked up in French concentration camps or, their help refused and their souls embittered, shipped to Africa or Syria to build roads. It should also be added that the French, British, and Belgian armies had few hand grenades, and none large enough to stop tanks.

How panzer divisions can be stopped is best indicated by such descriptions of successful modern anti-tank warfare as that supplied by Tom Wintringham in his book, *New Ways of War*. As commander of the British Battalion of the International Brigade in Spain, Wintringham studied these entirely new methods of war on their first European testing-ground. His book has become a manual for millions of men in Britain today. Although addressed to British civilians defending their island home, his words probably give us a fairly accurate description of what happened in Russia in 1941. The key weapon is the hand-grenade. First of all, Wintringham points out, the fuse of an anti-tank grenade must burn very rapidly—in two or two and a half seconds; in one second a tank can travel forty feet, and the thrower cannot afford to have his grenade burst behind the machine. The tracks, cogwheels, and in some types the relatively unarmored belly of a tank are the machine's weakest

points. The best place, therefore, from which to throw the grenade is a point as close to the side of the tank as possible; the thrower waits till the tank has almost passed him, slings his grenade under the tank from behind, and drops flat.

When a road is to be protected, the most useful grenade is the type that will detonate when a tank passes over it. Even the largest grenade can be hidden in a rut or hole. It should be pointed out that tank drivers and gunners, using only narrow slits in the tank armor, have a limited range of vision. Moreover, a tank's turrets must be turned before the guns can be trained on an object. Thus the most dangerous distance from a tank is probably about two hundred yards; the safest, about six inches. An additional protection sometimes provided for dynamiters as they close in on a tank is riflemen firing from a distance to distract the tank gunners.

It was guerrilla warfare that made it possible for the Spanish Republican Army and the Chinese armies to hold out for years against the attacks of aggressors far superior in size and equipment. In Russia the aggressor is superior neither in size nor equipment; in Western Europe and in Poland he proved to be superior essentially by his tactics.

In all history there has never been an irresistible

force. The elephants of King Pyrrhus of Epirus were finally put out of the battle by flames. The cavalry of the medieval knights, which had routed lines of peasant defenders, was finally broken up by gunpowder. The tank, as the Russians phrase it, is something to be hunted down. Well, the hunting down of the tank has shown up the weakness of the Nazi armies.

Most of these military factors which Mr. Hitler so blithely forgot, or never realized, about Russia, he learned in the most educational kind of way in the first few weeks of his unceremonious visit to Russia.

CHAPTER IV

**WESTERN "EXPERTS"
VS. THE FACTS**

HITLER'S invasion was not many months old before it became apparent how greatly the Red Army had been underestimated not only by the Nazis and their Corporalissimo but by observers all over the globe. The simple explanation is that the Goebbels' propaganda machine had spent a fortune annually convincing the peoples of the world that the Red Army was worthless and that the Russian people were brutish and incompetent. To those who knew the intensity of the propaganda and the all too receptive ground on which it fell, it would have been surprising if the Russians had not in some quarters come to be thought of as monsters or cannibals. Thus Russian resistance came as a great surprise to the many "experts," let alone laymen.

When it started, we were told on all sides that the obsolete Russian Army and Air Fleet would be

just a push-over for the Nazi panzer columns. After a week or two, the same knowing commentators told us that it might take a little more time, but the dull Russian peasants would in the end not even be able to wage guerrilla war. Then, when the struggle went into its sixth week, several actually began to suggest that Hitler really didn't want to conquer Russia, at all, but to lull Britain and her Allies into feeling safe and then secure more appeasement. A strange theory, indeed! Hitler, in other words, was going to sacrifice several hundred thousand men, a great part of his material and a still greater part of his military prestige just to get better peace terms in the West! These observers preferred to concoct such fantastic tales rather than admit frankly and honestly that, along with British morale, the Russian Army had been the most highly underestimated factor in the entire struggle.

There were several facts about the Soviet Army which apparently still had not been understood. When on July 17, 1941, less than a month after the beginning of the invasion, the Soviets announced the restoration of the authority of the military commissars, this was alleged by many to signify that Russian Army morale was collapsing, if not on

the verge of mutiny. The reappointment of the commissars was at once taken to be a last-ditch measure to bolster crumbling resistance, a desperate political interference in military matters.

Nothing could have been further from the truth. The men reappointed were *military* commissars and their work had little or nothing to do with politics. Not only were they not meant to obstruct military discipline but to prepare instead for a superior kind of military discipline—that of guerrilla fighters engaged in a type of warfare where the intelligence of individual soldiers is all-important.

The Germans have built an army of soldiers who follow orders with blind faith and without protest against any injustice whatever. It has been a "good" army only as compared with those armies of the West which were hamstrung with outdated attitudes and dead conventions. When forced to try comparisons with the Russian forces, however, it no longer looked so good. A man who will accept injustice in silence will just as readily accept orders that do not make sense to him or try to carry them out without understanding them. In the old days that may not have mattered much; today it is fatal. Neither the basic strategies of elastic defense nor of infiltration can be carried out effectively if orders

are obeyed in blind faith and without understanding. Thus, the German method of teaching these tactics has a flaw: they are executed in wooden fashion and when strongly opposed or in any way disrupted tend to founder.

In most military organizations obedience is considered so important that protests or even questions concerning unjust or unclear orders must be made "off parade." It is the duty of every commander to make himself clear and yet it is generally felt that giving decisive commands and explaining them do not always go well together. Thus armies founded on the theory that soldiers should understand and believe in what they are doing have often set up alongside the commander a leader whose principal duty was to explain, to hear complaints, to remedy injustices, and take some part in meting out penalties. He relieves the commander of many administrative duties and of special concern about morale and discipline.

This leader can usually stand much closer to the men than the commander can, and in actual experience he has often proved an invaluable gear in the machinery of warfare. In Oliver Cromwell's "New Model" army he was called the "Agitator" because he whipped up the fervor of those godly

but dangerous fighters. In the armies of the French Revolution this leader was the "Delegate," and in the brigades of the Spanish Republic his official title was *comisario de guerra* or Commissar of War; in Russia he is the "Commissar."

Particularly in guerrilla warfare, soldiers must be made to understand what they are fighting for and thus be inspired with an enthusiasm that will change their discipline from a mere acceptance of orders into a willing and eager application of all their powers. When they admitted the strong resistance and stubborn attacks of the guerrilla fighters in their rear, the Germans were unwittingly admitting that the Russian principle of educating and inspiring every Russian fighter, even isolated ones, was working out. Winston Churchill, in his message to Stalin on July 26, 1941, paid similar tribute to the courage and leadership of the Russian Army. Five weeks after the war there were already many things which were obviously not working out according to Der Fuehrer's schedule for the Eastern front.

Not only was the quality as well as quantity of Russian man power and equipment underestimated by those who had failed to pay any attention to

Russian history and warfare, but there was also a widespread lack of appreciation of Russia's military training. Curiously enough, while they found time, a number of years ago, to decry those "purges" in which the Russians succeeded in getting rid of generals who were collaborating with Nazis, most of the experts said nothing about the bland way in which France was putting her armies into obviously untrustworthy, if not traitorous, hands.

Russian generalship proved to be most superior in the flux of guerrilla warfare. By July, spearheads of both opposing forces had cut so sharply into each other's ranks that there were really no clearly defined lines of battle, particularly on the central front. Soon it was evident that large contingents of Nazi troops were fighting behind the Russian lines and Russians behind the Nazi lines; it was in the pockets thus created that most of the fighting took place and in such pockets it was guerrilla warfare that counted heavily. Long trained in guerrilla tactics, the Red Army soldiers usually proved their superiority in such clashes. They were capable of operating in the smallest units and with comparative independence of leaders: in contrast, the Nazi soldier, when cut off from a large unit or from any unit at all, was wooden and ineffectual.

It was only an appreciation of the training of the Russian soldier, and of a Russian characteristic which seemed to me a familiar fact of Russian military history that permitted me to say in a radio broadcast in October, 1941, that if worse came to worse so many guerrilla bands would spring up in Russia that the country would seem like Yugoslavia multiplied a thousandfold, that even if the great rivers of Russia had to flow with blood—Russian as well as German—the Russians would not be conquered.

There was another misconception of the experts that cried out for correction, a misconception which was still widespread as late as the winter of 1941-1942. This was the notion that the best that Russia hoped for was to prevent the Germans from pushing beyond Moscow or perhaps the Urals. I tried repeatedly, even when the Germans were threatening Moscow in the fall of 1941, to point out that this opinion could only be held by those who knew nothing of modern Russian military theory and practice. Whatever stress Czarist armies may have placed on purely defensive tactics and organization, the ultimate strategy of the Soviet Army is the offensive.

It is true, in one sense, that Soviet strategy is cautious; the Soviets place the preservation of man power before the preservation of territory feeling that they have enough territory to enable them to sell some of it at a terrible price to any invader. But Russian war plans have always set up the offensive as the final goal. The exhaustion of the invader is only the first, although very important step, in the preparation of the counter-offensive. The Russian Army and its High Command is waging a war whose aim is not only self-protection but the destruction of the attacker. We have to bear in mind—as the Russian General Staff always has—that Soviet man power reserves are superior to those of the Germans and that Russian weapons are at least equal. Thus, with a spirit at least as good as that of the Nazis and with a cautious but realistic strategy, the Russians are unremittingly preparing the moment for the offensive which will smash the invader. There is no foundation for the belief that the U.S.S.R. will long be content with defense—even a very great defense.

Nazi propaganda, particularly in Britain and in neutral countries, strove with might and main to spread the idea that Russia was exercising and was capable only of a defensive strategy. Almost every

communiqué during July, 1941, supplied evidence that Dr. Goebbels and his office wanted the Western world to believe that the Russians, far from even thinking about counter-offensives, were struggling desperately just to keep the Nazi invaders from crossing some sort of "defense line."

The Germans—not the Russians—gave this "line" the picturesque title Stalin Line and thus invented something that did not exist and was actually in strong contrast to all the fundamental principles of Soviet strategy. In a way that was really subtle and clever, Nazi propaganda sought to suggest that this Stalin Line was only another version of the outmoded Maginot Line, that is, a very strong but relatively shallow line of uninterrupted fortifications. The Maginot Line had proved to be a vast concrete tomb useful only as a burial place for much of France's national wealth; once pierced or outflanked at a few vital points, it could be smashed and mopped up—as actually happened in 1940. The Stalin Line—we would do better to call it the Stalin Belt—was a great system of scattered forts joined by bunkers, machine-gun nests, such natural fortifications as swamps and broad streams, and similar links. That system was between seventy-five and one hundred and twenty-five miles deep.

Spearheads, such as panzer units, might *enter* the system at some points, or be drawn into it purposely—only to be cut off from their main forces and be wiped up one at a time.

When such a column had been lured into the Stalin Belt, the Nazis told us the line had been pierced or even smashed and that they were on the road to Rostov, Leningrad, Moscow, or some such crucial city. The important question was which Nazi troops, and how many, were involved in these operations. They never told us. Had they done so, we would today know which units and how many were actually annihilated by what the Nazis called “desperate Russian counter-offensives.” But little by little the German people began to realize even by July of 1941 the magnitude of the setbacks they were suffering. The German papers at long last started to give death lists. In compliance with a very clever propaganda ruling, the papers published the names only of killed, wounded, or missing officers, never of privates. Nevertheless, the people began to understand what had happened to their fathers, sons, brothers, husbands, and friends during the Blitz Crusade.

And those European nations which had not the dubious honor of taking part in the Crusade be-

cause, as in the case of the Czechs, they were not considered worthy, or because, like the Turks, they could still keep out of Hitler's so-called New Order, began to have their own conceptions of Hitler's invincibility. Quietly in the occupied lands and secretly in Germany proper, people began asking: Where does this United-Europe-in-a-Holy-War-against-Bolshevism come in if the greatest sea power in Europe, Britain, and the greatest land power in Europe, the U.S.S.R., are lined up against the would-be Chief Crusader?

In their estimates of the Soviet Union the experts—and the American ones perhaps even more than the British—failed to take into consideration the cold, sober military facts. When they began to air their opinions of Russia's chances they automatically committed several major mistakes. First of all they thought of Russia in terms of the old Czarist army with its reactionary officer corps, its corruption, and its ill-clothed and ill-fed, though brave, soldiers. They did not take into account the enormous changes in Russian training, the entirely modernized equipment, and the new, able leadership.

In the second place—again automatically, it would seem—they thought of Russia in terms of the bloody story of the Bolshevik Revolution. Or

probably they continued to think of Russia only in terms of an economic system that many in the Western world disliked—forgetting, incidentally, that it was created to meet conditions in Russia rather than in their own countries. They apparently thought they could overlook the fact that Russia, whether czarist or communist, was a world power covering one-sixth of the globe and that it was senseless to ignore it simply because its economic system did not suit them.

The American observers forgot, finally, that Russia again and again had done her bit to tip the scale of world strategy and world affairs in favor of the United States. Russia's traditional antagonism against Britain, and particularly against British interference in Asia, had made her a natural ally of the United States whenever tension developed between Britain and America. As British-American controversies played an important rôle in the history of the United States (at least until World War I), Russia's support has more than once been very helpful to America.

Let us consider for a moment the many crucial occasions on which Russia has proved herself a natural ally and a cordial friend of the United States. This evidence goes right back to the very first days

of American independence. From the beginning, Russia aided the movement to free the Thirteen Colonies from Britain. During the Revolutionary War she declared the "Armed Neutrality" and enforced it, thereby making a tacit declaration of war on behalf of the Colonies. Russia did everything short of engaging in open hostilities, and her help was equivalent to open hostilities when she kept open the avenues of supplies to America and compelled England to keep some of her armed forces in Europe. John Paul Jones was so pleased by Russia's aid that immediately after the cessation of hostilities he joined the Russian navy and served with it as admiral.

In the year 1812, while Russia was being invaded by Napoleon, the United States was at the same time being invaded by Great Britain. After Napoleon had been defeated, Alexander I made a point of informing England that if she expected Russia to take further steps against "the Corsican" she must remember that the United States and Russia were traditional friends. Alexander went so far at this time as to invite President Monroe to join his "Holy Alliance."

During the Civil War, Russia again played an important part. When the troops of France, England,

Austria-Hungary, and other European nations were already in Mexico ready to back the Southern secession, when California and Utah were about to join the confederacy, and when the Southern forces were at their peak, one Russian fleet, under Admiral Popoff, appeared in San Francisco harbor, and another, under Admiral Lessowsky, in New York harbor, with sealed orders to fight for the preservation of the Union in case any foreign power should make an overt move against it. Thus Russia again served notice that she would go to war on behalf of the United States, and this was enough to restrain the foreign powers, localize the conflict, and renew Union hopes. When Russian sailors were entertained in Washington at this time President Lincoln declared by way of thanks that if in the future Russia should ever need aid, any American president who gave such aid would be "a true American."

Recently, too, state archives have disclosed that there were two special motives behind the "sale" of Russia's Alaska to the United States; the latter had offered to pay Russia for her aid during the Civil War but the Russians, feeling that payment for such acts was not fitting, had preferred to turn over Alaska in exchange; and, second, the Russians

as well as the Americans were ready to comply with the Monroe Doctrine.

As late as 1897-1898, during the "Skagway" dispute over border lines between the United States and Great Britain, Russia was again of special service to the United States. She then supplied America with the Russo-British treaty which made clear the dividing line between Alaska and Canada, and let it be known that she would stand by this treaty. This act may be said to have saved for the United States about one-third of eastern Alaska, including the Klondike gold areas.

In other words the bond of friendship between the Russians and the Americans has been a very real one, backed by deeds of considerable historical importance over a period covering most of America's national life.

The deeds have thus far been mostly Russian.

Another of the major reasons for the grave miscalculations of certain Western experts concerning the chances of Hitler's success in Russia was the problem of weather.

Hitler had obviously intended his invasion as a spring campaign meant to get under way during the second or third week of May, 1941. That is the

time when the ground in Russia hardens again after the long season of rains and mud. But the defeat of the fifth-column government in Yugoslavia and the brave resistance of the Serbs compelled him to defer his invasion to the third week in June. Thus he started too late. His schedule was upset. He was compelled to follow his summer invasion with a winter campaign on a strictly defensive line, a campaign he had not planned, a campaign for which he was not prepared.

What happened in 1942 was just the reverse of this. Hitler wanted to hold through the winter the territory and positions he had already taken in Russia; he wanted by defensive operations alone to keep control of these "springboard positions" until he was ready to renew offensive operations. But the German Army was not trained for defensive warfare in Russia and it was not equipped for a Russian winter. The result was that it was pushed back and had to surrender those vital positions from which it had intended to launch another spring campaign as soon as the weather was sufficiently mild and dry.

Then, on top of all that, Marshal Timoshenko, the master strategist of this war in Europe, compelled Hitler to turn his planned spring offensive

into a pre-spring defensive. The Russians had chosen their own time for the renewal of battle. Once more the great Russian strategists had torn up Hitler's schedules.

Choosing the time and limiting the place of attack to suit oneself—that has always been the master achievement of the greatest military leaders. Caesar did it. Napoleon did it with one great exception, the winter of 1812, when the Russians compelled him to fight during a season for which he was not equipped. Marshal Timoshenko first saved Moscow and Rostov by delaying the invader in the fall of 1941 and dragging the Nazis into a winter campaign. He turned the trick again in early 1942 by compelling Hitler to spend on a pre-spring, mud-choked campaign the forces he had reserved for another late-spring offensive.

Pre-spring mud in Russia is the most terrible enemy of any aggressor. It is worse even than the low temperatures of the Russian winter. For those who are not used to it, spring mud in Russia means death. It means *finis* for tanks and motor vehicles, which bog down and become easy prey for the Cossacks, and slow torture for any soldiers who may be ordered to march through it. It means a lingering death for most of those who have not

been brought up in it, for fighting in it invites typhus, typhoid fever, pneumonia, and a host of other diseases.

But Marshal Timoshenko and his soldiers are not only prepared for spring and pre-spring fighting but they obviously planned to precipitate such fighting. They assembled great numbers of cavalry units, especially Cossacks, who know how to fight and conquer the mud. While the women bring up weapons, munitions, and supplies, the horsemen push straight through the lakes of mud. Women and cavalymen; that is the human equation. The Germans may be fighting with all their man power, but the Russians are fighting with all their women and children as well; the story of the women soldiers of Russia will some day be one of the most glorious stories, not only in military annals, but in all the history of human sacrifice.

It is no longer Adolf Hitler who has the power to determine the time and the development of this war. It is Stalin and Timoshenko pushing the Russian Army toward Germany's eastern border; it is the new spirit of Britain and her bomber commands, telling the people of the continent each night that the tides have turned; it is the steadily

increasing stream of American production, the awakening of the American people to the sober realities long ago pointed out to them by President Roosevelt. It is the aroused spirit of world democracy which Adolf Hitler must now face.

And when Hitler started his invasion of Russia, doubts and myths, not facts, influenced the judgment of the Western experts. They kept thinking of the Germans in terms of the old proverb, "Success breeds success." They remembered only that the Nazi horde had never been beaten. They lacked that knowledge of the growing tension between the Junker generals and Hitler which would have told them that the army which invaded Russia was not the one which had taken the Lowlands, France, and the Balkans by storm, but one whose leadership was divided and pessimistic. Furthermore they did not understand that the structure of this army was predicated essentially on the possibilities of warfare in the West, on offensive strategy, and on brief albeit terrific campaigns.

Oblivious of these special characteristics of the German Army a great number of Western observers came to believe that it would have the same success in Russia as it had had elsewhere. Did not Russia offer the large expanses necessary to the warfare

of movement and position which Hitler's *Mein Kampf* had said was desirable? Couldn't the Germans knock out the Russians in a series of lightning blows? But the German generals knew that their army was not fit for a war in the East, that lightning blows would not suffice, that the army which would oppose them was trained and equipped and officered for all the situations of modern war.

The Western observers apparently based their conclusions more on a study of the strategy of wars like World War I and the American Civil War than of Russian military history and the Russian Civil War. Otherwise they would have been aware that the goal of Russian strategy, dating back to the days of its Civil War, was, is, and will be, first, to keep the Russian armies intact; second, to inflict as much damage as possible on the invader; and third, to leave nothing behind any retreating armies except guerrilla bands—and to do these things only until the great counter-offensive can be started.

To the great amazement of many Western observers, what actually happened in the first phases of the war was this: the Russians turned their retreats into delaying actions, stretched out the campaign, and lured Hitler's legions into drawn-out

winter fighting. The result? No food or shelter for the Nazi hordes in Russia, no Ukraine harvest to be shipped to Germany, and no great cities captured intact for use as winter quarters or as jumping-off points for new assaults.

Ruins and scorched earth were what the Nazi hordes found in those small fragments of western Russia which they succeeded in conquering. All stocks had been destroyed and populations evacuated; and while German cities were being bombed by a Red Air Force which Hitler had said was already wiped out, the Nazi legions began to appreciate the loneliness of that unknown and seemingly edgeless land. Supply lines lengthened everywhere, oil stocks diminished, and in the rear rose the guerrilla fighters. The war had become one of attrition. It could only be won if the armies of Russia could be hopelessly crushed, and crushed before the rains and snows came. This was Hitler's gamble, and, on August 14, 1941, I predicted in a radio broadcast that he had no chance of winning it.

Some military and political experts in the West also fell into the error of believing that Hitler would make headway with his ideological cam-

paign, his "crusade against Bolshevism." Nothing of the kind happened. As soon as the Western world realized that Russia was prepared to fight this war through, not only did such realistic leaders as Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt make clear that they regarded Russia as their ally but all the people in the Allied and conquered countries alike began to realize how important Russia was in their fight for liberation. They realized that Russia, as she had proved in the terms of the settlement after the Finnish War, was not out to force her economic and political system on other countries, but only—as Litvinoff had stressed again and again—to eliminate Fascism and Nazism and leave each nation to its own free choice.

Surely having in mind just those Western propagandists who were consciously or unconsciously helping Hitler by talking incessantly about the "Red Menace," Premier Josef Stalin, speaking to the Slavic Conference in Moscow, emphasized the fact that the Soviet Union would not intervene in the internal affairs of any of the enslaved peoples of Europe whom they were fighting to liberate.

It may be said again that the many millions of dollars Hitler's propaganda machine had spent for the sole purpose of disparaging the military, eco-

nomic, and political strength of the Soviet Union were not spent in vain. Before the Soviets' great military successes changed the minds of people in the Western world, public opinion, molded by real or alleged experts, clung to the conviction that the Soviet Union was a "colossus on feet of clay." The voices of those few who pleaded for a calm and sane analysis of the Soviet military power, Soviet morale, and Soviet leadership were drowned out. The radio chains, newspapers, and magazines joined their various techniques to tell people exactly what Hitler wanted public opinion in the West to believe, namely, that Soviet Russia would not be able to resist the Nazi invasion.

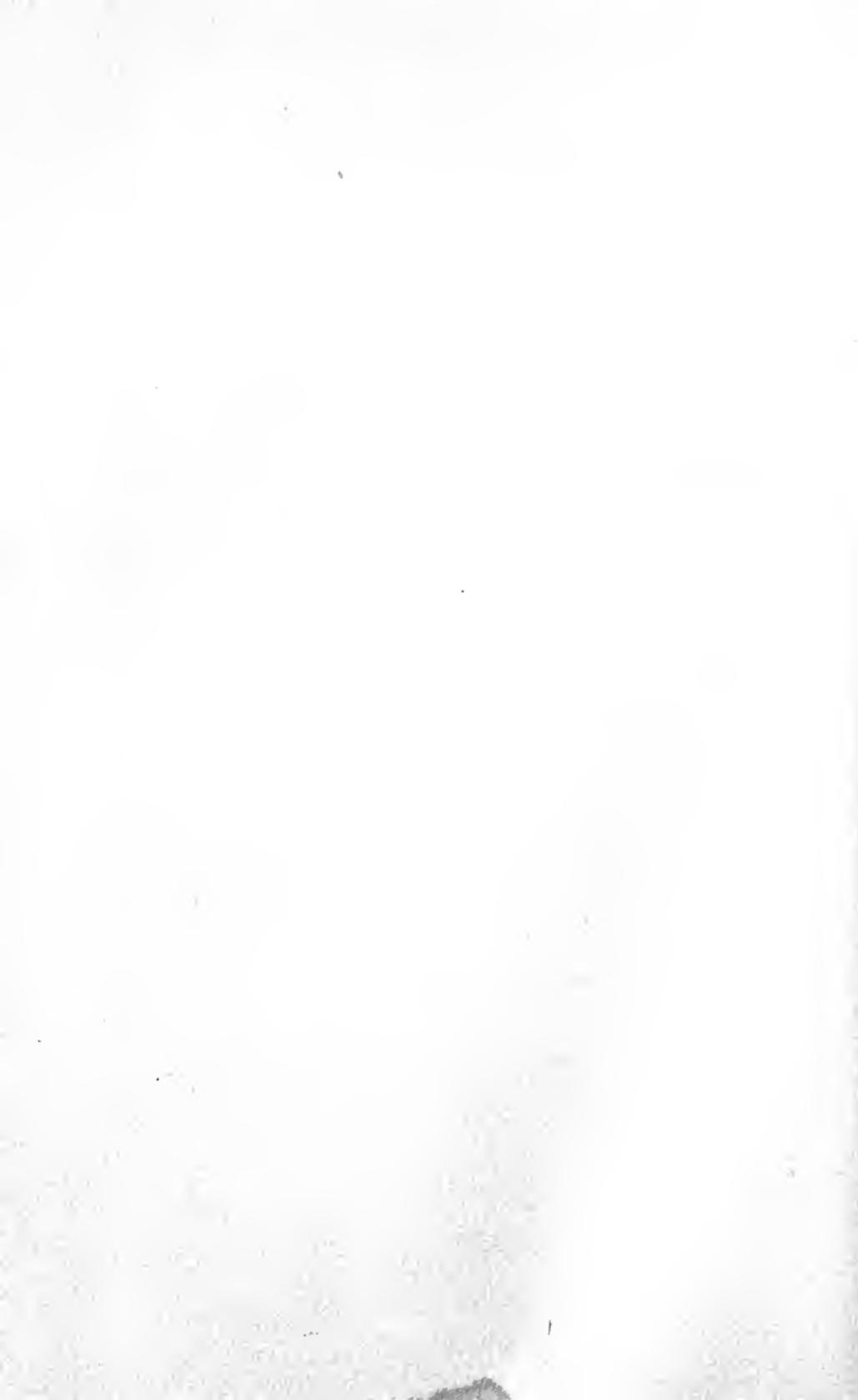
When, the day after the start of the Russo-German clash, I declared in a radio broadcast that early Russian attacks were probable but would mean nothing in the long run, and that Hitler was terribly mistaken if he thought he could escape the penalties of a two-front war by a quick conquest in Russia, I was met by disbelief. The experts were just as skeptical when I added, on June 24, 1941, that the Russian Army was trained for blitzkrieg warfare and might start heavy counter-attacks in that pattern, and when, in the third week of the war, I asserted that despite their boastful com-

muniqués the German armies in Russia were building up disaster for themselves as they lengthened their lines.

I think I can best conclude this survey of the mistakes or distortions of Western experts by calling to your attention what two men who really went through war in Russia and in the Russian winter said about it. It should at least indicate the difference between armchair strategists and men who have had actual experience or close acquaintance with the people and wars they talk about. First, there are the words of Germany's field marshal of World War I—Paul von Hindenburg. After all his long campaigns on Russian territory he once said, "I could get to Moscow, perhaps further, but Russia is so vast she would swallow the largest army. Russia has no heart at which to strike." And then there is the statement of the man who was not only a military genius but knew as much about actual war in Russia as anyone would care to know—Napoleon. Even before his disastrous capture of Moscow he is reported to have said to General Caulaincourt: "This is bad business. I beat the Russians every time but it doesn't get me anywhere."

CHAPTER V

**THE BLITZKRIEG
THAT DID NOT WORK**



THE blitzkrieg, or "lightning thrust," was not invented by Adolf Hitler or even by General von Seeckt, who founded the Reichswehr and adapted the blitz technique to Nazi purposes. It is at bottom simply another variation of the old idea of assembling one's strongest forces at a single point, piercing the enemy's line, and then, once in his rear, surrounding and annihilating him.

The German Junker generals, as I have pointed out, learned their lesson from World War I, and, elaborating on the "blitzkrieg theory"—which incidentally was also studied in detail by the Russians and their General Staff "Frunze Academy"—created an army purely for offensive purposes. This purely offensive design actually turned out to be as much of a hindrance as a help, for such an army becomes helpless once it is called upon to stand its

ground in defensive warfare. This was exactly what happened when the German Army was dragged into a winter campaign by the Russians; it revealed neither the training nor equipment for trench warfare and defense strategy, nor the kind of spirit necessary to hold ground at any cost.

The basic Prussian theory of blitzkrieg was made amply clear in a series of articles published in the famous organ of the German General Staff, *Militärwissenschaftliche Rundschau*, and written by General E. von Sodenstern, one of the leading German strategists. Since his words represent the most authoritative modern observations on the blitzkrieg, I quote him:

“In maneuvers we must train for short, sweeping actions of *impetum*. Of course, it is dangerous to lay down uniform rules. Nevertheless, the World War reëmphasized one of the oldest precepts of war: the success of an attack depends mainly on morale; war techniques play only a secondary rôle.

“It may be true that in 1941 the German infantry ‘rushed wildly against the enemy’ and ‘ran away from its own artillery,’ but it is also true that the victories of 1914 were in a great measure due to this ‘rush to attack.’ Captured French officers admitted that the ‘ruthless advance of the German infantry terrified our

troops. This is the only explanation for the lack of resistance at the psychological moment.'

"The First World War was full of such examples. They prove that the morale of the enemy can be broken without necessarily shooting to kill. The true carriers of panic, the most valuable allies of the attackers, are not the dead, but the living enemies whose nerve snaps. The way is thus prepared for the advance, and this must be, in General Geyer's words, 'like a thunderstorm.'

"The attacker's chance for success depends upon the speed of his action and upon his capacity to disregard unavoidable human sacrifice. The more quickly he jumps at the throat of the enemy the smaller will be his losses. The same thing applies to 'inching through the enemy's depth zone,' for only quick action can prevent the attack from petering out. It is up to the command to have reserves at hand, in order to prepare for the 'swift, piercing thrust' and also to forestall the danger of a disintegration into small encounters.

"The advocates of the much-slandered 'rush to attack' are accused of underestimating the effect of the enemy fire in war. Nevertheless, the rule must be: 'On to the enemy, come what may!' A soldier must be habituated in peacetime to the effect of the enemy fire if he is to be possessed of the will to destroy in war.

"An army that is to conquer needs a recipe for vic-

tory. It is: Whoever boldly ventures an attack will eventually succeed.

“Even if the First World War showed gaps in the coöperation of weapons, that does not mean that we should now burden the attacking troops with all kinds of war machinery. Three principles are necessary to make the attack more independent of supporting weapons and increase the initiative of the lower command, they are:

“1. Motion is the essence of the attack. Fire is only the means to the end.

“2. Speed may be induced by a simple command to the lower units. These must not be burdened with complicated ideas about coöperation of arms.

“3. The eye and mind of the attacker must be trained forward upon the enemy, never backward upon the supporting weapons.

“In the training of soldiers, we must never forget that only faith gives strength—faith in their calling, faith in their superiors and in their weapons, and faith in the infallibility of the methods outlined in the rules and regulations.”

But the first great surprise experienced by the Nazi Army moving into Russia was the fact that conditions were entirely different from those they had met in France. The surprise is easy to explain; the German Army, as was very often emphasized in German military literature, had never been

trained to meet the special nature of Russian terrain, the Russian Army, and Russian civilian population. It had been trained for a short and successful westward blitzkrieg, and for the conquest of countries like France and the Lowlands.

Actually the German soldiers did not find much resistance in Russia immediately after the invasion. The Russians were prepared to let the Germans in. But the German soldiers did not find any food or shelter either. They found a civil population that seemed to be prepared for a short period of enemy occupation but also for the return of the Red Army. When the Germans, in contrast to their experiences in the West, found neither stocks nor harvests, their rage against the civilians and against Russian prisoners knew no bounds.

If we are to understand the reaction of the individual German soldier to the situation by which he was confronted when he found himself thrust into Russia, we must get to know something of the psychological attitudes and mental sets with which he had been equipped. Reports from Russian sources on the behavior of the average German soldier in Russia and of his intercepted letters are enlightening. Before glancing at these, it would be well to remember that the average Nazi soldier

came to Russia with an absolute faith in the invincibility of the German Army. If he had started out with any doubts, the first twenty months of aggression—during which Holland, Belgium, France, Yugoslavia, and Greece had fallen in rapid succession—had convinced him that nothing could withstand the German juggernaut.

Nazism, moreover, had persistently taught him to think of himself and his comrades as the members of a “superior race” who became, among “inferior peoples,” virtually a law unto themselves. Taught to scorn those who were weaker—or less predatory—than themselves, it followed that they should feel that they had permission to enslave these others, loot their homes, or rape their daughters.

When twenty-two-year-old Hans Rechart, a young German prisoner who had “distinguished” himself in the Polish campaign, was asked to talk about what he had done, he remained silent at first but after a while burst out irritably: “I was obeying the Fuehrer’s orders to the letter—I was fighting anti-German moods.” These words were explained by Max Schact, another member of Rechart’s company: to fight anti-German moods meant to destroy Poles, Ukrainians, and Jews. In company

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with his fellow soldiers of the S.S. troops the brave Recharad had driven hundreds of women and children across the Visla River and bashed in the heads of nursing infants before the very eyes of their mothers.

Such a primitive, such a monstrous glorification of German force has been planted deep in the hearts of Nazi soldiers. Accustomed in some cases to privation and positions of inferiority, they were drugged by their terrible new-found strength. It was so extreme that in many it produced an attitude which can only be described by the violent phrase *après moi le déluge*—after me the end of the world. Their main idea was to grab as much as possible while they could: after which—let everything go hang.

Indicative of the official attitude itself was such an order as No. 07967, issued by Nazi headquarters and found on the body of a German tank soldier: "When waging warfare on foreign territory, it is necessary to seize and remove all means of sustenance, including cloth and fabrics, wine and other trophies. It is imperative that bread also be seized. . . ."

Another Russian report speaks of a road taken by retreating Nazis as being strewn with wrecked

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German tanks and motorcycles packed with loot of every kind—linen, lengths of cloth, underwear, clothes, and so forth. Even the haversacks of the Nazis were full of all sorts of stolen articles.

If we can trust the information bureau of a nation at war, the letters to and from German soldiers intercepted by the Russians are most revelatory. Those written in the early part of the campaign indicate an arrogance and confidence amounting to self-hypnosis. Such letters are replete with phrases like "This campaign will be over in a few weeks" and "We shall be in Moscow by the beginning of July." After the Russian counter-attacks and the mounting losses, however, a growing apprehensiveness is perceptible between the lines. In cautious terms there are allusions to the difficulties being encountered, to the guerrillas, the "trickiness" of the Soviet people, the ambushes, the snipers, the "recklessness" of the Russian soldiers, the daily appearance of newcomers in the German ranks and so forth.

This is supported, moreover, by the detailed and circumstantial testimony of captured German soldiers. As the struggle continued the admissions of these prisoners furnished evidences of growing disillusion, particularly in the ranks, and of discord

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between the rank-and-file soldiers and the Nazi cadre. As for the regiments made up of soldiers pressed into service from the occupied countries, there is the constant flow of reports of the number of these that have surrendered or put up only token resistance.

The bulk of the later evidence suggests that many German soldiers have begun to do what had absolutely been prohibited to them by Nazi headquarters—that is, think. It is hard to believe that the German soldier remains oblivious of the truth when he sees the terrible differences between the campaign in the West and that in the East, when he learns in one way or another that the folks at home are suffering, and when smuggled leaflets give him a chance to hear facts that really explain the strange things he has seen or heard.

Despite the careful dogging of their footsteps by officers, and despite the fact that it is dangerous to try to cross to the enemy while under fire, Germans are reported to be surrendering to the Russians in increasing numbers. These Soviet reports may be propaganda, but the way in which they distinguish between the reactions of rank-and-file soldiers and the confirmed Nazis or stubborn cut-throats is convincing. The former are the ones

who tend to surrender and are willing to admit their disillusion and weariness. The latter have to be taken by force, remain truculent and arrogant, and keep to themselves, avoiding the submissive prisoners.

Even before the start of the war in 1939 there was among German strategists a very strong school of thought opposed to the entire blitzkrieg theory and especially to the belief that the invasion and conquest of Russia could be solved by taking the Russians by surprise and destroying their army with swift thrusts. One of the leading German generals and the chief strategist of this anti-blitzkrieg school was General Horst von Metsch. He warned the Germans against the campaign in Russia and his predictions proved for the most part to be accurate. In his book, *Modern Attitudes toward Clausewitz*, published immediately after Hitler's victories over Austria and Czechoslovakia, General von Metsch considered it essential to caution his readers against overestimating the factor of "suddenness" in any clash with a really strong adversary:

"The duration of the effect of an unexpected strategic assault should not be too highly estimated. The

apparent successes of a sudden assault do not establish the bases for final positive results. The hatred aroused by the rude violation of peace, coupled with the nonobservance of norms of international intercourse hitherto accepted may even lead to the aggravation of the assailant's position in regard to foreign policy. The assault must be given a foundation of sufficiently convincing political and military arguments. An unexpected military blow brings no benefit and politically it renders the military aims pursued more difficult."

General von Metsch did not share the opinion of those who maintained that the new technique radically altered basic strategy or that it rendered worthless any analogy with Napoleon's campaign. Von Metsch wrote:

"As early as a hundred years ago Clausewitz perceived the invulnerability of the expansive Russian territory, and, exactly as we do today, he predicted the impossibility of defeating Russia. . . . Added to this there is a new factor that has bearing; namely, today that country is independent in its war economy potentialities. Its man power resources are inexhaustible. All these circumstances represent our war material debit column in regard to the Soviet Union. Under modern conditions this deficiency of ours is further enhanced by the fact that the military aviation of the Soviet Union has grown in an immeasurable degree."

It certainly took not a little courage on the part of a German general to publish statements as definitely opposed as these were to the Corporalissimo's faith in blitzkrieg.

Since air power and aircraft production are closely linked with potential blitzkrieg strength it is worth noting that leading German air experts did not share Hitler's confidence. In 1936, the German tank expert, Handon, warned against any attempt to invade Russia with motorized columns and pointed out that the Soviet Union already possessed seventy-four aircraft factories. At that time he pointed out:

"The most important group of aircraft engineering works is situated beyond the range of hostile bombers and, from the point of view of military geography, is in a favorable position. . . . Therefore, it is hardly plausible to expect that an enemy invasion will succeed in seizing any important branch of industry forming a potential of Soviet motorization.

"The industrial districts are situated so far inside Soviet territory that even the loss of a zone 500 kilometers deep will not constitute a serious danger to the industry producing motors, tractors, tanks, or aircraft."

General Scheffel, one of the chiefs of Goering's Ministry of Aviation, declared in 1939 that the

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Soviet aircraft industry had a capacity considerably exceeding that of Germany. And only a few months before the beginning of World War II the officially inspired *Militaer Wochenblatt* in its issue of February, 1939, and the *Voelkischer Beobachter* of January 26, 1939—the latter with an article signed by Tscheska, an officer of the German General Staff—agreed, using almost identical phrases, that the defensive strength of the Soviet Union was growing each month and that the Soviet Army was the largest and best equipped in the world. Testimony such as this could be multiplied many times over.

Looking back over these published statements of German military authorities, I feel convinced that they were not penned and printed for the edification of army headquarters alone. It seems that responsible German military circles, including general headquarters officers and eminent theoreticians, were trying in their own way to head off Der Fuehrer and his henchmen.

They could not fail to know that the irresponsible band of maniacs wielding uncontrolled dictatorship over the German people was gripped by the mad idea of enslaving the whole world. It was clear to them that these political adventurers would

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stop at nothing. That is why so many German books and articles by military experts repeatedly and in almost the same words emphasized the vast military potentialities of the Soviet Union, its inexhaustible natural resources, the fact that an assault on the U.S.S.R. would bring Germany a war on two fronts, and that Nazi Germany was in no condition to stand the strain of such a war. That is why, over a period of five or six years, the more sober and perspicacious German specialists so persistently stressed the inevitable cracking of the German Army in the event that it attacked the U.S.S.R.

These warnings fell on deaf ears. Nazism rushed headlong into war, pushing its last stacks of chips into the gamble. Thousands and thousands of Germans were doomed to perish daily in Russia. Blitzkrieg had failed in the Soviet Union. They were doomed because a daydreamer did not realize that great victories in wars are never won by coincidence, or by one man's genius, or by what Hitler calls providence, but only by incredibly hard work.

Hitler as the typical amateur went into the invasion of Russia with an *idée fixe*. It consisted in following the von Seeckt blueprint for conquering Russia by cutting through that immense country

“like a knife cuts through butter.” He paid little attention to stories of scorched-earth policies, to the fate of Charles II of Sweden and of Napoleon Bonaparte. He paid no attention to warnings of *Oteschestven-maia*, the people’s warfare, which was as old as Russian history.

He simply ignored the lessons the German General Staff had learned from World War I. He was convinced that he and his National Socialist Party would succeed not only where Napoleon had failed but where authoritative German military experts, with hardly any exception, had flatly denied that victory could be won. On the basis of his studies of World War I, one of the most eminent military historians of Germany, General Kabisch in his *Streitfragen im Weltkrieg* (published in 1924 but already a classic), wrote:

“The idea of a rapid and victorious drive against the entrenched Russian Army lacks any objective technical basis. To any thoughtful and calculating soldier the idea of a swift campaign to smash the Russian Army to such an extent that it would be helpless for a long time is a delusion.”

And to military historians it continued to seem a delusion. But after the successes of his Junker-built army, Hitler began to believe in this delusion.

To him Russia was not a European nation at all; it had to be driven back into Asia and left there to become the prey of the Japanese.

The German Junker generals were far more humble in their hopes. Once they saw that there was no way for them to sabotage this plan politically and realized that they would be compelled to invade Russia, they would have been satisfied to conquer just the Ukraine. Even in World War I they had never succeeded in conquering Moscow and Petrograd; even at that time they had realized that it would be unwise to risk the same fate as Napoleon. But they had to obey, to make plans: a drive up to a line running through Smolensk and including the Ukraine was evidently all they hoped for at best. They were aware that the risks involved were enormous. They had studied military literature.

But they also knew that if they stumbled, there would always be a chance for them to retire and leave the whole mess in the lap of their hireling. After that, they saw, there would be an inevitable winter campaign, and then their hireling would start calling for help. Then their moment, the moment for the making of terms, would come.

When, after the unhappy winter campaign, the

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retired Junker generals were in fact asked to take over their commands again, the situation had altered even as the generals had anticipated. Hitler's blitzkrieg had failed and the Fuehrer had been compelled to admit the fact in a public speech. The record was clear. For the first time since Hitler had risen to power the Army had become the complete master; the Nazi party had to obey Junker orders. Millions of lives had been sacrificed by the blitzkrieg venture. But it had ended not only in an admitted failure of the Fuehrer who was supposed to be infallible, but it had also ended in a reconquest of power by the Prussian Junkers.

The blitzkrieg venture in the winter of 1941-1942 by the Great Amateur had had far-reaching historical repercussions—not only in terms of strategy but also in terms of power inside Germany.

CHAPTER VI

**NAPOLEON AND
HITLER IN THE
RUSSIAN WINTER**



NAPOLEON, a great soldier, committed his greatest blunder when he invaded Russia. It was the blunder that finally sent him into exile on the deadly island of St. Helena. In his last years, a sick man aware that he was going to die, he wrote these words: "There is a day in every conqueror's life when the military lines have grown so long and so thin that everything that had been won by blood has to be lost by still more blood." The extraordinary length of his lines in Russia sealed Napoleon's fate. And in much the same way will Adolf Hitler's fate be sealed. In neither case did the Russian campaign end in full disaster, but in each instance the world began to understand that the theretofore successful conqueror was not invincible.

The myth of Hitler's superpower was ended by

his Russian campaign. For the first time an adversary, underestimated by almost the whole world, gave proof that the Nazi legions could be stopped. It was by no means an accident that this proof had to be given in 1812 and in 1941 by the same country.

After Hitler was well advanced in his invasion and it seemed possible that he would have to remain in Russia over the winter, Western "experts" still frequently asserted that Hitler's campaign could not be compared with Napoleon's. It goes without saying that Hitler's campaign is not a replica of Napoleon's. Of course, Napoleon had no mechanized army in the modern sense of the word—although his movable artillery units did create entirely new and unheard of methods of warfare in 1812. But neither were Czar Alexander's forces mechanized. Today the invading army is mechanized but so is the Russian Army. A more significant difference might arise from Russia's eastward development: Napoleon believed that he could conquer Russia by taking Moscow, and actually succeeded in doing this; today an occupation of Moscow would mark only the beginning of the eastward drive necessary to conquer the country.

Historic parallels, as I have indicated, are of

great value only if we do not suppose that every phase of a new war is going to be a perfect copy of a former war. However, certain important trends of strategy, as dictated by geography, economics, and human nature, may be expected to remain the same. This is the great lesson of military history.

First let us consider the parallels in weather conditions during the two campaigns. Hitler faced weather difficulties not only in the bitter winter cold and in the thawing earth of fall and spring, but also in the rains of early autumn. The torrential rains of Russia usually come in September and sometimes continue for more than a month, and the rain belt extends from the Pacific clear across Russia. It will be recalled that during the Nazi invasion of Poland the Poles prayed for rain and for the help of General Mud, but the rains came too late that year. In Russia, however, the rains came early in the fall of 1941 and that meant a staggering delay to the Nazis and their mechanized units. In preparation for any eventuality, the Germans had moved up more horse troops behind the front than they had assembled in any previous campaign. If the rains came ahead of schedule, they knew, cavalry units and horse-drawn supply trains

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would be essential in the central and southern sectors.

But the Russians likewise, and even more extensively, had equipped themselves with mounted units, and although the old regiments of the famous hard-riding Cossacks were gone, their tradition was still very much alive in the Red Cavalry (with plenty of mechanized equipment) organized by Marshal Budenny.

In 1812, the rains and the frost started at an unusually late date. Napoleon's armies reported their first difficulties in communications on September 14, after the conquest of Moscow. Napoleon hesitated to withdraw at a time when he still could have escaped the winter, because he thought that the rain and mud would make the retreat a very hazardous enterprise. This delay in withdrawing, dictated by a desire to preserve the legend of his invincibility, turned out to be his gravest mistake. Realizing at the last moment that withdrawal from the ruins of Moscow was his only hope, he had to face the first frost, unusually late again, on October 27.

The rain and the consequent mud were, as I have said, a much more serious threat to Hitler's plans than the winter snow. Communications in

those Russian border districts which were in Nazi hands were already on the verge of a breakdown. Hitler sought by every conceivable method to get hold of railway cars from any part of Europe, thus creating new problems in his rear. The Lisbon correspondents of the London *Daily Telegraph* reported on July 29, 1941, that the Nazi's newest drain on neutral Spain was the transportation to the Eastern front of Spain's sorely needed rolling-stock. The report, indicating how severely transport problems were impeding the Nazis, read:

“The Spanish railroad gauge is the same as the Russian, but German freight cars have too narrow a wheel base to be used on Russian lines. Americans arriving at Lisbon from Spain saw these cars being hoisted onto narrow-gauge cars at the French frontier, and were told that they were bound for Russia. That the Nazis should consider it worth while bringing these few cars across Europe testifies to their difficulties. Spain's sacrifice will increase still further her internal transport problems, which are largely responsible for her unsatisfactory food distribution.”

An even more terrible obstacle than weather to the advance and retreat of Hitler, as well as Napoleon, was the opposition put up by the invaded populace, that is, the guerrilla warfare.

Of this subject, *Napoleon's Invasion of Russia*

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—1812 by Professor E. V. Tarlé, member of the Russian Academy of Science, has an analysis which we would do well to study carefully. In 1812, as in 1941, the population rallied to drive out the invader, replying to the attempt at conquest and subjugation with a people's war. However, the empire of Czar Alexander I, with its serf population, differed considerably from the Soviet Union, a federation of republics inhabited by free industrial workers and collective farmers. In both cases the invaded country had a great deal to lose by a defeat, but other factors were involved.

Napoleon, who had started out as a supporter of the French Revolution, a progressive movement directed against feudalism and carrying on its banners the slogans of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity," had become the Emperor and Conqueror, the suppressor of human liberty and the destroyer of equality and fraternity.

In his earlier campaigns he had helped to end serfdom. But nothing was further from his mind than the abolition of serfdom among the Russian peasants. By that time Napoleon had come to fear the masses; if the Russian serfs were liberated he believed that there would be only chaos in Russia. "The campaign of 1812," writes Tarlé, "was more

frankly imperialistic than any other of Napoleon's wars; it was more directly dictated by the interests of the upper French bourgeoisie." Napoleon wanted to subjugate the country and, if possible, rule through a subservient serf-owning nobility. Professor Tarlé shows how groundless were the fears of St. Petersburg court circles that Napoleon might arouse the masses against the feudal order. He establishes this not only by quotations from Napoleon's utterances but by such an account as that of the ruthlessness with which the French troops suppressed an uprising of Lithuanian peasants against their harsh masters, the nobles.

Even in the very first weeks of his campaign, Napoleon demonstrated to the Russians that the change he was bringing would be for the worse and that neither noblemen nor peasants and serfs would profit from a French conquest. It is very interesting, indeed, to consider why the serfs, despite the fact that their condition could hardly have been made worse by the invader, immediately started guerrilla war against Napoleon and his *Grande Armée*.

Why did they refuse to deal with the enemy? Why did they even burn their harvests and their farmhouses—just as the free Russians would more

than a century later? Professor Tarlé, whose book, incidentally, was originally published before Hitler started into Russia, puts it as follows:

“At first glance we are confronted by a paradox: the peasants who loathed their servitude, who protested by murders of landowners recorded in annual statistics and by revolts which had, only thirty-seven years before, imperiled the entire feudal order in the Pugachev insurrection—the same peasants met Napoleon as a fierce enemy, fighting with all their strength as no other peasants had fought him except those of Spain.”

Tarlé explains this paradox by pointing out that Napoleon burst upon Russia as “a conqueror, a beast of prey, a ruthless destroyer. . . . For the Russian peasants, the defense of Russia from the invading army was a defense of their lives, their families, their property.” When the army of Napoleon advancing toward Moscow engaged in looting and pillaging and when the ancient capital went up in flames, Alexander, the Czar and autocrat of all the Russias, could sleep peacefully, at least for the duration, in his winter palace at St. Petersburg; for on the issue of fighting Napoleon he had the unanimous support of the peasants.

Napoleon—and here of course is the great differ-

ence between 1812 and 1941—was in a position to offer a better standard of life and an improvement in social position to the Russian masses. He could have offered them, above all, emancipation from serfdom. From the very outset Hitler's invasion promised only to take away all the liberty the Russians had won for themselves since Czarist days and return them to a new serfdom.

Thus the Russians of 1941 had even more reason to resist than had their forbears in 1812. On July 3, 1941, Josef Stalin proclaimed the now famous scorched-earth policy, guerrilla warfare in the rear of the enemy and an all-out people's war. Czar Alexander I never proclaimed anything of the kind at the start of the campaign of 1812. If the war against Napoleon became a people's war and culminated in a wave of guerrilla fighting against the retreating enemy, it did so almost spontaneously.

At first, as Napoleon pushed toward Moscow, the peasants waged a negative warfare, burning their villages and fleeing. Only after Napoleon had spent some time in Moscow, and particularly after he started his return march toward Smolensk, did active peasant warfare flare up like a forest fire on all sides of the retreating *Grande Armée*. In fact, judging from Tarlé's book and, even more, from

the great Russian classical novel of the campaign of 1812, Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, it would seem, amazingly enough, that the Russian authorities, far from helping the guerrillas, were very critical of such "irregular" military activities. The basic explanation of this phenomenon of war in Russia may be that it is in the very nature of the Russian people, regardless of their rulers; but there remains a vital difference between 1812 and 1941—in the latter year the government recognized its great value and made the best and wisest possible use of it.

The only Russian authorities who seemed to have appreciated the real military possibilities of the people's war in 1812 were the army. "The war is no ordinary war now, but a national war," one of the Russian commanders said, and many of his colleagues apparently agreed with him. But it was very late in the day, after victory had been won not only in Russia but also on the great European battlefields of the West, before the Czar even deigned to thank his subjects. In 1941 the situation was different from the very beginning. The war had been planned and organized as a people's war by the Soviet Government and was realized to

be a people's war not only by the Russians but also by the Nazi invaders.

Coördinated with the activities of the regular troops in all possible ways, guerrilla warfare was organized right after Hitler's armies began to move. It could be organized because the people from the very start knew what they were fighting for, and they knew that the foe was bringing with him a serfdom perhaps even worse than that which their ancestors had borne under the czars.

There is still another interesting parallel between the Russian warfare of 1812 and that of 1941. Despite the great technical and social changes which have taken place in the intervening century and a quarter the fundamental idea of Russian strategy, that of shifting from the defensive to the offensive, has remained. In 1812 the Russian commander-in-chief, Field Marshal Prince Kutuzov, pointed to the importance of keeping the army somehow intact if there was to be any hope of turning the tide and taking positive action. He knew, as did the strategists of 1941, that a Russian Army which could withdraw intact could afford to sell territory dearly to the invader until the invader's lines were drawn out, caught by

winter, and ready for counter-attack. That is in essence what the regular Russian Army did with the support of the guerrilla fighters in 1812.

One thing that seems not to have changed with the years is the spirit of Russian resistance, of the Russian people as fighters. It is true that since 1813 Russia has undergone as many changes as any country on the face of the globe. Industry, agriculture, science, the standards of life have changed enormously. Even strategy and the art of war have changed in many ways. But one thing that seems capable of living through such changes without altering vitally is the human spirit. On January 12, 1813, the Russian commander-in-chief, much more realistic than the Czar and all the civil authorities, addressed this proclamation to the Russian Army:

“Brave and victorious soldiers! At last you have reached the frontiers of the Russian Empire! Every one among you is a savior of our country. Russia hails you by this name! Your impetuous pursuit of the enemy, and the extraordinary labors you have accomplished in this campaign have astounded all nations and covered you with immortal fame. . . . Let us cross the frontiers and endeavor to complete the enemy’s defeat on his own ground. But let us not follow the example of our enemy in committing acts of

Napoleon and Hitler in the Russian Winter

violence and savagery unworthy of a soldier. . . . Let us be generous, let us carefully distinguish between the enemy and the peaceful population. Our just and kind treatment of the population will clearly demonstrate that we do not strive to enslave them and win a futile glory, but that we are trying to liberate from misery and oppression even those nations that had taken up arms against Russia."

The underlying, unchanging spirit of Russia can be recognized in the resemblances of this 1813 proclamation of an aristocratic commander-in-chief of the Czar to the 1941 proclamations of Josef Stalin, Premier of the U.S.S.R.

Napoleon once declared: "There are in the world two powers—the sword and the spirit. The spirit has always vanquished the sword."

Napoleon learned this truth, and Hitler is going to learn it.

In 1813, when the Russian commander-in-chief crossed the western border of the Russian Empire, invaded the countries which Napoleon had conquered and made the proclamation quoted above, military scientists began to understand, among other things, that the counter-offensive is basic in Russian warfare. The Russians are not aggressive by nature. We should not forget that practically

all the Slavs occupied without bloodshed the soil which Teutonic nations had abandoned in the early Middle Ages during the great Teutonic drive to the West. But the Slavs became accustomed to the necessity of defending their land against invaders, and then of defeating them and pushing them out by means of counter-offensives.

Now, what about the composition of the armies that attacked the Russians in 1812 and in 1941? And what kind of fighting spirit did they have?

When Napoleon invaded Russia, his so-called *Grande Armée* consisted in part of Frenchmen but, in the vast majority, of conscripts from all the countries he had occupied before the invasion of Russia. (From this *Grande Armée* of about 600,000 men—an enormous army for that time—only about 12,000 recrossed the western frontiers of Russia after the terrible retreat.) Similarly, when Hitler invaded Russia he pretended to be representing a coalition of crusaders fighting Bolshevism. However, with the exception of a few thousand French, Norwegian, and Dutch troops, and some anti-Bolshevik “volunteers” from the Quisling governments, only the Rumanians and Hungarians really took part in that invasion of 1941. Most of the Slovaks who were compelled to

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take up arms against Russia by their puppet government did not serve long; they made use of the very first opportunity to desert and join the Russians. The Czechs were not even asked to take part in the crusade of 1941, because the desertion of great units of Czech regiments to the Russians in World War I, and their activity in Russian service, was too fresh in the memory of the German war lords.

So, in contrast to Napoleon's *Grande Armée*, the bulk of Hitler's Crusade Army of 1941 was really German. But this meant, too, that Hitler's great losses in the 1941 campaign were losses of German troops—veteran German troops. Thus when the Junker generals took over the command again in March, 1942, they knew that a great number of veteran units had perished on Russian soil when the Russians had clipped off the Nazi "tentacles of steel." They realized, when they were called on to prepare the second spring and summer offensive, that there could be no graver error than to believe that they had lost only territory. That had been only the lesser of the defeats which the Russians had inflicted on them; the major defeat was the loss in men, particularly in veteran units.

Therefore, when Hitler decided to try again

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in 1942, the Nazi ranks, with their gaps not only from bullets but from gangrene, frostbite, and sickness, had to be filled with recruits from "Axis nations" like Rumania, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Slovakia, and from the conquered countries. The Nazis believed that such an army could serve as satisfactory cannon fodder when flanked by Nazi shock troops in front and Nazi reserves in the rear. By putting every kind of pressure on each of the conquered Balkan countries, the Nazis succeeded in finding the necessary number of men, but they surely realized that if they failed again such a procedure could not be repeated. The preparation of this mixed army for combat obviously took longer than was anticipated and so the spring offensive was late. But it was certain to be all the more violent because Hitler knew that it was 1942 or never.

In connection with all this preparation, various important Axis personalities kept making regular journeys during March of 1942 into southeastern Europe. Berne, Switzerland, reported at that time that signs were increasing that Hitler might move south and east in the spring of 1942 despite the desperate plight of the bulk of his armies in Russia.

The Berne correspondents pointed to the arrival in Berlin of two persons who might well play a

large part in such a drive—General Erwin Rommel, commander of the German African Corps, and Franz von Papen, Reich envoy to Turkey. The Rome radio reported that Rommel had been received at Chancellor Hitler's headquarters and that they had conferred for several hours. Von Papen, meanwhile, had arrived for consultation with Hitler and German foreign office officials; having narrowly escaped death in a bomb plot in Ankara, he had apparently returned to Berlin to report on the possibilities of using this incident as a pretext for a Nazi move against the Turks.

King Boris of Bulgaria already had held several conferences with Hitler, and observers believed the Nazi Chancellor was demanding active Bulgarian participation in a new offensive. In addition, the Nazis were already spreading rumors that Bulgaria was mobilizing against Russia.

Well, many strange things have happened, but anyone who knows the Bulgarian people would doubt—to put it mildly—that any unit of the Bulgarian Army could be trusted to fight effectively or wholeheartedly against Russia. To them Russia is Old Uncle Ivan who freed them from the Turks; it is the country most related to them in language and culture. It is true that King Boris is a German prince and Hitler's pawn, and that he is fighting to

hold on to his tiny Balkan kingdom—which he will probably lose as did his father King Ferdinand when he joined the wrong side in World War I. But the little king, whose only hobby is to play with toy electric railways in his palace in Sofia, would have been even more senseless than his friends thought him if he had tried to lead the Bulgars against their Russian blood-brothers for the sake of the Corporalissimo of Berlin.

But there is no doubt that Hitler was at this time beginning to collect soldiers whenever he could get them; and all the Quislings in Europe had to do their part.

The original Quisling in Norway, however, could only persuade 11,000 men out of Norway's population of three million. The bogus Rumanian dictator Antonescu had sacrificed almost his entire army in the campaign of 1941, but now Hitler promised him great parts of Russia even up to Odessa and Transylvania if he would assemble a new array of cannon fodder for the spring campaign of 1942. But the response here was just as bad as Hitler's promises. Many of the young men of Rumania were already resting under wooden crosses in Russia, and those who remained were writing to their young King Michael begging him to free Rumania from this new slavery. But they

never received any answers because King Michael did not receive their letters; they were diverted to the palace of the puppet dictator Antonescu and he took care of those who had written them.

He also took care of the gift packages mailed by young King Michael to soldiers in the field. In Antonescu's palace the labels were changed and the soldiers—that is, those who were still alive—received gifts from Antonescu, from the man who had sent them to death and disease, fighting for a German dictator on the endless steppes of Russia.

Hitler wanted troops from Hungary, too, but the son of Admiral Horthy (and now his representative) was more than hesitant, because he knew the attitude of his people. And the Czechs, Hitler knew, were out of the question, because they would go over to the Russians at the first opportunity, and no Nazi officer could stop them.

A strange army, indeed, was Mr. Hitler going to put into the field for the campaign of 1942. The Russians meanwhile were compelling him to start his offensive right then and there—in March—with two months of rain and mud just starting. In Russia Hitler simply never got a chance to choose the right time or the right place for action; the myth of invincibility, which had been frozen hard by the

Russian winter of 1941 now began to sink into the Russian mud of 1942.

In actual variety, Hitler's army of 1942 was probably as strange as Napoleon's *Grande Armée*. Hitler brought Finns and Rumanians, Italians and Slovaks, Hungarians and Spaniards to the Soviet Union, while Napoleon boasted, after the campaign of 1812, that he had lost "no more than fifty thousand real Frenchmen"—to which Tarlé adds, "The remaining hundreds of thousands were Germans, Italians, Dutchmen, Poles, Spaniards, Dalmatians, and other nationalities."

Thus once again the cruel whip of an imperialist conqueror drove almost all the races of the European continent onto those fatal roads leading to Minsk, Smolensk, and Moscow. All the catchwords and shibboleths of the propaganda of 1812 reappear in the propaganda of 1941. But where the people's war of 1812 was spontaneous and haphazard, that of 1941 and 1942 is deliberate and organized. Finally, despite the many changes in warfare and the contrasts between the two leaders—one a great soldier and the other an instrument of Prussian Junkers—two very important factors have apparently remained much the same from 1812 to 1941—the Russian earth and the nature of the Russian people.

CHAPTER VII

**THE JUNKERS IN
RUSSIA**



THE German Junker generals who were sent home by their commander-in-chief in the first weeks of winter, like employers fired by their employee, were ordered back in March when the fighting weather looked better and when their commander-in-chief had completed his experiment with the Russian winter.

The Prussian Junkers do not have what we call a "soldier's sense of honor." We must remember that throughout Prussian and German history monarchs like Frederick the Great and William II and even lesser rulers used the Junkers when they needed them, dropped them, recalled them, dropped them again, and so on.

To understand that, we must simply accept the idea that the Prussian Junkers are not affected by the "success" or "failure" of one of their monarchs

or delegates. Their only real concern is the extension of Prussia and opportunities for more power and better jobs. They know very well that all the novices they employ may make mistakes; they look on these amateurs with a profound feeling of superiority in all matters that really count, especially in all questions of war.

They know that they have ruled Prussia for centuries, even before the Hohenzollerns came to Berlin as Markgrafs from southern Germany—foreigners, to be treated by the Junkers with the kind of politeness one might accord a visiting monarch. They knew that they would go on ruling Germany long after the Hohenzollerns had left. (And what they have been doing since 1918 indicates how quickly and easily they forgot their last “Kaiser.”) They know—or they think they know—that they will find a way to go on ruling Prusso-Germany, the heart of Europe, when their latest employee, Adolf Schicklgruber, has been relegated to history. That is why those proud generals who were dismissed from the Russian battlefield in November, 1941, silently returned to it in March, 1942.

All this may seem as casual as changing a pair of gloves; it would, however, be very wrong to believe that this servant who ignored his master's

advice went entirely unpunished. Even a Prussian Junker general harbors resentment. It was not quite the contempt they had had for those who in 1918 tore off their epaulets. It was rather the anger of an employer for a hireling who did not live up to his contract, an employer who felt sure that the time would come, after victory over the foreign enemy, when the account could really be settled in full.

When it had become clear that Stalin, Timoshenko, and Zhukov were dragging the war into a winter campaign with enormous losses for the German Army, the generals had told Hitler frankly that he, and he alone, was to blame for the campaign and for all the blunders it had involved. It was then that Hitler, unable to stand criticism and still clinging to his motto, "Der Fuehrer is always right," had sent his generals home and, as self-appointed commander-in-chief, had led his army into death and the Russian winter. By March, after his winter defeats and stalemates, Hitler had decided that he must start another drive. Not anxious to repeat his amateur's experiment he wanted his generals back. Then came their chance.

Just to keep the record straight, and not without a touch of stubbornness, the Junker generals required some kind of public retraction or admission

of error from Hitler before they would take over the command again. They wanted a few things made clear to the German people and perhaps to history. The Fuehrer had to confess in a speech that he had made no progress in his winter campaign, and that the army he was turning back to the Junkers was, to put it mildly, hardly in the best shape.

It may be more than coincidence that, while Hitler was making this crestfallen and pessimistic speech concerning his offensive in Russia, Japan was stepping up her diplomatic maneuvers with Moscow on the grounds that the two nations should enjoy what was termed "continued peace." It is plain that Hitler would have liked a Japanese attack on Russia before he began his second spring campaign; but it became equally plain that the Japs, with their hands full in the South Pacific, did not intend to fall into such a trap.

All indications, moreover, were that Moscow was not asleep at the switch and while continuing her counter-offensive in the West was strengthening her forces around Vladivostok in the Far East. Unless Hitler's speech was a bit of camouflage to fool the Russians—a difficult trick when dealing with the realists in the Kremlin—the speech will go

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down as the most frank admission of setback he had made up to that time. After this speech, which probably marked the most bitter day in his life, Hitler was in a position to ask the Junkers to take over again; they took over, you can be sure, under terms which they had made and which were not calculated to solace the former commander-in-chief and the Nazi crowd that surrounded him. The Junkers still had a few other accounts to settle with Mr. Hitler. But for the time being this final settlement had to wait. The Junkers had another great military task before them.

Convinced that this time no Hitler and no second front, except perhaps for air raids and British commandos in the West, would hinder them, the Junkers now began to prepare an offensive of their own in the East. Private uncensored reports reaching London in March, 1942, from Germany revealed that the Nazis were going all-out in the preparation of a powerful military offensive for late spring and summer. Apparently the Nazi Government under Junker leadership was now trying to make the people realize that everything was at stake and that they must make a corresponding effort. Nazi leaders openly told the workers that it was "now or

never" and that if the present production drive on the home front failed, Germany would be lost.

The production drive included warships, tanks, aircraft, and gliders, and the indications were that the increased production was desired for a special effort to be made very soon. Everything was done to increase the number of workers. More and more workers from conquered nations were conscripted and mere boys were forced into the labor armies. Even workers suffering from such a disease as tuberculosis were employed in the factories. There was every sign that Germany was gearing herself for another major offensive. If that offensive failed, home morale was certain to suffer; and it was doubtful if the Nazis could ever again attain that production peak.

In other words, the greatest event in March—much greater than all the happenings in the Pacific—could not be found on the map. The Prussian Junkers who built the German Army and who had been discharged by their so-called commander-in-chief were one by one returning to their commands.

Exactly what the terms are of the new agreement between Hitler and the Junker generals is not known. But Hitler is now going to be more than

ever the puppet of the Junkers, and the active rôle of the Gestapo, at least at headquarters and at the front, will be ended. In all likelihood, however, the Himmlers and other such thugs will become even more active in the conquered countries and in Germany proper.

We should not forget that Hitler began his career not as a politician but as the agent of the so-called Black Reichswehr, a second, secret army created by the Reichswehr generals in violation of the Versailles Treaty. The men of this Black Reichswehr wore civilian clothes and had to swear allegiance only to their commanders, who were in close touch with the official army. The agents of this organization, for the most part former World War officers and soldiers, sold the people the idea of making Germany strong in preparation for a war of revenge. One of these agents was Adolf Hitler, who made his living for many years by preaching hatred against the Weimar Republic, against democracy, against France—in short against every target which the Black Reichswehr organizers thought might make the people forget that, after all, the generals had lost the war.

Thus Hitler was supported by the generals from the very start of his career and continued to be con-

sidered a tool by those Junkers and professional officers who had lost the first World War. With their help he came to power. Whenever they would have to drop him, as they had dropped the Kaiser at the end of the first World War, they would do so without qualms. We can be certain, too, that they would then tell the world that they had nothing to do with the whole Nazi business; that they had, in fact, detested it all along. Again they would try to sell the world the idea that they and they alone could and should be allowed to re-establish law and order in Germany.

The world will soon be called on to face many great problems, not only of economic reconstruction, but, even more than that, of spiritual reconstruction, of creating a really new order of things. At the crux of all this and perhaps the most difficult single problem will be Germany. It may be impossible at this stage to offer solutions of such almost inconceivably complex problems, but by looking at the record it may at least be possible to avoid the more obvious mistakes made in the past.

A glance at the methods of the German Junkers at peace conferences may help us if we are not to be caught napping again, if we are not to be taken in when they begin to disclaim Hitlerism and ask to

be allowed to bring "peace and democracy" to Germany.

In discussions of contemporary Germany there is always one theory, originally popularized by the Nazis, which crops up at every turn; it may be summed up by the phrase, "Versailles produced Hitler." German nationalism—so this argument goes—would never have succeeded in winning over the German people if more concessions had been made in time.

I think that anyone who was acquainted with conditions in Germany after the war knows that these arguments are entirely fallacious. The fact is that the Versailles Treaty was too lax to prevent the flow of millions of marks, really due as reparations, into a campaign of militaristic propaganda which poisoned the German people. This propaganda, directed by such men as the leaders of the Black Reichswehr and such agents of theirs as Adolf Hitler, brought about the secret rearmament and created the conditions that brought Hitler into power.

For those who charge the Versailles Treaty—have they, incidentally, really read it?—with being harsh, it might be interesting to look at the peaceable record of the Germans when they were vic-

torious, when they were dictating the terms. Let us look at the famous peace of Brest-Litovsk, dictated by the German generals in December, 1917, and accepted by the Russians in March, 1918, when Russia, after the revolution, was too weak to go on with the war. Germany had not yet been defeated in the West, but she was looking forward, as state archives have since revealed, to a similar peace with France and England. Only the facts that German morale cracked in late 1918 when American help began pouring into Europe banished the German hope of dictating in the West the kind of peace it had driven home in the East.

Well, what happened at Brest-Litovsk when German generals dictated a peace to a government that was helpless to resist? On March 3, 1918, the representatives of Russia concluded a peace with the Central Powers in which Russia agreed to evacuate the Ukraine and Finland and to surrender Poland, Lithuania, Kurland, Livonia, and certain districts of the Caucasus. Finland and the Ukraine, the latter comprising a great part of southern Russia, had declared themselves independent, and, under German influence established governments of their own. It is estimated that in

this settlement Russia lost about a third of her population, a third of her railways, nearly three-fourths of her iron mines, about ninety per cent of her coal mines, her chief manufacturing towns, and her richest farmland. Thus Russia was dismembered, and, for the time being, all her western and southern regions were brought under German control.

The Allies in those days certainly did not appreciate the Bolshevik Government, but this peace did them at least one good turn—it warned them what a German victory would mean, and so impelled them, under the moral leadership of President Wilson, to redouble their efforts to come out victorious. Thus, compared with the “peace” which Germany handed to Russia in March, 1918—not to mention what she did to Rumania—the one the Allies handed to Germany only eight months later at Versailles seems like child’s play.

To dictate peace and to destroy the vanquished was always the basic idea of German “peace conferences” after German victories. To attack foreign countries and then look for reasons and provocations afterward was always the policy of those German leaders who had the decent common people of their country under their heels.

The same German professors who clamored, after 1918, against the injustice of the Versailles Treaty had, in a petition to the German Kaiser in 1916, announced: "If we were ever in a position to impose indemnity payments upon Britain, no sum of money could be great enough." And their Kaiser, addressing his generals, had cried out: "I am the instrument of the Almighty! I am His sword, His Agent. . . . Woe and death to all those who shall oppose my will! Woe and death to those who do not believe in my mission! Let all the enemies of the German people perish! God demands their destruction! God who, by my mouth, bids you, the army, to do His will!"

All that sounds very familiar, doesn't it? It represents the way of a Junker at a peace table.

The aristocratic families of von Brauchitsch, von Rundstedt, von Bock, von Reichenau, Guderian, Rommel and Co. have been living on their family estates in Eastern Germany for many centuries. These country places are generally large but not productive. The soil, tending to be sandy, cannot be cultivated for wheat or the orchards for valuable fruit. They are farmed mostly for corn and potatoes; these have fairly good crops. The

custom is for the eldest son and any particularly intelligent brother to inherit the estate. But this makes the placing of the younger brothers a recurrent problem. The tariffs on imported corn and potatoes are not high enough to permit the Junker landlords to get high prices for their own farm crops, so that if the younger brothers wish to maintain the social standing which has been passed along to them, they join the army. And as soon as they join the service they learn one thing: Germany must become strong again—our army must grow, because then, and only then, will we have a chance to get better-paid commissions quickly.

The Brauchitsch, Bock, and Guderian Junkers had conquered Germany, even as a nucleus might absorb an entire organism; but, in 1918, along with their emperor, they had lost their jobs—or at least their good salaries and their chances of rapid advancement. They wanted to get all that back through Hitler. So they obeyed orders on June 22, 1941, even though they felt that the orders were foolish.

But in March, 1942, much more was at stake than their employe, Adolf Hitler, and the Nazi party; they themselves and their army and their

power and the future of their families—all these were now at stake. Hitler's definite defeat in Russia would mean that Germany would be carved up the way Germany itself had carved up Russia at Brest-Litovsk. "International collaboration" and "collective security" were words which were never permitted to enter the minds of the Junkers because such words stood for disarmament and a small army—in brief, for a situation that would give them and their families no opportunities except for civilian jobs, a type of work that was in the eyes of the Junkers so contemptible as to be worse than nothing.

And these are the reasons why Brauchitsch, Bock, Guderian, and the others obeyed their Fuehrer's orders at once, even after they had heard how several of their number had suddenly been "shot down in action" or had died by "jumping out of an airplane," and even though they knew how von Reichenau, their former commander-in-chief, had had to die in order to make room for Commander-in-chief Adolf Hitler.

Despite the fact that most of the veterans of the invasion army of 1941 were lying under wooden crosses in Russia and that the new army assembled by Hitler in the Balkans was without training and

without sufficient equipment, the generals prepared to the best of their ability to make a new onslaught in the spring of 1942.

It was not out of love for the Fuehrer that they took up their commands again, just as it had not been out of love for the Kaiser that they had continued World War I after it was obviously lost, after the Kaiser had even said: "If my generals leave me I shall go on with the Socialists." They know now as they knew then that they are being led by a madman. But now, as then, they go on with the war, even with a two-front war, because it is the only chance for them to reestablish their way of life as the ruling class of Germany.

It is typical of monomaniacs like Kaiser Wilhelm and Adolf Hitler to boast loudly of themselves as long as everything goes well, and then, when things go badly, to blame others. It is also typical that as the monomania increases they try to get rid of their experts or colleagues and stand absolutely alone. The way Hitler suspended an expert like Field Marshal von Brauchitsch may well remind one of the way that other monomaniac who ruled Germany, the Kaiser, discharged his chief military adviser, Bismarck. Although a comparison of the two obsessed masters

of Germany reveals other striking parallels, there are, of course, several major differences: the Kaiser, for example, took over a great and solid empire built up by the ruthless but clever Bismarck, while Hitler, supported by the generals and the industrialists, had first to create a gangster party and then worm this party into control of what was left of the German Republic. But with all these differences, the will to power, the will to get rid of all expert co-workers, to do everything by oneself, remains peculiar to both.

When Wilhelm II succeeded his father Frederick III, whose death he had been anticipating with an eagerness which shocked his most abject flatterers, his future seemed to be settled. The Iron Chancellor's stubborn ambition, satanic intelligence and lack of scruples had had to overcome many obstacles, including the local patriotism of independent German principalities and the vanity of their rulers, to change Wilhelm's family from kings to emperors. He had succeeded in expelling Franz Joseph of Austria from the Hapsburg's last holdings in Germany, had reduced the kings of Bavaria and Saxonia to the rank of vassals, and had proclaimed the reestablishment of the

German Empire at Versailles. Thus the future of Wilhelm II and his line seemed predetermined.

All the new Kaiser had to do was follow Prince Bismarck's policy: friendship with Russia without neglecting Britain, and isolation of France to forestall a war of revenge. But Wilhelm II looked forward impatiently to the time when he could reign alone. His childish vanity—which, for example, compelled his intimates to sing the praises of his atrocious musical compositions—urged him to break away from his authoritative guardian. So the Iron Chancellor was evicted from office and his political testament was stored away and forgotten. Wilhelm II stood alone—and in loneliness. His marked inclination for the sensational and the theatrical made him alternately the laughingstock of Europe or the center of international incidents, incidents which were all settled peacefully until . . . until that day in August, 1914.

"I did not want this to happen!" Wilhelm II exclaimed. It is one of the few "famous sayings" which is actually historical. And yet the Kaiser may not have spoken the truth. Reports from his ambassadors and secret agents may have led him to believe that Russia under Nicholas II was not in a position to defend Serbia, that France under Poin-

caré was determined to relinquish Toul and Verdun rather than remain loyal to her Russian ally, and that Britain under Asquith and Sir Edward Grey would confine herself to a sullen neutrality.

At least three times between 1914 and 1918 victory seemed at hand. Then came the end. Loathed by his people, despised by his generals, William II sought refuge in hospitable Holland. Lloyd George had promised him the gallows, and the Versailles Treaty in solemn words demanded that Germany hand over the war criminals, with the ex-Kaiser topping the list. But the Allies never insisted on the enforcement of this clause, thus setting a dangerous precedent which was later followed by a disastrous series of vacillations and retractions. This road of concession after concession, appeasement after appeasement, is the one that led us, in the final analysis, straight to the present tragedy.

A mere hypothesis: had William II been hanged in 1919 the shock might have been great enough to convince the Germany of that day that she would have to bow to the determined will of the victors and that submission would be best. The death of one man might have saved the lives of millions.

And now we have a direct heir of William II, Adolf Hitler. All the Kaiser's ambitions and dreams

The Junkers in Russia

and wildest fancies have cropped up again in the Fuehrer's outbursts: Pan-Germanism, world supremacy, Berlin-to-Bagdad, a German navy capable of dealing with the combined navies of the world, a German colonial empire extending over the whole of Africa and the Near East, German economic control over South America, and so on. Just as the Kaiser plunged into a two-front war against the advice of the Junkers so has Hitler. And the outcome will be the same.

The Fuehrer will meet defeat as did the Kaiser before him. Winston Churchill has not yet promised Hitler the gallows as did Lloyd George, but experience may teach the former to keep such a promise where the latter was content to let it slide.

The Junker generals, faced with a choice between making a last great bid to beat Russia in 1942 and perhaps rule the world, or let Hitler try again and surely be defeated (which would also mean doom for them), decided to return to their commands. Although their army did not compare with the one Hitler had used, they prepared to try Russia again. They knew they had at least a fighting chance, that is, as long as one thing did not happen—the opening of a second front in the West.

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Probably no one will ever know what the Junker generals would have decided in March, 1942, if a second front had already been opened by the Allies. While their opponents continued to act separately rather than in collaboration there was still hope for them. They understood, perhaps even better than Russia's Allies, the significance of what Maxim Litvinoff had said so succinctly and well in his address to the Overseas Press Club in New York on February 26, 1942:

"We hear a lot about the common efforts of the United Nations toward achieving victory. But common efforts which do not include common fighting may not be sufficient. Indeed, we see that they are not. This fighting, divided in space, must not be divided in time. It may be of little use to have large, well-equipped armies, say, somewhere in the West, if they are not in action while decisive battles are raging in the East. When such battles are over, it may be too late for the Western armies to serve their purpose. Only by simultaneous offensive operations on two or more fronts separated by long distances could Hitler's armed forces be disposed of—and that is just why Hitler would dislike such operations.

"International diplomacy has never done anything which Hitler disliked. Will not international strategy try?

"I repeat: I speak as a layman, but I do believe Hit-

ler could in this way be destroyed by the summer. But the opportunity may be missed. The peace has already been lost owing to missed opportunities. It would be too bad if the war were to be lost because we let opportunities slip again."

The Junker generals, trained for war and for nothing but war for generations, realized that despite all the blunders of Adolf Hitler, despite all the economic superiority of the Allies, the latter still had not achieved a successful coalition. They were still divided, fighting singly. To defeat such enemies one by one—that was the old principle of Otto von Bismarck. And that was one of the things Junker military minds had studied all these years.

But it would perhaps oversimplify the issues if we were to assert that the Junkers and the Junkers alone were and are the deciding factor in Germany's wars. It is true that their importance has been definitely and consistently underestimated and it is also true that the problem of German aggression can never be solved without ending their power. But there are several other groups wielding influence in Germany; they make themselves felt whenever the situation grows grave or when they begin to fear they will suffer losses of any sort. Such a group is the one of the German industrialists

and businessmen who helped Hitler to power. As long as they were able to continue increasing their fortunes under him, particularly by the exploitation of the industries of occupied countries, they accepted his rule. But as soon as they saw that he had gotten out of hand they were ready to abandon him.

From the very start of the Russian campaign, this group, which was in close contact with certain of the Junker generals whom Hitler had ousted during the winter, began to feel that Hitler was headed toward his doom. They did not, of course, indicate this publicly. But they decided, after the discharge of the generals, that it was up to them and their Junker friends to free Germany from Hitler. Once this was done, they could proclaim Germany's return to what they would call democracy. They could then say that they had carried out the hopes and wishes of the Allies and therefore deserved, along with their Junker compatriots, the right to establish a "new order" in Germany.

This group is not so great as many people believe but it is extremely powerful. There is another group of industrialists, however, which is, to my way of thinking, no less of a danger to the peace of the future. Their attitude is a more pessimistic one.

They believe that the army, under the auspices of certain industrialists, should take over immediately. They do not want to run any risk of being invaded by Russia; they want to make peace immediately under a so-called "anti-Nazi democratic Germany" ruled by army leaders. This second "peace-loving" group of German industrialists and army leaders feels that while the war continues, the resources of any occupied territories cannot be effectively exploited.

To put it briefly, both of these industrialist Junker groups realize that they have placed their bets on the wrong side, but one wants to continue fighting under new leaders while the other wants to cut its losses by ending the contest now. Both of them feel certain that even without Hitler the old Junker regime can be renewed. The only thing that needs changing, they think, is the name; they will call their new order "democracy" and both of them believe that the world will fall for it.

Again there rises the voice of one who understands thoroughly the social structure of Germany, of one who was never fooled by the appeasers inside or outside the Third Reich, the voice of wisdom but of warning—the voice of Dr. Beneš. Here is what he said in a lecture in England concerning

the possible collapse of Germany, the importance of Russia, and what must be done with Fascism:

“Regarding the outcome of the war I have no doubts whatever. In spite of the fact that the Allies will have to make still greater sacrifices, it appears to me that people do not sufficiently appreciate the extent of the present interior disintegration of Germany and the fact that the end could come very suddenly. Of course, this will not happen without a military victory. But in this connection the war in Russia seems to me to be decisive. In my own opinion the attack on Russia was suicidal for Germany, and the events will make this evident. At the moment when a general offensive of the Allies can really be said to be in progress, the dictator states and all our enemies, with all their military power, will for a certain period collapse in chaos and revolution.

“I believe that this is the lesson of the present war launched in 1939 by Nazi Germany. Our duty now is to destroy the European dictatorship mercilessly, to tear up by the roots everything represented by Nazism and Fascism, to establish in Europe a new era of real democracy and, above all, to be faithful to this new regime and to have the courage to defend it at any price. The evil must be checked at the beginning. For later it may be too late, as it was in the present war.”

A chain of blunders had been committed by the nations of the world because they would not listen

to those who out of their knowledge warned, and warned again. Let us hope that if they learn nothing else they will come to understand the paramount importance of the German Junkers and their friends. These Germans have played various rôles in the history of Germany and of Europe, but always toward one end—power for their feudal clique. They have always made and are now making any alliances that suit their purposes. They will accept Bolsheviks if they feel that that will help them. They will accept the democracies if the democracies will give them a chance to rebuild their power. They will seem to become republicans or monarchists or whatever appears to be most appropriate at the moment. At heart they remain Junkers, a group of men interested only in power and convinced that they are born to rule Prussia, Germany, Europe, and all mankind.



CHAPTER VIII

**SOVIET STRATEGY
AND MILITARY
LEADERSHIP**



THE true hero of the Russian War is neither the officer nor the regular soldier or sailor but the Russian people. It is the people and their heroism which make Russian strategy work. It is the people and their guerrilla warfare which make life unbearable for the invader. And it is the people—not a privileged class as in Czarist Russia or in Nazi Germany—that have given Russia its great military leaders, leaders who do their work not as members of a privileged caste but as normal, though honored, citizens.

Next to man power and the spirit of the guerrillas it is the spirit of the officers, their leadership and their knowledge of strategy which has made possible Russian resistance and counter-offensive against what was reputed to be the greatest military force the world had ever seen, the German Army in 1941.

For a long time before the invasion it was the fashion to speak of Russians and especially of the Russian Army as an "enigma." When I was lecturing in London in 1938 on the hopes and fears of Central Europe I was frequently asked: "But don't you think that the Russian Army lost its leaders in the Trials and that it will turn out to be some kind of colossus on feet of clay?" When I would try to explain the background of the Trials and the structure of the Russian officer corps the response I usually got was that same old phrase: "Well, Russia is an enigma."

The fact is that neither Russia nor the Red Army is any more enigmatic than any other nation or army—except in so far as we of the Western world have never made any particular attempt to understand Russia or its military practice. Those who tried to study objectively the great problems of Russia were usually called "communists" although they may have been as far from communism and its ideology as the author of this book. It is interesting to note, by the way, that the Russians knew much about us and our military organizations.

To those who studied Russia and especially its military problems, Russia was no enigma at all. The trouble once more was that the enemies of human

liberty and of democracy, especially the Fascist General Staffs, studied Russia carefully, while we in the Western world thought that it was somehow shocking to deal with such taboo subjects even from a purely military and scientific viewpoint. The inevitable consequence was that the German military leaders—not Hitler, of course, but the German General Staff—knew a great deal about the vital details of the Russian military structure, while we confined ourselves to making knowing predictions about a war of “three to five weeks.” Our enemies who were out to fight the democratic world to the death knew about the military power of our greatest ally, while we, up to and for some time after June 22, 1941, were convinced that the Russian Army was without adequate leadership.

The first fact that struck any student of Russian military organization was the great number of officers the Soviets had trained and kept in readiness. While the old army of Czarist Russia had between 35,000 and 40,000 officers, Soviet military literature generally refers to the number of Soviet officers as being in the hundreds of thousands. This of course includes not only those in active service but also those available on Mobilization Day. The fact that 16,000 students were enrolled in the Russian

military academies in 1935 means that at least 4000 officers annually began the training necessary for a higher command. The total number of officers in the old Reichswehr was not greater than this—and that included a relatively large number of noncommissioned officers.

The fundamental reason for having so many officers in the Red Army was the fact that no army in the world has ever had such an enormous number of special weapons. This abundance and variety of weapons was partly the result of the gigantic resources of the country and of the fact that these resources were placed freely and completely at the disposal of the state and its fighting forces.

The German strategists, and particularly men like General von Seeckt who built the Reichswehr, always insisted on an army of “specialists.” This ideal was actually realized in Soviet Russia long before the Germans ever started to put it into effect. It was this, in turn, which made it possible to realize that “ideal unity of strategic and technical experience” demanded by German army reformers.

As early as February, 1935, Pierre Cot, later on French Minister of Aviation, writing in *L'Oeuvre* about the officers of the Red Army, declared:

Soviet Strategy and Military Leadership

“They are young. They work hard. Their intellectual activity is remarkable. Everywhere throughout the Red Army we found laboratories, workshops, and technical equipment for independent work which aroused our admiration. There is nothing similar in our officers’ training schools in Paris, Lyon, or Marseilles.”

Six months later, in an article in *Vu* concerning the commanders of the Red Army and in particular of the Air Force, he added:

“They are men who are thoroughly abreast of modern military theory and modern military technique. Their leaders are young, their critical sense is well developed, and they give one an impression of intelligence and energy. Their cultural horizon is broad, and their intellectual curiosity (the basis of all culture) and the extent of their knowledge astonished me.”

A glance at the organization and control of Soviet Russia’s military forces is instructive. Article Fourteen of the Soviet Constitution specifies that in war and peace the organization of the defense of the U.S.S.R. and the leadership of all its armed forces come under the jurisdiction of the highest bodies of state administration. The appointment of the higher command, the declaration (between sessions of the Supreme Soviet) of a state of war in

the event of attack or in fulfilling international treaty obligations, the declaration of mobilization, and the declaration of martial law, all come within the functions of the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet (*Constitution, Art. 49, Par. i.k.l.p.*). The Council of People's Commissars is charged with determining the annual classes subject to service in the armed forces, and also the general structure of the armed forces (*Constitution, Art. 68, Par. d.*). The direct leadership of the armed forces is in the hands of the two all-Union Commissariats, the People's Commissariat of Defense and of the Navy, and the Union-Republic People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. Until 1937 the naval forces of the U.S.S.R. were organizationally integrated with the Red Army and also came under the jurisdiction of the Commissariat of Defense. But the necessity of reinforcing the ocean frontiers and establishing a large ocean fleet resulted in the formation of an independent Commissariat of Navy. The border guards and internal troops are under the control of the Commissariat of Internal Affairs.

When Kiev was captured in the early part of August, 1941—and the prophets of June 22 began to predict an imminent breakdown of Russia's fighting forces—Russian strategy really began to

become clear. It was significant in itself that the Russians from the very start of the war were acting according to a very detailed plan for the defense of their country and that they always took into account even the worst eventualities in order to avoid that bugbear of defense—panic. That is why they were able to take in stride the fall of a city like Kiev and why, in fact, the fall of Kiev may have been arranged to draw away from attacks on more important cities like Moscow and Leningrad.

Casual references to the loss of territory must be understood from the point of view of Russia: the U.S.S.R. is, after all, so large that it can afford to lose a certain amount of territory—provided that the invader is given deadly punishment and provided that the defending armies can be held intact and prepared for counter-offensives. With her great population, land, and resources it is evident that even if Russia had lost the whole Ukraine, Moscow, and Leningrad—and there was no real threat of that at the time—she could have survived and, with material and military support from her Allies, gone on with the fight almost indefinitely.

Let us consider for a moment what Russia was capable of doing in case such losses as these—that is, the worst possible eventuality—had been suffered.

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First, the next natural line of defense would have been along the Volga River from the Caspian Sea to the Ural Mountains and along the Urals themselves. If, let us assume, the Russians had fallen back to such a position with an army punished but still capable of a counterblow, such an army would have found in the sprawling breadth of Asiatic Russia everything it might need. Russia is more than eighty per cent agricultural, and its vast expanses produce great quantities of food. It might have meant some belt-tightening behind the Volga, but the Russians have withstood such hardships before. Remember, too, that most of Russia's people live in the West. If conquered, these people would immediately become a Hitler feeding problem.

Even more important are the great factory centers now disposed over the area behind the Volga-Ural line. They dot this vast expanse at Ufa, Perm, Orenburg, Sverdlovsk, Tashkent, and in the area near Lake Baikal, and in many other places conveniently close to water power and coal. It would indeed be a grave error to believe that the Ukraine and the Don Basin east of the Ukraine are the only or even the truly great centers of Russian industry. That was, of course, the situation during the Czarist era. The Don Basin and the Dnieper districts

then furnished almost three-quarters of Russia's pig iron. In that period the other Russian pig-iron center, the Urals, produced only about twenty-five per cent of the entire output. Although the metal resources of the Urals were far greater than those of the south, the feudal owners of the Dnieper and Don Basin industries did not want to have the Urals developed and saw to it that the Ural mills should have to use eighteenth-century machinery.

But the Russians as far back as twenty years ago began to take into account what would happen if Germany or any other European invader would get hold of the Ukraine and the Don Basin, and they made the building-up of the eastern mills and industries one of their first great undertakings after the Revolution.

South of the Urals and more than one thousand miles east of Moscow, the Soviets have developed one of the greatest ironworks the world has ever seen. There, in the vicinity of the old Cossack village of Magnitnaya, stood Atach Mountain, one vast lump of iron ore, sixty-three per cent. iron and weighing 300,000,000 tons. It is this magnetic mountain that gives the plant its name—Magnitogorsk. The blast furnaces of Magnitogorsk today form the most powerful battery in the world. In

1934 its mills turned out about 10,000,000 tons of cast iron, and by 1937 this figure had grown to 14,500,000 tons. Its steel output increased from 9,500,000 to upwards of 17,500,000 tons and its rolled metal from 9,000,000 to 13,000,000 tons. Production has continued to increase ever since and its total output of iron and steel is now immense.

In Siberia, about 1200 miles farther east from Magnitogorsk, are the great coal mines and heavy industries of Kuznets. The coal of Kuznets travels west to Magnitogorsk while the iron ore of Magnitogorsk travels east to Kuznets—with blast furnaces at either end. In Pribalkasky, situated in Kazakstan, the large republic to the south and east of the Urals, vast copper resources have become the base for one of the largest copper industries in the world; and the gold mines of Siberia have established Soviet Russia as the second largest gold producer in the world.

Far beyond Moscow, in Gorki, the machine industries start. The Molotov Automobile Plant alone produces more trucks than the combined auto plants of England. In Czarist times European Russia, so small a part of this vast empire, monopolized industrial development, leaving Asiatic Russia industrially inactive. The latter's rich raw

materials were ruthlessly scraped off and borne away. Then Russia's eggs lay, so to speak, in one basket, and that basket was dangerously exposed to Germany and Austria-Hungary. Everything was concentrated in St. Petersburg, Moscow, White Russia, and the Ukraine and was perhaps the most vulnerable industry in any European country. By their motto, "Spread wheat north—industry east," the Bolsheviks have changed the entire economic map of Russia. And how tremendously important this is the Nazis will only realize if and when they ever succeed in pushing the Russians farther back.

If those arsenals and mills and factories can be maintained at anything like capacity, if outside technicians can be imported from Russia's Allies to maintain that production, Russia's armies can be supplied almost uninterruptedly.

Consider another point—one of the main reasons why Hitler ordered the invasion of Russia. He wanted, to put it briefly, oil and food and new factory sites, close to power sources and away from the British bombers steadily smashing industrial Germany. The Ukraine and western Russia seemed ideal: food, oil, and factories—many of them ultra-modern. But what Hitler kept forget-

ting was that even if he could take this territory, and then organize production in such areas—what an undertaking!—the Germans would still face a constant threat of flank attack from Russian forces behind the Volga, and the attacks of bombers taking off from Russia's eastern air fields.

Thus Russia can afford to lose territory. As long as the Germans cannot smash the Russian Army, as long as they cannot put the Russian eastern reserves out of action and at the same time get rid of Russian guerrilla warfare, they stand no chance of profiting from their new campaign.

But let us turn back to the question of what Russian strategy will be if and when the Nazis should menace Russian cities and regional centers of even greater importance than Kiev. Since the threat to Moscow is now again remote, Leningrad seems to be the Russian city still most in danger. Although Kiev is an important industrial city, the Soviets could not be expected to sacrifice as many men and materials in its defense as they would to save Leningrad. For the fall of the northern metropolis would mean the fall of the great Red fortress of Kronstadt, which guards the water route to Leningrad, and would end Russian naval power in the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Finland.

Control of the Baltic would simplify the Nazis' communication problem. The distance by land from Berlin to Smolensk is about a thousand miles. Maintaining these communication lines is a tremendous task; it would be immeasurably eased by Leningrad's capture. Troops and war materials could then be sent by water from Germany and Finland directly to Leningrad, only three hundred miles from Moscow. With Leningrad as a springboard the Nazis would be in a position to launch a sweeping flank attack against Moscow, extending far enough eastward to cut the railway from Archangel to Moscow.

But Leningrad will not be an easy conquest for the invaders. Ever since the city was established, the Russians have kept its defenses modernized. Kronstadt is a formidable defense against invasion from the sea and the old forts to the west and south built to block land attacks have been improved from time to time.

Finally there is still to be considered the extremely important question of Soviet military leaders. All that most of us in the West have heard is of their being shifted from one front to another. This may have seemed strange but actually there

is nothing unusual in such shifts in a campaign which covers a land battle front more than two thousand miles long on one side.

The Soviet Defense Commissar up to 1940 and the present commander of the Leningrad sector is Clementi Voroshilov. Despite the fact that he was replaced as Defense Commissar he is still regarded as one of Russia's most experienced leaders. A Ukrainian, but for the most part a commander in the northern sector, including Leningrad and Murmansk, Voroshilov is one of the most popular soldiers in Russia. Born in 1881 the son of a railway worker, he worked from the age of seven as a miner, shepherd, farm laborer, and factory worker. He was frequently imprisoned under the Czarist regime for revolutionary activity and became commander of the Tenth and Fourteenth Ukrainian Armies during the Civil War; and it was he who succeeded in routing the German puppet dictator, Skoropadski, from the Ukraine.

In 1939 Voroshilov as Defense Commissar committed a great blunder. Convinced that he could rely on no Russian troop units more than on his own Ukrainians and units from other parts of the south, he chose these regiments for the campaign in Finland. These were composed in part of men

who came from places like Krim and Tiflis in the deep south and consequently it was much more the arctic climate of Finland than the Finnish Army which led to the first great setbacks in this campaign. Only later, when troops from central and northern Russia joined the army in the north was the Finnish campaign successful and the Mannerheim Line destroyed. After being replaced as Defense Commissar he became a member of the Committee of Five, the defense council established after the outbreak of the German-Russian War; and now, as commander of the Leningrad sector, he is defending a terrain which, as a result of the Finnish campaign, he knows very well.

Marshal Timoshenko, now Defense Commissar and Commander-in-chief on the central Smolensk-Moscow sector, is perhaps the best Russian strategist. On several important issues he disagreed with Stalin, but the threat of the Nazi invasion has now unified Russia in military as well as other matters. Like Voroshilov, his predecessor as Defense Commissar, Semyon Timoshenko comes from the south. He was born in Bessarabia and thus, like Voroshilov, he may be considered a Ukrainian.

The alienation between Premier Stalin and Marshal Timoshenko was a subject of much concern

during the months before Hitler's invasion and it was feared that the Nazis might take advantage of this internal difficulty. The trouble began with the constantly increasing pressure on Russia by Germany during May and April, 1941. Stalin favored further concessions to the Nazis, while Timoshenko, confident in the strength of his Red Army, insisted that the time had come to refuse further concessions. Even when Hitler had solved the question by invading Russia, the misunderstanding continued, and when, in June, Stalin named the Committee for the Defense of the Soviet Union with Supreme Military Power, Timoshenko was not chosen, while Voroshilov, his predecessor as commander of the Red Army, was.

Recent evidence of the new unity in Russia in the face of national danger was the nomination of Marshal Timoshenko to the command of the important central sector. Pointing in this same direction was the recall to office of Maxim Litvinoff, who had always violently opposed any compromise with the Nazis. Litvinoff's recent public appeals to the Allies for an invasion of the continent indicate that he has again been given an important part in the framing of Russian foreign policy. This Russian unity is not only a matter of internal pol-

itics: the majority of monarchists living in exile in England and France have also pledged their support to Stalin. How strong is the patriotic feeling in Russian emigré circles in England may be gathered from such an article as that in the *London Times* which quoted many of them as being anxious to return to fight with the Soviet Union despite their past difficulties with the U.S.S.R.

It is interesting to note that the third of the chief commanders of the Russian Army, Marshal Budenny, is also a southerner—from the Caucasian provinces. Budenny was originally in one of the oldest Cossack regiments of the Czarist Army. He created the first cavalry group after the Revolution and became commander of the First Cavalry Army which won many battles during the Civil War. In 1938 he was appointed commander-in-chief of the Moscow Garrison and is now in charge of the southern sector, including the Ukraine. Budenny, like Voroshilov and Timoshenko, has had much experience in guerrilla warfare. He is extremely popular with the army.

These three chiefs of the Russian Army are relatively young, averaging about fifty-eight years of age. They had nothing to do with the so-called purges in which Marshal Tuchachewsky and

others were convicted of turning over vital plans to the Germans; this was known outside of Russia, especially in Prague. But the most significant fact about Soviet military leadership is that the three key generals are experienced, are real soldiers, and are not, as some have suggested, politicians. All three, especially Timoshenko, will probably play a very important part in the future of Russia.

In addition, the vast majority of the commanders of regiments, brigades, and divisions are young men who were advanced to replace older officers who had been purged. All one can say of them is that they have given a good account of themselves; at this time any final decisions concerning them would be premature.

Such details as these concerning the military leadership of the Russian Army are essential for anyone who wants an objective picture of the military situation in Russia. And our faith in such facts need have little relation to our attitude toward communism. Winston Churchill made this clear on June 22, 1941, as soon as the Russians joined battle with the Nazis. He declared:

“Any man or state who fights against Nazism will have our aid. Any man or state who marches with Hitler is our foe. No one has been more persistent an

opponent of communism than I have been for the last twenty-five years. I will unsay no word I have spoken about it. But all this fades away before the spectacle which is now unfolding . . . the Russian danger is our danger and the danger of the United States."

The Russian Army which was called the most obsolete army in the world by certain experts before this war is still intact and is dealing the invader smashing blows. And the Red Air Fleet still bombs the Rumanian oil fields of Ploesti regularly.

On October 24, 1941, about two weeks after Hitler's famous communiqué declaring that Russia had "ceased to exist as a military power," a great shake-up in the Russian High Command was announced by chief war spokesman, S. A. Lozovsky. At the same time he asserted that the Germans had thus far lost hundreds of thousands of men in their attacks on Moscow, while Russia was organizing great new armies prepared to "fight for years to certain victory." In this, one of the firmest Russian statements, he said that Hitler had failed in his main objectives, that he would never attain them, and that if this was not the last great German offensive it was one of the last. He announced finally that Marshal Voroshilov and Marshal Budenny, two heroes of the early days of the Soviet,

were organizing new armies and that Timoshenko had gone to the south.

This new shake-up in the Russian High Command seemed very sound from the point of view of strategy. Naturally the Axis and its sympathizers sought to give a very different impression. Axis and pro-Axis newspapers ran such sensational headlines as "Timoshenko Dismissed" and "Stalin Sends Heads Rolling," and some observers even asserted that Timoshenko had died before a firing squad. Actually Timoshenko had been given a great job to do. As the most brilliant marshal, one who had protected the central sector with marvelous success, he had now been placed in command in his native south.

At this time, too, General Zhukov, Chief of the Russian General Staff, a thoroughly trained professional soldier with twenty-six years of experience, was given the command of the entire front north of Orel, including the defense of the bastion of Moscow. Voroshilov and Budenny, past masters in guerrilla warfare and in the training of civilians, were called on to execute the great task of forming new armies in the east and of adapting and organizing already available reserves in accordance with their experiences. The original

three-man High Command of the entire front was thus replaced by a High Command of the North under Zhukov and a High Command of the South under Timoshenko, and at the same time two other experienced commanders were released to prepare great new armies out of Russia's huge reserves.

From the first days of the war, when we were told that Russia would be conquered in five weeks or that "stupid Russian peasants would not even be capable of sabotage," up to the reports announcing the discharge or execution of Timoshenko and Budenny, certain Western observers had manifestly been guilty of either the grossest ignorance or the most vicious distortion of facts.

In addition to General Zhukov who succeeded Marshal Timoshenko in the Moscow sector—which had already, it should be noted, been extricated from danger—one other Soviet marshal is of great importance—Boris Mikhailovitch Shaposhnikov. He is one of those strong, silent men who do the vital staff work which makes victory possible. To Marshal Shaposhnikov, a former Vice-Commissar of Defense and later Chief of the General Staff, must go the essential credit for those strokes of military genius whereby the Russian defensive was turned into the winter offensive.

Shaposhnikov was born in 1882 and was educated at the General Staff's Frunze Academy, an academy which has given Russia so many outstanding strategists since its foundation during the civil wars that it can rightly be considered one of the greatest institutes of military science in the world. Shaposhnikov, who is, like other Russian generals, a professional soldier and by no means a "Civil War Colonel" (as Western experts at first referred to the Russian marshals), was appointed assistant commander and, in 1927, commander of the Leningrad military district. He became Chief of Staff of the Red Army in 1928 at a relatively young age. In 1931 he had to take over a command in the Volga area but the following year he was recalled to staff work as Chief and Commissar of the Frunze Academy. Since 1937 he has been Chief of the General Staff of the Red Army.

Timoshenko may be more colorful, Zhukov more conspicuously successful (particularly in his victories at Mozhaisk), cavalryman Budenny may be more popular (although his ability as a strategist is uncertain), Voroshilov, the "son of the Ukraine," may be nearer to the heart of the people; but from a strictly military point of view it is Marshal Boris Mikhailovich Shaposhnikov who

will surely go down in history, not only as the general who defeated Hitler, but also as a strategist who wrote a great new chapter in military history.

The feat of turning a defensive action into a great and successful offensive—a stratagem never worked out by Alexander the Great, Caesar, or Napoleon—was performed by Marshal Shaposhnikov. It was the accomplishment of a man who was not only a soldier intimately acquainted with the service but also a master of military science, a man who, if you wish, waged his great war from behind a desk. His major operation, that of shifting a gigantic force from the defensive to the offensive has already been called by General MacArthur the greatest achievement in military history.

Next after the heroism of the Russian people and the Red Army, and, of course, the amateurishness of Adolf Hitler, it was the ability of Marshal Shaposhnikov that made it evident that Mr. Adolf Hitler would never sleep in the Kremlin.



CHAPTER IX

**CAN WE TRUST
RUSSIA?**



ON FEBRUARY 23, 1942, the Twenty-fourth Anniversary of the Red Army, America's heroic General MacArthur cabled this message of congratulation to Russia:

"The world situation at the present time indicates that the hopes of civilization rest upon the worthy banners of the courageous Russian Army.

"During my lifetime I have participated in a number of wars, and have witnessed others, as well as studied in great detail the campaigns of outstanding leaders of the past. In none have I observed such effective resistance to the heaviest blows of a hitherto undefeated enemy, followed by a smashing counter-attack which is driving that enemy back into his own land. The scale and grandeur of this effort marks it as the greatest military achievement in all history."

In these words an experienced American strategist made it very clear that he for one did not

belong to the crowd of misguided or prejudiced Western observers who consigned Russia to defeat as soon as they heard the news on June 22, 1941. These are the words of a real soldier, who knows that in time of war it is a soldier's job to worry more about beating the enemy than about communism or capitalism, and one who realizes, moreover, that that is just the job the Russian soldiers are doing. To those in the Western world who keep asking themselves whether they can trust Russia or whether Russia, if victorious, will capitalize on this victory by spreading communism all over the globe, General MacArthur has given the best answer.

To understand why such people ask such questions in the first place, we must realize first of all that hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent by the Goebbels propaganda machine for one single purpose: to make the world believe that the Russians are beasts and murderers and that their main goal is to bathe mankind in bloody massacres. In thousands and thousands of booklets and newspaper articles—sometimes openly and sometimes with insidious subtlety—the Hitlerites pressed home this thesis. They succeeded in building a kind of Chinese Wall around Russia, stirring up in the

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democracies a dread of the "Bolshevist menace" and in Russia an acute suspicion of everything happening outside. To spread the impression that Russia was incapable of keeping faith with any alliance, that she was a third-class military power, that her industry was chaotic, her rulers a gang of murderers and her internal affairs corrupt—this was first and last the aim of Goebbels' efforts. And the result was that all over the world on June 22, 1941, men who should have known better declared that Russia was doomed.

Well, what are the facts? Is Russia anxious and prepared to create a "world revolution" and to conquer the world as a result of such a revolution? Would Russia, upon whose courageous army, according to General MacArthur, rest the hopes of civilization, turn the tables after victory was won and start a "world revolution"?

In the first place, Stalin, when asked to speak of the fate of Slavic nations if the war should be won by the Allies, declared unequivocally:

"We have not and cannot have such war aims as imposing our will and our regime on the Slavs and other enslaved people of Europe who are awaiting our aid. Our aid consists of assisting these people in their struggle for liberation against Hitler tyranny

and then setting them free to rule on their own land as they desire . . . without any intervention whatever in their internal affairs."

If this is regarded as "pre-war propaganda" we have those conversations between Stalin and Eden in December, 1941, when Russia again made it clear that she intended to respect "the internal integrity of each liberated country."

Those who respond to these statements and promises with simple assertions of disbelief had better check actual history and the record of how the Soviets have kept their promises as compared with any other power on the face of the globe. That goes for financial matters, and for political and military pacts, as well as for any other form of international agreement. If actions alone give weight to promises and if a nation's actual record in international relations alone counts, then the sincerity of the Soviet Union is beyond doubt. In the minds of those who were close to the European scene in pre-war days, particularly during the unhappy era of Neville Chamberlain, there can be little doubt on this score.

Why then did the Goebbels propaganda agency have such a relatively easy task spreading the story of a Russian plan for a bloody world revolution?

The answer is simple. Although the Russian Revolution of 1917 actually aimed at world revolution as its final goal, Stalin soon had the foresight to concentrate on establishing "socialism in one country." He realized that Russia would be committing a grave blunder if she continued to try to spread communism at the expense of her own national and international standing.

When Trotsky, the leading representative of the idea of world revolution was ousted from power in 1926 and expelled from the Russian Communist Party in November, 1927, a "New Deal" was started in Russia, founded on that idea of "building socialism in one country." Trotsky himself was compelled to go into exile in 1929 and died there; once he had been expelled, his ideas lost their influence in Russia.

That did not prevent communists in other countries from continuing with their party politics. But Russian economic and military, national and international policies had but one goal—to build up Russia according to the ideals of her leaders and not to bend Russia or Russian policy to the purposes of anyone, communist or non-communist, outside. The idea of the world revolution therefore existed only in the files and brains of the

Nazi propaganda ministry, which used it to the utmost, whenever possible, to create anti-Russian sentiment.

Stalin's statement of Russia's intention of keeping out of the internal affairs of other countries has, I say, been repeatedly substantiated by Russia's actions. When Finland was at last utterly defeated in early 1940 and was entirely at the mercy of the victors, Russia in the peace treaty asked only for those essential defense sectors, such as the Karelian Isthmus, which she originally tried to secure by territorial exchanges. Russia never tried to capitalize on her victory by interfering with Finnish internal conditions or the Finnish Government. She even permitted Finland to retain her Generalissimo, Baron Mannerheim, despite his unquestioned, long-standing anti-Russian attitude and the probability that he would aid Germany if and when the Germans turned against Russia.

There is also the evidence of the Russian attitude toward Poland. Stalin, in his talks with Anthony Eden and Sir Stafford Cripps, has insisted that Russia not only does not want to destroy Poland after the war but hopes for an even stronger Poland, enlarged by upper Silesia and parts of eastern Prussia.

If there was ever any fear that Russia, because she had once been driven by the Chamberlain type of policy into a "pact" with Germany, would now, after the German invasion, make a separate peace with the Nazis, the Soviet Government conclusively blasted such notions by December, 1941. In addition to Russia's actions in the field there was the note which was at that time handed by Commissar Molotoff to every government with which Russia had diplomatic relations. This impressive and forthright communication declared:

"German officers and soldiers have engaged in an orgy of plunder in all the Soviet districts which they have captured. The German authorities have legitimized robbery in their army and encouraged plunder and rape. The German Government sees in all this the realization of the bandit principles proclaimed by them, according to which 'every German soldier must be personally and materially interested in the war.'"

The secret instructions of July 17, 1941, addressed to all propaganda companies of the German Army and found by the units of the Red Army when they routed the 66th German Infantry Division, were here linked with actual German Army practice. After recording all sorts of other vile German crimes, the note continued:

“Not a single German is held responsible in any degree for the murders of Soviet citizens, however wanton they may be. On the contrary, these murders are encouraged by the German authorities.”

The note ended with this important statement for the Allied Nations and their governments:

“The Hitlerite government of Germany, which perfidiously attacked the Soviet Union, has no regard whatsoever for any rules of international law, for any requirements of human morals. It is waging war primarily against a peaceful and unarmed population, against women and children and old men, thus demonstrating its foul, rapacious nature. This robber government, which recognizes only violence and plunder, must be broken by the all-devastating force of all freedom-loving peoples, in the ranks of which the Soviet peoples will fulfill their great liberative task to the end.

“Not only the Red Army, but the whole of our many millions of Soviet people are filled with fiery hatred and thirst to avenge mercilessly the blood and the ruined lives of Soviet citizens.

“The Soviet people will never forgive the atrocities, rape, destruction, and mockery which the bestial bands of German invaders have committed and are committing against the peaceful population of our country. They will never forget, nor will they ever forgive, these crimes.”

The Soviet Government thus declares that it holds Hitlerite Germany responsible for all the inhuman and rapacious acts of German soldiers in Russia. It contrasts sharply with the attitudes of those who in 1918 approached Germany with such a compromising proposal as that which agreed to make peace in exchange for the Kaiser's head.

It would thus be definitely erroneous to believe that only Hitler and a couple of his henchmen will be held accountable for the aggression. This note is of historical importance because it drives home the fact that the aims of Moscow include the levying upon the Nazis of penalties equal to the hardships inflicted on the Russians. These and similar aims are evidently not looked on with favor by certain reactionary circles and magazines in London, that is, by just those circles which in September, 1938, urged a quick and complete surrender of Czechoslovakia to the Nazis. But as matters stand now, I suspect that there is little chance that the Russians will ask such people what they think the Soviet Union ought or ought not to do.

A vigorous statement of Russian aims similar to the ones referred to in this note accounts for the surprise which Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden is reported to have felt when he personally dis-

cussed war goals with the Russians. These aims, designed to prevent Germany from ever undertaking aggression again, are reported in London as having included the following clauses:

1. Germany must be disarmed and made incapable of further aggression.
2. As punishment for its crimes and unprovoked aggression, Germany must endure suffering equal to that which she has inflicted on the Russians.
3. Germany—that means the German people—must rebuild all she has destroyed.

The significance of these Russian statements of aims is heightened by the fact that the indictment contained in the Molotoff note itemizes with such care the massacres, pillages, and devastation undertaken by the Nazis, the number of civilians killed in captured cities, and the variety of ways in which these civilians were murdered.

But there is still another aspect to this Russian note, namely this—it certainly does not sound like the attitude of a country uncertain of victory. Coming in December, 1941, after the successful defense of Moscow, it was a shrewd, well-timed thrust at an enemy now in the first stages of despair.

In sum, then, we can trust Russia on a political level because modern Russia, although her economic system is and probably will remain very different from ours, is fighting for the same thing we are—to live in peace and to develop her own resources. We must trust Russia because she can and is willing to collaborate with the rest of the civilized world. We can trust her finally because she obviously has no desire or need to interfere in the internal affairs of any other nation—despite the gestures made by minor communist groups in various countries. Her natural resources are so vast and undeveloped that they will place her for a long time to come beyond the necessity for aggrandizing or aggression; and in culture and raw materials she has, in fact, much to offer any country wise enough to treat with her.

Those who accept the Bolshevik Frankenstein built up by Goebbels' propaganda or believe the stories of an imminent "world revolution" rather than face the facts are deluded—or gullible beyond help. Those who can abandon such foolish, albeit pet phrases as "the enigma of Russia" and assimilate a few obvious facts will soon realize that we must and can trust the Soviet Union.



CHAPTER X

THE SECOND FRONT

THE greatness of Russia's strategy and her willingness to sacrifice millions is evidence enough that we can trust her, both in intentions and in ability, on the field of battle as well as in the field of political and economic collaboration.

When the German invaders entered Russia in June, 1941, the Russians made enormous sacrifices, especially during the summer and autumn, accepting the fact that if the Germans were to be delayed, the defender's losses might have to be greater than those of the invader. However, when one considers the respective mobilization strength of the two nations and the much larger man power reservoir of the Russians, it is evident that the Russians in the long run have lost less.

The general strategy of Marshal Shaposhnikov consisted in turning the tide of the war by seizing

the initiative after the great battles of Moscow and Mozhaisk. This compelled the Germans to abandon that offensive warfare to which their army is geared and which their generals prefer.

The German soldier is excellent in the offensive. As long as the columns keep moving forward his commander can expect the best from him, but—and all of German military history, especially in World War I, supports this thesis—once he has to turn, defend himself and protect his rear, he tends to lose his faith in the outcome of the battle and even of the entire struggle.

That was why the Junker generals in preparing the Reichswehr for the “war of the future” trained it for blitzkrieg, that is, for offensive only. Knowing that the German soldier, splendid as he was in attack, lost morale in trench warfare, the generals, good psychologists as they were, founded their strategy on the principle that a defensive war must be avoided under all circumstances. Thus the basic idea of overrunning foreign armies in a short time by means of superior man power and fire power concentration on an enemy weak point is nothing but the result of studying the psychology of the average German soldier in World War I. But an inevitable consequence of this was to teach the

German soldier that he must think in terms of offensive only, and, as corollary, never in terms of defensive.

What happened, then, in December, 1941, was that the Russian General Staff and Marshal Timoshenko capitalized on this chief weakness of the German armies. The armies of Poland, France, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Yugoslavia never had a real chance to turn the battle and to gain the offensive; they simply had neither the men nor the territory in which to do this. Russia, with her immense expanses and her willingness to pay the enormous price in man power, was able to draw out the war into the winter and then turn the tide. This left the Germans on a defensive for which they had not been trained, in a season for which they were unprepared, and on a terrain they did not know.

The Russians also paid an incalculable price in civilians enslaved, tortured, or slaughtered behind the German lines. But it is already evident that they did not make these sacrifices in vain.

When the Germans had to call off their offensive, their losses began to exceed even those which the Russians had suffered during the winter. The minimum of the German casualties in this winter

campaign must be placed at two million, not counting previous losses or the great quantity of planes, tanks, and material of all kinds destroyed or abandoned. But one of the most serious consequences of this turn of the battle for the Germans was that, unaccustomed to and untrained for defensive action, they had to yield highly important positions and break up their front.

The Junker strategists had always believed that if ever the worst came to pass and the Germans had to go through a winter campaign in Russia everything would depend on their ability to stabilize the front. But here again German technique and the German soldier prevented Germany from carrying through a successful defensive strategy, particularly when called upon to furnish the kind of counter-attacks which had enforced the Russian defense of Smolensk and Moscow.

The best word to characterize the German defensive during the winter campaign is "passive." Crawling past the wooden crosses of their fallen comrades, Hitler's army moved backwards without positive aim or initiative. Military commentators will continue to discuss whether it was a "rout" or not; one thing is clear from the impressions recorded by American and British corre-

spondents who were anywhere near the scene, from the admissions of captured Germans, and from statements in intercepted German letters—it was a state of depression not very different from that in which, in 1918, the army of the Kaiser streamed back to Germany.

Although they always hated to think of it, the German General Staff had of course worked out the possibilities of a campaign in Russia. Military men must try to anticipate every conceivable contingency. The German strategy against Russia as planned by Field Marshal General von Loeb in 1937 called for defensive action at the start to wear out the enemy, whittle down his man power, and thus gradually offset his known superiority in reserves. Only then, von Loeb advised, should the offensive be taken. Of course Hitler paid no attention to such plans.

What Hitler did was not only contrary to the plans of the General Staff, but also to the lesson of 1812 and, most of all, to the psychology of the German soldier. Hitler started with an offensive and then followed it with a passive defense. The result was more than two million German graves in Russia, the loss of the springboards vital for a new campaign in 1942, resentment on the part of

the entire German General Staff, and, finally, pre-spring operations which allowed great German contingents to be caught in giant pockets and sometimes annihilated.

The strategy problem for the Russians in the pre-spring period was not to regain territory. They knew that they could do that later. The goal was to render useless as many as possible of the German contingents being prepared for the spring and summer offensives. Once again the Russian calculations proved shrewd. They succeeded in surrounding and bottling up the Germans in cities like Smolensk and Kharkov and did so without sacrificing valuable troops.

As in 1812, the Russian aim was to destroy enough of the German Army during the winter and early spring months to make a new campaign disastrous. They did a magnificent job. They did it in the hope, of course, that the Western powers would be ready and willing before long to open a second front in Western Europe.

When in 1914, during the first phase of World War I, the German Imperial Army, after having crossed Belgium, was moving rapidly toward Paris the situation in the West was desperate. It was then that the Czar dispatched two Russian army

corps to invade eastern Prussia and compelled the Kaiser to withdraw large contingents from the Marne front in France to resist this invasion of Germany from the east. These troops which the Kaiser withdrew from France at the crucial moment tipped the scale. Of course, the Russians never had any real hope of successfully invading Germany with only two corps of soldiers; but their opening of a second front, no matter how hopeless, served the purpose of drawing a force of Germans away from France and permitting France to win in the west.

They called it the "miracle of the Marne" in history books; it was no miracle at all—only a supreme sacrifice of Russian flesh and blood. The Czar did not want to disappoint his Western Allies; the Russian sacrifice of 1915 turned the war into a true war of coalition.

In much the same way, the opening of a second battle front in Western Europe today would surely shorten the war. It is not a question of winning the war, because the Allies will inevitably win if it is drawn out to four, five, or six years and resources are thus permitted to become the deciding factor; it is rather a question of ending the war in 1942 or 1943 by turning it into a war of coalition, the

form of war which Hitler and the Junkers dread most of all.

Stalin made all this strikingly clear in his radio address of November 7, 1941—the very day that Hitler made his promise to capture Moscow and liquidate the Soviet Government before its next anniversary. Stalin declared:

“Russia is fighting alone a war of liberation against Germany and her allies. . . . It is unnecessary to add that the blitzkrieg has failed, but one of the chief problems facing the Red Army at the present moment is the lack of a second front in Europe.”

And then he made this significant remark:

“Feeling assured that they would not be attacked on the Western Front, the Germans are throwing in the bulk of their forces in the East. Our country is carrying on a war of liberation alone against the Germans, Hungarians, and Italians.”

It is not so much the criticism of the failure to establish a second front which made these sentences remarkable as the fact that Stalin blamed those who were letting the Germans rest assured that they would not be attacked on a Western front. And this, as was repeated openly in the British Parliament, was why the Germans were

confidently throwing in the bulk of their forces in the East.

When Sir Stafford Cripps, the only really successful ambassador Britain had had since 1938, returned to Britain from Moscow in early February, 1942, he categorically declared: "Either we are in partnership with Russia in the reconstruction of Europe, or we again plunge the world into chaos." Germany could be defeated within a year, Cripps said, but only if Great Britain and the United States did their utmost to aid Russia. All Russian industry had been turned over to war work, food was limited to elementary needs, and clothing was practically a monopoly of the armed forces. "But people accept the sacrifices," he added, "because they know they are necessary to ultimate victory." It was difficult for the Russians to understand the tolerance which is shown in England for fifth columnists. In appealing to the people to make further sacrifices toward the war effort and aid to Russia, Sir Stafford pointed out that Hitler's attack on Russia at least would "relieve Britain from the threat of invasion." Michael Kalinin, President of the Soviet, had stressed the dangers of overconfidence and made it clear that the notion that Britain could "leave the Russians to defeat Ger-

many alone" was absolutely false. For this reason it was not only necessary for the Allies to continue to give aid to Russia at once, President Kalinin had said, but to increase such aid.

There is no doubt that great risks and problems will be involved in opening a second front. The problem of shipping facilities is, to take but one example, particularly acute, because America and Britain must cope with sinkings and because so many of their vessels must take roundabout, double-length courses.

The risks are very great, as the risks of attack are always greater than those of defense. But concerning such risks surely the wisest comment was that made by the Russian Ambassador to Washington, Maxim Litvinoff, at the end of his address to the Economic Club in New York on March 16. Ambassador Litvinoff observed:

"Concerning the second front it is sometimes objected that practical ways of victory involve risk, and there is no denying the truth of this. Military operations between more or less equal forces generally do involve risk. Does not Hitler owe his considerable successes to highly risky ventures in Norway, Crete, and elsewhere? There may be much greater and more actual risk in waiting, in doing nothing, in letting slip one opportunity after another: and action involving

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risk has at any rate some chance of success, whereas inaction, also involving risk, is practically never crowned with success."

Once before, in his February 26 address before the Overseas Press Club in New York, he had made this point of view brilliantly clear when he had said:

"We have wrested the initiative from the German Command, which in modern warfare is of the utmost importance. It would be deplorable if we were to lose this initiative for lack of adequate and timely support. We are proud that it has fallen to our lot to smash Hitler's war machine but we by no means insist on exclusive rights. We are prepared to let others have a share in our pride."

Now that the United States has taken over all, or most, of Britain's troubles in the Pacific there is more reason than ever for Britain and the Allies to open a second front in Western Europe. The old Tory excuse that nothing could be done in Norway or in France because British ships, men, and material were vitally needed in the Pacific does not go any more. General MacArthur will succeed where Britain failed. Moreover, if the Allies help shorten the war on the Russo-German front by opening an attack in the West, there will be that

much more reason for Russia, with its bases only a few hundred bomber miles from Japan, to open another front against Japan and thus shorten the war in the Pacific.

Where there's a will there's a way: there are several possible places where new fronts might be opened in the West. For example, eight or nine hundred thousand men, according to experts, would be sufficient to push the Nazis out of northern Norway. That in turn would establish a direct supply line between the three great powers, America, Britain, and Russia, besides compelling the Germans to divert troops from Russia. Or perhaps a diversion through France or the Netherlands would be more efficient although more costly. It is difficult to say exactly which would be the best; the only thing people in America, Russia, and in the anti-appeasement circles of Britain know is that only a second front, if established efficiently and soon in Western Europe, can shorten this war.

Anyone who knows German psychology will agree that no German scorched-earth policy would meet an invader. Caught between two fires Hitler will not be able to stand a second winter. As Sir Stafford Cripps said after his return from Moscow—it can be done and it will be done.

The United Nations must not lose sight for a moment of the fact that Germany is still the strongest of the whole Axis gang and the world's No. 1 Public Enemy. More important is the fact that, as a glance at the globe will show, Germany is geographically still the closest and most accessible of the Axis nations to the main United Nations. Many observers fail to keep in mind the important fact that even the United States is, surprisingly enough, much closer to Germany than it is to Japan. In the long run, moreover, Germany menaces the whole strategy of the United Nations more directly than does any other of the Axis powers. Only when the Allies are relieved of the Nazi threat will it be wise for them—for Russia and Britain no less than for America—to turn all their strength against Japan.

It would be a grave error of Allied strategy to divide its forces at a time when the concentration of man power and material on the annihilation of Nazi Germany is the crucial action. Such action would, in fact, almost solve the Japanese problem in itself. For the time being, a delaying action against Japan, including such sinkings of Japanese convoys as have already been reported, would be sufficient. The time to deal with Japan will come.

Meanwhile the great and true battle for world domination is going on in Western Russia.

Such a Russian victory as that at Mozhaisk indicated more than that the Russians were putting pressure on retreating Nazis. It revealed the importance of the rôle of Russia in the war. Above all, this campaign destroyed forever the myth of Nazi invincibility on land. Tanks and planes, coupled with the courage of the Russians, have shown that the Nazi machine is dependent on prosaic war production and earthly principles of military science. Hitler is obliged to recognize the existence on the same continent of another armed force which he has failed to conquer and which threatens him mightily.

This fact, in turn, indicates the vital importance of the Eastern European front in any attempt to put an end to the Nazi regime. In the spring or summer of 1942 the Nazis must end the menace represented by the Russian Army or that army—once American production has attained its maximum—will afford an easy means of ending the Nazis. Somewhere on the Russian front from the Baltic to the Black Sea a battle upon which will depend the fate of the Nazi regime will be fought this year. When the time is ripe to seek footholds

for actual invasions of Germany itself, those footholds will be found along that two thousand miles from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

When the Nazi Army is compelled to leave the invaded territory, it will have to retreat through occupied lands which have been tortured for years by the Himmlers and the Nazi Kultur. The psychological and military consequence of this retreat will be incalculably great; as occupied territory is freed from Nazi terrorism and exploitation, as the German wounded stream homeward, and the inevitable invasion of Nazi Germany itself begins, the German people will be compelled to realize that their god-like hero, Adolf Hitler, has built for them a Russian graveyard greater than any the Kaiser ever heard of.

Another point which should not be forgotten is that Nazi-occupied Europe grows frantic with hatred against its oppressors. All the experiences the British had in the first months of 1942 in their air raids over France and their commando sorties onto the continent and Norway give proof that Hitler has reason to fear what might happen in those countries in case of an Allied invasion. And although revolution may not be just around the corner, the situation in Germany proper is worth

watching. Judging from all the news which is leaking out, the German people may be willing to give Hitler until the fall of 1942 to fulfill his promises, but they know they cannot stand another winter. Hitler knows that too.

Berlin broadcasters have been trying to fit the St. Nazaire raid of March, 1942, into the framework of their propaganda. Obviously, it was a rather delicate task. The German people are apprehensive about landings in Europe, rightly fearing that what they have dealt out to others may, in due course, be dealt out to them. They remember the last war and the phrase "second front" is one of their bogies.

That is why their principal commentators have had to tell them again and again that the continent is a "fortress which no expeditionary force in the world can assail." For reasons of morale it is no doubt essential that the German people should not think that the St. Nazaire raid conflicted with that idea. It is this preoccupation that makes the German propagandists treat the raid so defensively; instead of proclaiming how much they had hurt the British, they kept on insisting that the British had not and could not hurt them. Said one Nazi

commentator: "They know in England that a second front is impossible."

And these two points were driven home again and again. The speakers kept repeating quotations allegedly from foreign newspapers, quotations all pointing toward one and the same idea—"Europe is impregnable. A second front is impossible." Uncertain which would sound better, the anxious propagandists sometimes called the raids mere "military feints which would suggest that Britain is incapable of launching a real offensive" and at other times, to emphasize Germany's defenses, spoke of having repulsed a large-scale attack.

Apparently not satisfied with vague assertions of impregnability, Berlin often broadcasts "visitors' descriptions" of fortifications on the North Atlantic coast. And, as if fearful lest the people get any wind of Allied intentions or successes, the announcers frequently refer to Allied announcements as "clumsy distortions of facts, clamors over unfounded victories, empty phrases and idle promises to comfort the public."

Idle promises to comfort the public—therein lies the key to the whole matter. The German public needs comforting—it doesn't like these raids. It fears what they may foretell. It fears worse things

to come. The emphasis of Nazi broadcasters on security makes that perfectly plain.

Well, these were only so-called "commando raids" and none constituted a real landing. Such a landing would require something like forty divisions. The end of the war depends on how soon realistic British and American action makes the landing of these forty divisions possible. If it can be done, and done in the summer of 1942, then and only then can we be sure that victory will be ours.

The year 1942 is the year of decision, not 1943 (although this decision in Russia does not necessarily mean final victory and end of the global war). Mr. Hitler knows it; Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill know it.

Hitler has no time to lose because he knows that if he does not win in 1942 there will be no 1943 for him. If Russia's Allies follow her example this year, civilization will have another chance.

THE OUTLOOK

IN A proclamation to the Red Army on May 1, 1942, Josef Stalin again proclaimed Russia's intention of defeating Germany this year. "I order the Red Army," he declared, "to fight so that the year 1942 shall become the year to complete the rout of German fascist troops, the year of the liberation of Soviet land from the Hitlerite scoundrels." Addressing himself to the fearful German people as well as to doubters among his Allies, he again solemnly asserted: "We have no aim of occupying other countries or conquering other people." Once more he made overwhelmingly clear the fact that Russia's one great aim is to free herself and the world from Nazism and not to interfere in the internal affairs of any other nation.

But what, you may ask, is Russia's aim with reference to Germany? Does Russia intend leaving

the Junker officers in control after Hitler and his army have been liquidated? Well, here is what Stalin had to say, in this significant May Day speech, of the Junker officers:

“The experience of the war convinced our Russian soldiers that the so-called courage of the German officers was something very relative, that the German officer displays bravery when he deals with unarmed prisoners and with peaceful civilians but courage deserts him when he meets the organized strength of the Red Army.”

And this, notwithstanding many curious misapprehensions among Western observers, simply bears out the record of how Junker generals have acted when they were defeated. When Prussia capitulated to Napoleon after the battle of Jena in 1806 no one was more surprised than Napoleon himself and his marshals. The German Army had met no real defeat. The battle of Jena had been only a single incident and one which had taken place at quite a distance from Prussia. But the news of the surrender broke all German resistance. Just because its commander received a false report that Stettin had fallen, the fortress of Hameln surrendered to a troop of minor foreign hirelings who were fighting under the French flag. All the other

important strongholds—Stettin, Spandau, Küstrin, and Danzig—gave up almost immediately. It was simply a collapse of nerves, a collapse of Junkers who believed that everything was lost as soon as they realized that they were not invincible.

And what happened in 1918 when Ludendorff bombarded his reluctant government with telegrams insisting that it surrender and ask for an armistice immediately? A great wave of defeatism swept the German officer corps. Although the German front had been broken in Flanders, there was not yet one enemy soldier on German soil. Once more the magic faith in German invincibility had been pierced and that was sufficient to cause the Junkers to lay down their arms and ask for any terms they could get.

Many Western observers who had failed to watch the German home front were much surprised when the peace came in 1918, when the German Junker generals appeared suddenly ready to accept any terms, when they did not even try to defend the German frontiers although the battle line in the West was still far from the German border. These observers were puzzled because they did not know the character of the German Junker generals or of the Germans at

home. They thought of Germany as though the Kaiser were Germany. And the same kind of people think about Germany today as though Hitler were Germany. They were wrong then and they are wrong now. As long as those forces which drove Europe from one war to another throughout the last century are allowed to survive in Germany there will be new Kaisers or new Hitlers forever arising to plague the world. History is soon going to repeat itself, and when the day of reckoning comes much will depend on how closely the Allied leaders watch those Junkers.

Victory in Russia in 1942! Good, you may say, but how will it affect us and how will Russia act if she is victorious? To this I answer again: the Russians are anxious to see a second front opened, but even if, without such a diversion, they succeed in crushing the Germans and driving them from Russian soil, the Soviet Union will never make a separate peace. On this question we have threefold evidence from history, for the Russians faced a similar situation in the beginning of the seventeenth century with the invasion of the Poles, in the beginning of the eighteenth with the invasion of the Swedes, and in the beginning of the nine-

teenth with the invasion of the French—and in each instance no invader ever won a separate peace. Each was destroyed.

When, for example, Napoleon sent his General Lauriston to offer a truce to Marshal Kutuzov in October, 1812, Kutuzov bluntly told Lauriston that the Russian people looked upon the French as their ancestors had looked upon the invading Tartars under Ghengis Khan. “Nevertheless, there is a difference,” Lauriston insisted. The Russian Field Marshal retorted that the Russian people could not see any difference and Lauriston soon realized the complete futility of his mission.

Later on in the same conflict the Russian General Baron Korf met the French General Armand at an outpost.

“We are really tired of this war; give us a passport and we will leave,” said Armand.

“Oh no, General,” retorted Korf, “you have come to us as unbidden guests and you shall have to take French leave—without saying farewell.”

“But actually is it not a pity that two nations which respect one another should wage heartless war?” went on Armand. “We will apologize for having started it and be glad to make a peace restoring the original frontiers.”

“Yes, we believe that you have lately learned to respect us,” retorted Korf, “but would you respect us in the future if we allowed you to depart with your arms?”

This is the Russian way with invaders.

The difficulties Russia has faced in coöperating with its Allies can only be fully appreciated if we recall the kind of distortions and falsehoods that have been spread concerning the Russian people. One of the many vicious misconceptions spread abroad by the Kaiser during World War I and by Goebbels during World War II was the fable of Russia's inhumanity. It might be called the “muzhik myth” for it stressed the idea that the average Russian is only a cruel and stupid peasant, a blundering, bloodthirsty soldier, and so forth. The German Ministry of Propaganda zealously compounded and disseminated this fable in every corner of the globe to make sure that Russia would be the last power with which the enemies of the Axis would make an alliance. Despite the obvious evidences of Russian culture of every sort and of the fame of its great writers, composers, and thinkers, these propaganda seeds found a ready soil in many lands.

Whenever I hear this story of the cruelty and inhumanity of the muzhik I keep thinking only of the victory proclamation issued by a Russian Commander-in-chief on the last occasion when the Russians celebrated a great triumph over an invader. It came from General Kutuzov as his armies drove Napoleon's forces back across the Russian borders. It stressed above all the necessity of humanity in the treatment of civilians.

These words were ringing in my ears when I heard the experts in June, 1941, repeating as fact what was in truth only vicious, undiluted German propaganda. They are ringing in my ears even to-day when those same experts suddenly discover—after the Russian Army has smashed back Hitler's forces and ended the spell of their invincibility—that Russia is our great ally. I can't help wondering what those same experts would have said if the Russians had not saved us. No epithet, I fear, would have been too harsh to apply to those peasants, workmen, soldiers, and generals of the Soviet Union.

The entire world, including those experts who so suddenly discovered that it was popular to embrace Russia as our ally, is now discovering that the Russians are great fighters. It had apparently

He Wanted to Sleep in the Kremlin

forgotten the Russian soldiers who had, under Marshal Suvorov in 1799, performed a feat which amazed the age and which had not been duplicated since Hannibal—a drive across the Alps. It had forgotten, too, the exceptional heroism displayed by Russian soldiers in the Balkan wars. And it chose to forget, finally, that even in World War I, when disorganization and downright treason left them practically without arms, Russian soldiers fought heroically, sometimes with only their bare hands as weapons.

So far the Russians have sacrificed two million lives—two million lives which now will *not* have to be sacrificed by the Western powers. They have paid with these two million men in the hope that, with the help of their Allies, they will be able to crush Hitlerism in 1942. Pierre Cot, formerly Minister of Aviation in the French Republic, put the matter with admirable bluntness when he recently asserted: “The war will be won by the Allies in 1942 if the Red Army is not crushed, just as surely as it will be lost if the Red Army is crushed.”

More than ever before, the second front is the decisive issue before us. That is why every hour

of work on the building of ships, planes, and guns is ten times more important now than it will be next year or the year after.

A comparison between such a second front and Dunkirk does not make sense. When the British shipped their army to the continent they had almost no troops left on their islands to protect Great Britain. In addition they faced an undivided German Army. Today an invasion of the continent would require only a part of the United Nations' well-trained and well-equipped armies, would leave the British Isles completely protected, and yet be sufficient to compel Hitler to divert great units from the Eastern front. It would give Russia just that chance it needs to push her offensive toward her frontiers and across them into Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Without Russia the position of the Allies would at best have been terribly precarious; Russia's entrance not only tipped the balance in favor of the United Nations but will shorten the war by many years. Russia's entrance into the war will in the final analysis also decide the fate of Japan, because Russia, anxious to live in peace and develop her great resources, will never be able to live in tranquillity with an aggressive neighbor like Japan

always at her back. The old account between Russia and Japan will be settled at a time which will suit Russia and her Allies and which will be dictated by considerations of strategy, not emotion.

Russia's entrance into the war and the fact that Hitler could not conquer her is only another piece of conspicuous evidence that Russia is one of the greatest and most consistently underestimated powers on earth from the point of view of military strength as well as economic power and national spirit. Russia's part in World War II may at long last awaken those who have so long talked about that nation of one hundred seventy million souls as if it were an abstraction of communist theory or one great Bolshevist bogeyman. Because it opened the eyes of many millions, June 22, 1941, must thus be considered one of the great days in human history.

Russia's culture may not be the same as our culture, but the great link between the Soviet Union and the Western world is the fact that both contain a majority of people who want to make the world safe from aggression and who desire only peace and freedom. The West will now try to understand Russia, while Russia, free from her old distrust of democracies and from outworn slogans

like that concerning world revolution, will try to understand our Western way of life. Democracy is not the monopoly of any nation, and Russia's democracy, which will surely grow stronger and clearer as a result of a final defeat of Fascism, will win her a well-earned seat in the society of the democracies of the future.

We must build a new world after this war, a world in which no Junker clique will be permitted to remain an unremitting menace to peace and culture, a world in which there will be no place for those who want to sow suspicion between peaceful nations, races, or forms of government.

Hitler did not succeed in reaching the Kremlin, because he did not realize what moral forces he would rouse when he crossed the Russian border in June, 1941. The enormous sacrifices of the Russian people will not be made in vain. They will soon result in the downfall of the dictators and in the end serve to teach us the greatest of all historic lessons—the power, in military affairs as well as government—of the people.



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