

FACTS in REVIEW

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Colonel-General
von Weichs
negotiates
the armistice
with Yugoslav
officers
in Belgrade

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SPEECH OF THE FUEHRER BEFORE THE GERMAN REICHSTAG, MAY 4, 1941

"Facts in Review" presents herewith an authorized translation of Chancellor Adolf Hitler's historic speech before the Reichstag on May 4, 1941, for the benefit of American students of current history.

Deputies, Men of the German Reichstag:

At a time when deeds alone count and words are of little importance, it is not my intention to appear before you, the elected representatives of the German people, more often than absolutely necessary. The first time I spoke to you was at the outbreak of war when, thanks to the Anglo-French conspiracy against peace, every attempt at an understanding with Poland—which otherwise would have been possible—had been frustrated. The Reich having become too powerful for them in its peaceful work of reconstruction, the most unscrupulous men of the age had decided—as early as 1936—as they admit today, to involve it in a new and bloody war and if possible to destroy it. They finally succeeded in finding a state prepared to draw the sword for their interests and aims. That state was Poland.

All my endeavors to come to an understanding with Britain—in fact, to arrive at lasting and friendly cooperation with her—were wrecked by the desire and the determination of a small clique, who—either through hate or avarice—rejected every German proposal for an understanding. They were resolved to resort to war whatever happened, nor did they take the trouble to conceal the fact.

The man behind this fanatical and diabolical plan — war at any cost — was, even then, Mr. Churchill. His associates were the men who now form the British government. Their endeavors received the most powerful support both openly and secretly from the so-called "great democracies" on both sides of the Atlantic. While the people were becoming more and more dissatisfied with their poor statesmanship, their responsible men considered a successful war the most likely means of settling problems which were otherwise beyond their powers to solve. Behind these men stood the great international Jew-

ish financial interests which controlled the banks and the stock exchange as well as the armament industry. *Just as before, they again scented the opportunity of big though unsavory business. And, just as before, there was no scruple about sacrificing the blood of the people for the sake of their gold. That was the beginning of this war.*

A few weeks later the state which had been reckless enough to allow itself to be the first European country to be used for the financial interests of these war-mongers was defeated and destroyed.

An Appeal to All—For Peace

In these circumstances, I believed that I owed it to our German people and to countless men and women in the opposite camp who were individually as decent as they were innocent of blame to make yet another appeal to the common sense and the conscience of these statesmen.

Therefore, on October 6, 1939, I once more publicly stated that Germany had neither demanded nor intended to demand anything from either Britain or France; that it was madness to continue the war; and, above all, that modern weapons of warfare, once they were brought into action, would inevitably ravage vast territories. I warned them of the effects of the use of heavy long-range guns against civilian areas, because I realized that this could result only in widespread devastation on both sides.

In particular I pointed out that the use of the air arm with its far-reaching effects would lead to the destruction of everything which had been built up by the aggregate efforts of centuries and of the cultural values which had been created in Europe. However, just as my appeal of September 1, 1939, proved to have been in vain, this new appeal also met with almost indignant rejection.

—And the Response

The British war-mongers and their Jewish capitalist backers could find no other explanation for this appeal, which I had made on humanitarian grounds, than the assumption that it was a sign of weakness on the part of Germany.

Germany, I assured the peoples of Britain and France, dreaded the clash to be expected in the spring of 1940, and was eager to make peace for fear of the devastation which would otherwise inevitably result. They declared, however, that in no circumstances must peace be made until the German Reich was broken up and the people of Germany so defeated and reduced to distress that they would grovel up to the field-kitchens of their enemies begging for food.

At that time the Norwegian government, already misled by the stubborn insistence of Mr. Churchill's prophecies, began to toy with the idea of a British landing on their soil, thereby contributing to the destruction of Germany by permitting the seizure of Norwegian harbors and Swedish iron ore fields.

The Gossips Foil Themselves

So sure were Messrs. Churchill and Paul Reynaud of the success of their new scheme that finally—whether from sheer recklessness or perhaps under the influence of alcohol—they deemed it no longer necessary to keep their intentions a secret. Thanks to these two gentlemen's tendency to gossip, the German government discovered the plans being made against the Reich. As a result, the German people were able to launch what was to prove to be their most effective counter-stroke during this war, since the British design upon Norway was without doubt the most serious threat to Germany.

A few weeks later this danger was eliminated. One of the boldest deeds of arms in the whole history of warfare frustrated the attack of the British and French armies against the right flank of our line of defense. This extremely successful German defensive action led to such an increase of strength in our positions in Europe that its importance from the strategic point of view cannot be exaggerated.

Immediately after the failure of these plans, increased pressure was exerted by the British war-mongers upon Belgium and Holland. Now that the attack upon our sources for the supply of iron ore had proved unsuccessful, the aim was to advance the front to the Rhine by involving the Belgian and Dutch states and thus to threaten and paralyze our production centers for iron and steel.

Thus on May 10th of last year, perhaps the most memorable struggle in the whole of German

history commenced. Within a few days the enemy fronts were smashed and the stage was set for operations culminating in the greatest battles of annihilation in the history of the world. France collapsed. Belgium and Holland were already occupied, and the battered remnants of the British expeditionary force retreated from the European continent leaving their arms behind.

Peace Again Turned Down by Plutocracy

On July 19, 1940, I convened the German Reichstag for the third time to render my account of that great success which you all remember. This meeting provided the opportunity of expressing the thanks of the nation to its soldiers, appropriate to the unique greatness of the event. Once again I seized the occasion to urge the world to make peace.

In the light of past experiences, I made it perfectly clear that, however, such hopes could be but small. The men who had wanted the war were certainly not inspired by any idealistic motives. The driving force behind them was Jewish plutocratic capitalism to which they were bound and upon which they were consequently dependent. The billions already invested by these war speculators were clamoring for interest and amortization. They were therefore far from being depressed by the thought of a long war. On the contrary, they favored it.

But this capital, once invested in factories and machinery, needs time to become productive and certainly considerably more time to reach the dividend stage. From the very outset, therefore, nothing was more odious to these Jewish plutocratic war speculators than the thought that an appeal to the common sense of the nations might possibly at the last moment succeed in terminating the war without further bloodshed, thus limiting the profits on their invested billions. What I foresaw and prophesied at that time came to pass. My offer of peace was misconstrued as a symptom of fear and cowardice. Once again the sound common-sense of the masses—who can never hope to profit from this war—was befogged by the war-mongers of Europe and America who succeeded in conjuring up false pictures of new hopes.

Finally, under the pressure of public opinion as moulded by their press, they once more managed to induce the nations to continue the struggle. Even my warnings against the night bombing of civilian populations advocated by Mr. Churchill were interpreted as a sign of German impotence. Churchill, the most bloodthirsty amateur strategist that history has ever known, actually saw fit to believe that the reserve displayed by the German

Air Force for months was merely proof of its inability to fly by night.

The Air Bombings at Night

So for months this man ordered his hired scribblers to deceive the British people into believing that the Royal Air Force alone and none other could wage this kind of war and that thus ways and means had been found to force the Reich to its knees; namely in the ruthless onslaught of the British Air Force on the German civilian population and in the Starvation Blockade.

Again and again I uttered warnings against this specific type of aerial warfare, and I did so for over three and a half months. That these warnings failed to impress Mr. Churchill does not surprise me in the least. What does this man care for the lives of others? What is culture or architecture to him? When war broke out he stated clearly that he wanted to have "his war," even though the cities of England be reduced to ruins. So now he has his war. My assurance that from a given moment every one of his bombs would be returned a hundredfold if necessary failed to induce this man to consider even for a moment the criminal nature of his actions. He professes not to be in the least depressed. He even assures us that after such bombing raids the British people greeted him with joyous serenity, causing him to return to London refreshed by his visits to the stricken areas. Perhaps such sights strengthened Mr. Churchill in his already firm determination to continue the war in this way. But we are no less determined to continue to retaliate a hundredfold if necessary and to go on doing so until the British nation at last gets rid of this criminal and his methods.

If Mr. Churchill deems it necessary from time to time to improve upon the impetus and impressiveness of his war by propaganda, I would have him know that we, too, are quite ready to adopt similar methods. The appeal to forsake me, made to the German nation by this fool and his satellites on May Day of all days, can be explained only as symptomatic of a paralytic disease or of a drunkard's ravings.

His abnormal state of mind gave birth to his decision to transform the Balkans into a theater of war. For almost five years this man has been racing around Europe like a madman in search of something to set afire. Unfortunately, he often found hirelings who opened the gates of their countries to this international incendiary. He has succeeded, by a wave of false assertions and pretenses, in persuading the British people that the German Reich was completely exhausted by the campaign of the preceding year. He saw himself obliged to

create a fresh conflagration in Europe to prevent an awakening to the truth. In so doing he returned to the project which had been in his mind as early as the autumn of 1939 and the spring of 1940. You will remember, Gentlemen, the documents, found at La Charité and published by us, which disclosed attempts to transform the Balkans into a theater of war as early as the winter of 1939-40. Those mainly concerned with the operation at that time were Messrs. Churchill, Halifax, Daladier, Paul Reynaud, General Weygand and General Gamelin.

As these documents revealed, it was deemed possible at the time to mobilize about one hundred divisions in Britain's interests if this plot against the peace of southeastern Europe had succeeded. The sudden collapse which we witnessed in May and June of last year caused these plans to be temporarily abandoned. But by the autumn of last year, Mr. Churchill once more began to tackle the problem. In the meantime, however, certain difficulties had arisen, chiefly because a modification of conditions in the Balkans had occurred due to Rumania's dropping out of England's political schemes in consequence of internal changes. Led by General Antonescu, Rumania began to follow an entirely national policy, without regard for the hopes of certain British circles who were interested in the war.

Germany and the Balkans

Another factor was, of course, the attitude taken by Germany herself. In dealing with this question I shall begin by giving you a brief outline of the aims of German policy in the Balkans, such as I envisaged them and such as we endeavored to attain:

1. As in the past, the Reich never pursued any territorial or any other selfish political interests in the Balkans. In other words, the Reich has never taken the slightest interest whatsoever in the subject of territorial problems and internal conditions in these states for selfish reasons.

2. On the other hand, the Reich has always endeavored to build up and strengthen close economic ties with these states especially. This policy served not only the interests of the Reich but also the interests of the Balkan countries themselves. If any two national economic systems effectively complement each other, they are certainly those of the Balkan states and of Germany. Germany is an industrial country and requires foodstuffs and raw materials. The Balkan states are agrarian countries and a source of those raw materials. At the same time, they require industrial products. This fact necessarily implies the possibility of an exceptionally successful development of mutual economic relations.

That British or even American circles pretended that this fact constituted an unjustified German infiltration into the Balkans was obviously a piece of arrogance as stupid as it was impertinent. After all, every state tends to develop its economic policy in accordance with its own national interests and not according to those of alien Jewish democratic capitalists.

Another thing to be borne in mind is that both England and America could at best only hope to do business in these parts as sellers; never as buyers. It is typical of the utter narrowmindedness of capitalist democrats in matters of national economy that they imagine that states can go on existing under the obligation of buying goods from someone who is neither willing nor able to buy anything from them.

However, Germany did not merely sell to the Balkan states; she was also the largest purchaser in those markets—a permanent and important purchaser who paid for the products of the Balkan peasant with the labor of the German industrial worker, and not with make-believe foreign exchange which has been chronically depreciating for years. It was hardly surprising that—as I have already said—Germany thus became the main business partner of the Balkan states. Nor was this only in Germany's interest; it was in the interest of the Balkan peoples themselves. No one but our Jewish democracies, which can think only in terms of capitalism, maintains that if one state delivers machinery to another state it thereby dominates that other state. Actually, such domination works both ways. Presumably it is easier to go without machines than without food and raw materials. Consequently, the partner who receives wheat or raw materials for his machines would appear to be more tied down than the recipient of industrial products. No, in this transaction there was neither conquerer nor conquered. There were only partners, and the German Reich of the National Socialist revolution had prided itself on being a fair and decent partner, i.e. on paying with good quality products instead of with worthless democratic paper money.

For these reasons the Reich was interested in only one thing—if, indeed, there was any question of political interests—namely, in seeing that the business partner was internally established on a sound and healthy basis. The Reich has therefore done everything in its power effectively to assist and advise these countries, to consolidate their own existence and their internal order without taking account of the particular form of government maintained. As a matter of fact, the application of this idea not only led to increasing prosperity in these countries but also to the beginnings of mutual confidence.

British Incendiarism Ignites the Balkans

All the greater were the endeavors of that world-incendiary, Churchill, to put an end to this peaceful development and, by shamelessly imposing on these states utterly worthless British guarantees and promises of assistance, to introduce in peaceable European territory elements of unrest, uncertainty, distrust and finally conflict.

In so doing, he received the support of all those obscure contemporaries who were dependent, either economically or in their outlook, upon British influence and were prepared to place the wishes of their material and spiritual masters before the interests of their own peoples. Originally, Rumania was won over by these guarantees; later, of course, Greece. In the meanwhile it has presumably been sufficiently demonstrated that these guarantees were not backed by any power to provide real help and that they were merely intended to goad the states into following the dangerous trend of selfish British politics. Rumania has had to pay bitterly for the guarantee which was calculated to estrange her from the Axis powers. Greece, too, who required this guarantee least of all, followed the enticing voices of the British and thus was also prepared to link her destiny with that of the country which financed her king and gave him his instructions. Even today I feel that I must—in the interests of historical accuracy—distinguish between the Greek people and that thin top-layer of corrupt leaders who, inspired by a king subservient to Great Britain, had no eye for the real duties of leaders but preferred to further the aims of British war policy. To me this was a subject of profound regret. For me, as a German whose early education and subsequent career as well were imbued with great respect for the culture and art of the country that once radiated the first light of human beauty and dignity, it was indeed very bitter to watch this development and without being able to do anything to counteract it.

From the documents found at La Charité we had become acquainted with the activities of those powers which sooner or later were bound to lead Greece into abysmal misfortune. In the late summer of last year Mr. Churchill was successful in shaping the Platonic Greek guarantees in certain circles in such a way that a large number of violations of neutrality was the result. Italy was chiefly affected by them. In October, 1940, she accordingly felt it necessary to make proposals to the Greek government and to demand guarantees which would tend to put an end to conditions which Italy could no longer tolerate. Owing to the influence of the British war-mongers, this request was unceremoniously refused.

Thus, the peace of the Balkans was broken. The subsequent inclemency of the weather, snowstorms, gales and rain, combined with extraordinarily courageous resistance offered by the Greek soldiers, which—I must record once more for the sake of historical justice—afforded the government in Athens ample time to consider the results of their ill-fated decision and to weigh the possibilities of finding an adequate solution to the difficulty.

With the faint hope of still being able to contribute in some way to a solution of the problem, Germany had not broken off relations with Greece. But even then it was my solemn duty to point out to the whole world that we would not passively permit a resurrection of the old Salonika scheme of the Great War.

Unfortunately, my warning, that should the British land anywhere in Europe, we were determined to drive them back into the sea, was not taken seriously enough. The result, as we saw during the course of the past winter, was that the British began ever increasing measures to establish bases for the formation of a new Salonika army. They began by laying out airdromes, first establishing the necessary ground organizations, in the firm conviction that the occupation of the airdromes themselves could be quickly carried out later. Finally, a continuous stream of transports brought equipment for an army which, according to Mr. Churchill's idea and plan, was to be landed in Greece in the course of a few weeks.

As I have already said, we were aware of this. For months we watched this entire strange procedure with attention, if with restraint. The reverses suffered by the Italian Army in North Africa due to certain technical inferiorities of their tanks and anti-tank guns, finally led Mr. Churchill to believe that the time was ripe to transfer the theater of war from Lybia to Greece. He ordered the transportation of the remaining tanks and of the infantry divisions composed mainly of Anzacs, and was convinced that he could now set about making the coup which would straightway set the Balkans aflame. Thus did Mr. Churchill commit one of the greatest strategic mistakes of the war.

Keeping Pace With Churchill

As soon as there was no further possible doubt regarding Britain's intention of gaining a foothold in the Balkans, I took the necessary steps so that Germany, by keeping pace with these moves, might also assemble sufficient forces in this vital region to counteract any possible trick by that same gentleman. I must state categorically that this action was not directed against Greece. The

Duce did not even request me to place a single German division at his disposal for this purpose. He was convinced that with the advent of good weather the struggle against Greece would be brought to a speedy and successful conclusion in one way or another. I was of the same opinion myself.

The concentration of German forces was therefore not made for the purpose of assisting the Italians against Greece. It was a precautionary measure against the British attempt, under cover of the clamor caused by the Italo-Greek war, to dig themselves in secretly in the Balkans, to force the issue from that quarter on the model of the Salonika Army during the Great War, and, above all, to draw other forces into the whirlpool of war. This hope was founded principally on two states, namely Turkey and Yugoslavia. But during the years since I came into power I have striven to establish close cooperation based on economic considerations with these very states.

Relations With Turkey and Yugoslavia

As far as the Serbian nucleus was concerned, Yugoslavia was our enemy in the Great War. In fact, the Great War actually started from Belgrade. Nevertheless, the German people, by nature ready to forgive and forget, felt no animosity towards that country. Turkey was our ally in the Great War. The unfortunate outcome hit that country just as hard as it did us. The great genius who created the new Turkey was the first to set a wonderful example of recovery to her Allies whom fortune had at that time deserted and whom hate had dealt so terrible a blow. Thanks to the practical attitude of her leaders, Turkey preserved her independence by carrying out her own revolution. Yugoslavia fell a victim to British intrigue.

Members of the German Reichstag! Most of you, especially my old party comrades among you, know what efforts I have made to establish a straightforward understanding and friendly relations between Germany and Yugoslavia. I have striven for this for years. I believed that I had the support of certain representatives of that country who, like myself, saw only advantages in close cooperation between our two countries. When, as a result of British intrigue, the danger that the Balkans would sooner or later be involved in the war increased, it was my main endeavor to do everything in my power to protect Yugoslavia against such a dangerous entanglement. In pursuance of this aim, Herr von Ribbentrop, our gifted Minister for Foreign Affairs, with characteristic patience and untiring perseverance pointed out in the course of numerous meetings and conversations the advantages, nay the necessity, of keep-

ing at least this part of Europe out of the unfortunate war. He submitted to the Yugoslav government proposals which were so excellent and so honorable that even in the Yugoslav state as it was then constituted opinion at last seemed to be veering increasingly in favor of such close cooperation. Lord Halifax is absolutely correct in saying today that Germany had no intention of starting a war in the Balkans. Yes, that is correct. For on the contrary, it was our honest intention to facilitate, as far as possible, the elimination of the Greek conflict by means compatible with the legitimate wishes of Italy, through closer cooperation with Yugoslavia. The Duce not only consented, but lent his full support, to our efforts to bring Yugoslavia into a close community of interests with our peace aims.

Yugoslavia's Chance to Avert Disaster

Thus, it finally became possible to induce the Yugoslav government to join the Three-Power Pact. This pact made no demands whatever upon Yugoslavia, but offered that country only advantages. *In the interests of historical accuracy I must today proclaim that Yugoslavia was pledged to no sort of assistance by this pact and its subsidiary provisions. On the contrary, she received a solemn assurance from the powers who had signed this pact, not only that she would not be approached for any form of assistance, but also that we were prepared from the very beginning to renounce all transport of war materials through her territory.* Over and above this, in response to a substantial demand by her government, Yugoslavia was assured that if changes in territory should take place in the Balkans she would receive an outlet to the Aegean sea under Yugoslav sovereignty, which would include, among other things, the town of Salonika.

Thus, on the 25th of March of this year, a pact was signed in Vienna which offered the Yugoslav state the greatest future conceivable and which was calculated to insure the peace of the Balkans. Believe me, Members of the Reichstag, that on that day I left the beautiful city on the Danube veritably happy, not only because it seemed that almost eight years of foreign policy had been rewarded, but also because I believed that perhaps German intervention in the Balkans might at the last moment become superfluous.

Two days later we were stunned by the news of a coup by a handful of bribed putschists who brought about the event that caused the British Prime Minister to utter his joyous words, that he at last had good news to report. You will further appreciate, Members of the Reichstag, that when I heard this I at once gave orders to attack Yugo-

slavia. The German Reich cannot be dealt with that way. One cannot spend years in asking for friendship and in concluding a treaty in the interests of the other party only to discover, not only that the treaty has been broken overnight, but that one's efforts are rewarded by insults to the representative of the Reich, by threats against his military attaché, by injury to the aide-de-camp of the attaché, by the maltreatment of numerous other Germans, by the demolition of offices, schools and exhibition halls, by the destruction of the homes of German citizens and by the terrorization and killing of members of the German minority as though they were outlaws. God knows that I wanted peace. However, if Lord Halifax scornfully declares that they knew this very well and for this very reason forced us to fight—as though that were a particular triumph for British statesmanship—I can do nothing against such malice but protect the interests of the Reich with those means which, thank God, are at our disposal.

I made this decision all the more calmly at the moment because I knew that I was in accord, first, with the attitude and state of mind of Bulgaria, who had always remained unshaken in her loyalty to the German Reich, and secondly, with the equally justifiably outraged attitude of Hungary. Both of our old allies of the World War were bound to regard this action as a provocation, emanating from a state which once before had set the whole of Europe afire and which had been guilty of causing the indescribably great suffering which befell Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria.

Mobilizing Against the New Threat

The general directions for operations issued by me through the High Command of the German forces on March 27, confronted the Army and the Air Force with a formidable task. Overnight a new campaign had to be prepared. Units already on the scene had to be moved about, supplies of armaments had to be assured, and the Air Force had to occupy numerous improvised airports which were still partly under water. Without the sympathetic assistance of Hungary and the extremely loyal attitude of Rumania, it would have been very difficult to carry out my orders in the short time envisaged. I fixed the sixth of April as the day on which the attack was to begin. On this day our Southern Army stationed in Bulgaria was ready to attack. The other armies were to proceed to attack as soon as they were ready to do so. The dates fixed for this were the 8th, 10th, and 11th of April, respectively. The main plan of operations was:

1. To proceed with an army coming from Bulgaria against Thrace in Greece in the direction

of the Aegean Sea. The main striking strength of this army lay in its right wing, which was to force a passage through to Salonika by using mountain divisions and one division of tanks.

2. To thrust forward with a second army in the direction of Skoplje, with the object of establishing contact as speedily as possible with the Italian forces advancing from Albania.

These two operations were to begin on the sixth of April.

3. A further operation beginning on the 8th of April provided for the break-through of an army from Bulgaria in the general direction of Nish, with the object of reaching the neighborhood of Belgrade. In conjunction with this, a German army corps was to occupy the Banat on the 10th. From there it was to proceed to Belgrade from the north.

4. On the 11th, an army concentrating in Carinthia, Styria and western Hungary was to attack in the direction of Agram, Serajevo and Belgrade.

In connection with these operations, arrangements had been made with our allies, Italy and Hungary. The Italian armed forces intended to proceed from their Julian Front along the coast in the direction of Albania to join hands with these detachments from Albania via Scutari; also to break through the Yugoslav frontier positions on the Yugoslav-Albanian border opposite Skoplje, thus to establish contact with the German army advancing there, and finally to break through the Greek Front in Albania itself and, if possible, to encircle and force it back towards the sea. In connection with this the Dalmatian and Ionian islands were to be occupied and all other bases captured. Agreements as to cooperation had also been reached between the two air forces.

The Commanders of the Various Units

The command of the German armies operating against Macedonia and Greece was placed in the hands of Fieldmarshal von List, who had already distinguished himself in previous campaigns. Once again, and under the most exacting conditions, he carried out the tasks confronting him in splendid fashion. The forces advancing against Yugoslavia from the southeast of Germany and from Hungary were commanded by Colonel-General von Weichs. He and the forces under his command also reached their objectives in a very short time. The armies and SS detachments operating under Fieldmarshal von Brauchitsch as Commander-in-Chief and the Chief of the General Staff, Colonel-General Halder, forced the Greek army in Macedonia to capitulate after only five days of resistance, established

contact with the Italian forces advancing from Albania, occupied Salonika, forced Serbia to capitulate after 12 days and thus generally prepared the way for the difficult and glorious break-through via Larissa to Athens. These operations were crowned by the occupation of the Peloponnesus and numerous Greek islands. A detailed appreciation of this achievement of truly historic importance will be given by the German High Command, whose chief, Fieldmarshal Keitel, and General Jodl have, as always, done excellent work in these operations.

The Air Force's Job

The Air Force under the personal command of the Reich Marshal and the Chief of his General Staff, General Jeschonneck, was divided into two main groups commanded by Colonel-General Loehr and General von Richthofen. It was their task, 1. to shatter the enemy air forces and to destroy its ground organization; 2. to attack every important military objective in Belgrade, the conspirator's headquarters, thus eliminating it from the very outset; 3. to cooperate everywhere with the fighting land forces by all possible means; 4. to break the enemy's resistance; to impede the enemy's flight; to prevent as far as possible his subsequent embarkation, and to render valuable assistance to the operations of the army by airborne and parachute units.

Members of the Reichstag! The German armed forces have truly surpassed themselves in this campaign. The Army's initial disposition for the advance was fraught with tremendous difficulties. The attack upon the positions, which were heavily fortified in certain places, particularly on the front in Thrace, was among the most difficult tasks which could confront an army. In this campaign, tank units have fought over country which had previously been considered impassable for them. Mechanized units performed feats that warrant the highest praise for the men, for their capacity, their courage, their endurance and also for the quality of their materiel. Infantry, tank, and mountain troop divisions, as well as units of the SS, rivalled one another in a continuous display of courage, devotion, endurance, and determination in attaining their respective objectives. The work of the General Staff was again truly magnificent.

The Air Force for its part has added particular fame to its already great renown. With a devotion to duty and a courage which can be appreciated only by one acquainted with the difficulties of the country, it launched attacks, until recently considered impossible, often under extremely bad climatic conditions, for days on end. AA-guns, as always, accompanied the infantry, and

tank divisions operated over roads which can scarcely be called bridle-paths.

There is only one way of characterizing this campaign: Nothing is impossible for the German soldier. The drivers of the tanks as well as those of the road vehicles, the drivers of service units, of the artillery and of AA-gun tractors have earned special mention in this theater of war. For their fighting against fortified positions as well as for the repairing of bridges and roads, our engineers deserve special praise. The signallers deserve the highest esteem.

On mud-bound tracks, across blown-up roads, over boulders and rocks and on narrow mountain paths, through raging torrents, over broken bridges, through high passes and across bare cliffs, this victorious campaign brought the war to an end in two countries in a scant three weeks. We fully realize that our allies have played a great part in these successes. Especially the six months struggle by Italy against Greece, under most difficult conditions and at the cost of great sacrifices, not only held off the main part of the Greek army, but above all weakened it to such an extent that its collapse was already inevitable.

The Hungarian army once more demonstrated its old military renown. It occupied Batchka Province and advanced across the Save with mechanized units.

A Tribute to Greek Bravery

However, historical justice obliges me to say that of all the opponents that have taken up arms against us, the Greek soldier especially fought with the greatest bravery, supreme courage and contempt of death. He capitulated only when further resistance became impossible and therefore useless.

Now I am compelled to speak of the enemy who was the main cause of this conflict. As a German and as a soldier, I consider it unworthy ever to revile a brave enemy. Yet it seems to be necessary to defend the truth from the wild exaggerations of a man who as a soldier is a bad politician and as a politician is an equally bad soldier. *Mr. Churchill, who started this conflict, is, just as in the case of Norway and Dunkirk, trying to say something that may sooner or later still be twisted about to resemble a success. I do not consider that honorable; but in his case, I think it understandable. If another man had experienced as many defeats as a politician and as many catastrophes as a soldier he would not have remained in office six months unless he also possessed the sole gift that Mr. Churchill does possess: the gift of lying with a pious expression on his face, and of distorting the truth until finally glorious victories*

are fabricated from the most terrible defeats. In this way Mr. Churchill may be able to throw dust in the eyes of his fellow countrymen, but he cannot eliminate the consequences of his defeats.

A British army of 60 or 70,000 men was landed in Greece. Before the catastrophe, the same man maintained that it consisted of 240,000 men. The object of this army was to attack Germany from the South, defeat her, and from this point, as in 1918, to turn the tide of the war. The accomplice again chosen by Churchill and driven into misfortune by him—in this case Yugoslavia—was destroyed within barely two weeks after the beginning of hostilities. Scarcely three weeks later, the British troops in Greece had either been killed or wounded, taken prisoner, drowned, or driven off. Those are the facts.

Exposure of British Demagoguery

In my last speech I announced that wherever Britons might set foot on the Continent they would be attacked by us and driven into the sea. I have, therefore, prophesied more correctly than Mr. Churchill. Now, with his brazen effrontery, he asserts that this war cost us 75,000 lives, i. e. more than double the losses of the Western Campaign. In fact, he goes still further; he informs his seldom very intelligent fellow countrymen through one of his hirelings that, after having slain enormous masses of Germans, the British finally turned away from sheer abhorrence of the slaughter and, strictly speaking, withdrew for this reason alone. Thus, the Australians and New Zealanders would still be in Greece today if the Englishmen, with their rare mixture of lionlike bravery and childlike softheartedness, had not killed so many Germans that they finally withdrew horrified by their own heroic deeds, took to their ships, and sailed away. That is probably the reason why we found practically none but Australians and New Zealanders among the dead or among the prisoners. That is the sort of thing a so-called democratic people will swallow.

The Balkan Campaign In Figures

I shall now present to you the results of this campaign in a few simple figures:

In the course of the operations against Yugoslavia, we captured the following number of purely Serbian prisoners: 6,298 officers and 336,864 men (leaving out all soldiers of German origin, as well as the Croats and Macedonians, most of whom were immediately released). These figures are not final, but are merely the result of preliminary estimates. The number of Greek prisoners, amounting to 8,000 officers and 210,000 men does not have

the same significance, since, as far as the Greek armies in Macedonia and Epirus were concerned, they were encircled by the joint German-Italian operations and thereby forced to capitulate. The Greek prisoners were also released at once, or will be, because of the bravery they have shown throughout the campaign. The number of Englishmen, New Zealanders and Australians taken prisoner exceeds 9,000 officers and men.

The booty can not be even approximately estimated at present. According to the estimates available at this time, the share of booty due to the operations of the German forces amounts to more than half a million rifles, far more than a thousand guns, many thousand machine guns, anti-aircraft weapons, trench mortars, numerous vehicles and large amounts of ammunition and equipment. To this I would like to add the amount of tonnage sunk by the Air Force: 75 ships totalling 400,000 tons were destroyed; 147 ships totalling 700,000 tons were damaged.

These results were achieved by the following German forces:

1. 31 full and two half-divisions in all were set apart for the operations in the Southeast. The disposition of these forces, preparatory to the advance, was completed in seven days.

2. Of these, the following took part in the actual fighting: 11 infantry and Alpine divisions; 6 tank divisions, and 3 full and 2 half mechanized divisions of the Army and the armed SS Troops.

3. Of these detachments, 11 were engaged in more than six days of fighting, and 10 in less.

4. 11 detachments were not engaged in fighting at all.

5. Three detachments were relieved before the termination of operations in Greece; three further detachments were not brought up from the rear because they were no longer needed, and two detachments were stopped in the process of unloading.

6. Only 5 of these detachments took part in fighting with the British. Of the 3 tank divisions included in this figure, only two were in action. The third was halted in the course of operations and withdrawn because it was no longer required.

The German Losses

In conclusion, I should like to point out that only two tank divisions, one Alpine division and the SS Bodyguard were actually used against the English, the New Zealanders and the Australians. The losses of the German Army and of the German Air Forces, as well as those of the SS Troops, in this campaign are the smallest that we have suffered so far. In fighting against Yugoslavia and

Greece, as well as against Britain in Greece, the German armed forces suffered the following losses:

The Army and SS troops: 57 officers and 1,042 non-commissioned officers and men killed, 181 officers and 3,571 non-commissioned officers and men wounded and 13 officers and 372 non-commissioned officers and men missing.

The Air Force: 10 officers and 42 non-commissioned officers and men killed, and 36 officers and 104 non-commissioned officers and men missing.

Members of the Reichstag! Once more I must repeat that we feel the hardship of the sacrifice borne by the families concerned, and that the entire German nation expresses to them its heartfelt gratitude. Measured as a whole, however, the losses sustained are so small that they constitute the supreme justification: 1. for the planning and timing of this campaign; 2. for the conduct of operations, and 3. for the manner in which they were carried through. The training of our officers, which is excellent beyond comparison, the high standard of efficiency of our soldiers, the superiority of our equipment, the quality of our munitions, and the indomitable courage of all ranks—all these factors have combined to gain for us, at such small sacrifice a success of truly decisive historic importance, at a time when the two allied Axis powers were actually able to turn the tables within a few weeks on the so-called success of the British forces in North Africa. These actions—linked forever with the name of General Rommel—carried out by the German African corps and by the Italian forces in the struggle for the Cyrenaica, cannot be separated from the operations in the Balkans.

Churchill Loses Two Wars At One Blow

Churchill, one of the most hopeless dabblers in strategy, thus managed to lose two theaters of war at one blow. The fact that this man who would be court-martialed in any other country gains fresh admiration as Prime Minister in his own cannot be construed as an expression of magnanimity such as was accorded by Roman senators to generals honorably defeated in battle; it is merely proof of that perpetual blindness with which the gods afflict those whom they are about to destroy.

The consequences of this campaign are extraordinary, in view of the fact that a small clique of conspirators in Belgrade was again able to foment trouble in the service of extra-continental interests. The radical elimination of this danger means the removal of an element of tension for the whole of Europe.

The Danube, as an important waterway, is thus safeguarded against any further acts of sabotage in the future. Traffic has been resumed in full. Apart from a modest correction of its frontiers, which were infringed as a result of the outcome of the Great War, the Reich has no special territorial interests in these parts. As far as politics are concerned, we are merely interested in safeguarding peace in this region, while, in the realm of economics, we wish to see an order which will allow the production of goods to be developed and the exchange of products to be resumed in the interests of all.

European Readjustment

It is, however, only in accordance with supreme justice if interests founded upon ethnographical, historical, or economic conditions are also taken into account. But in this development, Germany is merely an interested spectator. We are gratified that our Allies are now in a position to satisfy their legitimate national and political ambitions.

We are pleased by the establishment of an independent state of Croatia with which we hope to be able to cooperate forever on terms of friendship and trust. This can lead only to mutual advantage, especially in the economic sphere. We are sincerely gratified that the Hungarian people can take another step in the revision of the unjust peace treaties once imposed upon them. We are especially moved by the fact that the injustice done to Bulgaria is being made good, for we believe that by making this revision possible by the force of their arms, the German people have paid off a historic debt of gratitude owing to our faithful brother-in-arms of the Great War. The fact that our ally, Italy, now obtains the territorial and political influence in her vital space which is her just due, has been more than earned as the result of the great sacrifices in blood which she has made since October of last year for the future of the Axis. We are filled with sincere sympathy for the vanquished and unhappy Greek people. They are the victims of their king and of a small dazzled upper stratum. They have, however, fought so courageously that their enemies cannot but respect them.

The Serbian people will perhaps learn from this catastrophe the one true lesson—that those officers who led the putsch are a misfortune for their country. Perhaps this time, however, all the sufferers will not so quickly forget the extremely gentlemanlike manner in which the country for which they had the honor of sacrificing themselves, and its leaders, have written them off in accord-

ance with the delightful principle that a duty well-performed is rewarded by nothing but ingratitude. Seldom has greater cynicism been displayed towards the sacrifices of small peoples than in this case. *For to incite nations to war as supporters and then to declare that from the very outset one did not believe in victory, and that the sole object was to force another who did not wish to fight in this theater of war to take up the fight there, is probably the most disgraceful thing that has ever occurred in world history.*

Only in an age in which capitalistic greed is so united with political hypocrisy as is the case in the democracies today, can the dishonor of such procedure be considered so small that those responsible for it can even boast of it publicly.

The Importance of German Training and Materiel

Deputies, Men of the Reichstag! When we survey this last campaign, we shall be able to realize exactly how important are the excellent equipment and training of the soldier. So much blood was saved simply because so much hard work was done beforehand. The ability which our soldiers derived from their constant laborious training proved to be of the greatest value in this war. Thanks to this training, the ability of the German soldier and that of his leaders, a maximum of effect was obtained with a minimum of bloodshed. But this minimum in sacrifices demands a maximum in weapons, in the quality of these weapons, in munitions, and in the quality of these munitions.

I am not one of those who see in war a material problem alone. For material is a dead substance. Only man gives it life. But even the best soldier must fail if he is given bad or insufficient weapons. Therefore, the lives of many of our sons are in the hands of those at home, whose hard work can save the blood of our soldiers. Therefore, having in mind the men fighting at the front, it is the highest duty of the German people to do their utmost to produce the arms which they need. For, besides all the other causes which led to the losses of the Great War, there was the lack of an offensive weapon capable of deciding the war at that time, and the absence of a suitable defensive weapon. Our soldiers have proved in this campaign what they can do. The total of the efforts made by individuals and the nation as a whole can never be judged by those at home. The labor which these can place at the disposal of the nation in this fateful struggle, however great it may be, is nothing compared to what millions of our men have achieved, must achieve and will achieve at the fronts. And I should not like to see another country ever excel us in this achievement. Not only that; we are all obliged to make sure that the

lead which we now possess becomes not smaller but increasingly larger. This is not a problem of capital, but exclusively a problem of work, and therefore a problem of our will and our ability.

The Important Role of the Home Front

I believe that in this the German girl and the German woman, above all, can make an additional contribution. Millions of German women are working on the land and must do the hardest kind of work in place of men. Millions of German women and girls are working in factories, workshops and offices and are giving a good account of themselves. It is not unfair if we demand that these millions of German working women be an example to many hundreds of thousands of others. Though we are in a position today to mobilize the labor of more than half of Europe for this war, our own people stand decidedly at the head of this labor organization.

When the democratic agitators of a country to which the German people have never done any harm but whose statesmen impute offensive intentions to the German people—which is nothing but an absurd lie—threaten to choke the National Socialist people's state with the force of their capitalistic system and of their material production because it has become irksome to them, there can only be one answer: The German people will never again experience a year such as 1918, but will rise to still higher achievements in all branches of national resistance. They will profess more fanatically than ever the axiom that neither force of arms nor time will ever make us yield, let alone break us. They will, therefore, maintain the superiority of their armaments, and in no circumstances will allow their lead to be reduced.

If the German soldier already possesses the best weapons in the world today, he will receive still better ones this year and next year. If the material side of the conflict does not weigh heavily upon him, as it did in the Great War, all this will certainly not become worse but will improve in the future. We are therefore under an obligation to incorporate the working capacity of the whole nation into the task, and produce the mightiest armament process the world has ever seen. The measures necessary to bring this about are being taken with National Socialist determination and thoroughness.

For the rest, I can only assure you that I look into the future with perfect tranquility and the greatest confidence. In military, economic and, above all, moral respect, the German Reich and its Allies represent a force superior to any possible coalition in the world. The German armed forces

will always do their part, whenever and wherever it may be necessary. The confidence of the German people will always accompany their soldiers. It knows that this war is only the consequence of the greed of some international war-mongers and of the hatred of the Jewish democracies backing them. These criminals have refused every German offer of peace because it did not conform to their capitalistic interests.

But any man, who, while undertaking such a satanic thing, dares to take the word "God" upon his lips, commits sacrilege against Providence and can, we profoundly believe, reap nothing but annihilation. Thus we are not only fighting for our own existence today, but for the liberation of the world from a conspiracy which has subjected the happiness of nations and of human beings to its detestable egoism in the most unscrupulous fashion. The National Socialist movement conquered these enemies at home after a struggle of fifteen years. The National Socialist state will also overthrow its enemies in the outside world. The year 1941 will be inscribed in history as the greatest year of the rise of our nation. To this end, the German forces, the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, will carry out their duty.

Germany Shall Never Fail Her Destiny

Let me now express my thanks to the German soldiers who have performed such marvelous feats in this new campaign. My thanks also to the German people, in town and country, whose industry has contributed to make it possible for us to achieve these successes. My particular thanks to those German fellow countrymen who have lost their lives or have been wounded as victims of this war, and to all the loved ones who mourn these victims.

Looking up to the Almighty who guides human destiny, let us be particularly thankful that He has made it possible for us to achieve those great successes with so little bloodshed. We can only beg Him not to forsake our people in the future. All that lies in our power to beat off our enemy shall be done. A spirit the world has never overcome has sprung to life in this country. A common faith inspires our people. What we have won for ourselves, through a long succession of internal conflicts, and what makes us so proud when we face other nations, cannot be wrested from us by any power in the world. In a Jewish capitalistic age obsessed by the lure of gold, rank and class, the National Socialist state stands like a solid monument to social justice and plain common sense. It will survive not only this war, but a thousand years to come.