

ANALYSIS OF HITLER'S SPEECH ON THE26TH APRIL, 1942.

The object of this analysis is to reconstruct, if possible, what was in Hitler's mind when he composed and delivered the speech. Its content would presumably reflect his morbid mental tendencies on the one hand and special knowledge available to him, on the other hand. Naturally, any such analysis is speculative.

In a previous memorandum on Hitler's mental state, written in January, it was claimed that there are three morbid tendencies discernible:

Shamanism, epilepsy and paranoia.

Shamanism is an exploitation of hysterical symptoms by which the Shaman works himself up in the presence of a crowd until he believes he is transmitting messages from the spirits. In the previous memorandum it was claimed that Hitler's Shamanistic tendencies were diminishing, so that there would be fewer public appearances and these would become less histrionic. This now seems to be confirmed.

The most outstanding characteristic of this speech was the dull flatness of delivery, as compared with his usual elocution. If his Shamanism is diminishing, this would imply an increase of one or both of his other two pathological tendencies.

Epilepsy. Psychologically an epileptic shows a cold rather than less egoism, tending to dominate over whatever altruism and human sympathy may be present. The result of the advance of this tendency is the dropping of diplomatic indirect approach to goals in favour of less pains-taking frontal attacks: the leader becomes a driver. This is accompanied by a loss of emotional rapport, which is often betrayed by the "epileptic voice sign", that is, loss of normal emotional flexibility in speaking, which produces "plateau speech" and, most important of all: a deterioration due to lack of interest. The epileptic loses heart when foiled in some ambition. He may become more egotistic in fantasy about himself, but faith in reaching his objective lapses. Where the normal individual will try again when once foiled, the epileptic gives up his quest. There are indications of these changes in this speech.

The first half is taken up with arguments about European history and Jewish intrigues. During this, only 15 words or phrases were given a normal emphasis. The rest was read in a dull flat voice, to which he reverted from time to time during the remainder of the speech. He woke up when rehearsing the story of German successes since 1939, but was really himself only during his sustained irony in comparing the "encouragements" of the Democracies with the achievements of the Reich. The speech ended with no elocutionary peroration. In the previous memorandum I said the indications were that Hitler would become less of a leader and more of a driver, that he would put screws on civilians rather than on the Army. In this speech there is little of the inspiring crusader; it is focussed rather on his demand for the legal right to over-ride laws and forbid leave. The latter privilege is to be withdrawn specifically from civilians. What are they offered in return? Merely these words of thanks, "The Homeland supported me in this struggle/Russian winter campaign/. For that I thank you, not only on my behalf but, above all, on behalf of our soldiers". Preceding this perfunctory expression of gratitude there are about 800 words of praise and thanks to German and Allied troops, and it is followed by 120 words of praise for various Party organisations.

The third epileptic change is loss of interest. In this speech Hitler says, "I speak to you as someone who, for the sake of the sacred task has gone through the worst struggle of his life". He takes credit for having remained steadfast in an impossible situation. From this struggle he does not seem to have emerged unscathed. According to some military authorities, the survival of the German army after the forced retirement last winter is one of the greatest triumphs for morale in the history of warfare. Hitler, it is true, has argued that mere survival constituted a great victory. But he makes no confident prediction of triumph over Russia, nor does he glory in the achievements of last summer's campaign. It is dismissed in 65 words with the statement that the Bolshevik frontier had been pushed back 1000 kilometers, - in the same sentence is the claim that 16 million tons of Allied shipping was sunk during the same period, and that more would be sunk - and that the Russian gauge was changed over a mileage greater than that of English railways. Against these 65 words are set some 700 in the description of the horrors of the Russian winter. One's impression is that he was more disheartened by the winter than he was confident of the future. His predictions are in sufficient contrast to his prophecies in earlier speeches to justify enumeration.

The first is, that England will end the war weaker than her Allies. Next comes the prediction that the millions in the Democracies subjugated by the Jews will rise in revolt against them. Then he winds up in his diatribes about Jewry by saying (in a flat voice) "In the East lies the battlefield where the issue will be decided." After recounting the horrors of the winter, he says "the lessons learned will mean better equipment and organisation next winter. This spring, however, will show whether the Russians' losses were worth while, or not. He is doing all that is humanly possible, and the future will show whether or not that is enough. England will be bombed till Churchill falls. The Bolshevik colossus will be smashed. Thirteen words are enough to deal with this Russian defeat, but he then requires more than 250 words to describe what the U-boats are going to do. There is no prediction of final Japanese victory, and the speech ends on the "Sein oder nicht sein" note. Defeat would be the end of Germany, but it is England that will lose: "Truth will conquer in the end, and Truth is with us." A long war is envisaged, and he asks the Almighty to keep him, personally, alive, only so long as he can be useful to Germany - hardly an optimistic peroration!

There can be no doubt that this is the speech of a man who is seriously contemplating the possibility of utter defeat, and sees hope for victory only in successful blockade of Britain by U-boat warfare. He dare not hope for the destruction of the British Empire and the U.S.A. by Japan, because that would mean the realisation of the Yellow Peril. There could be two explanations for his despondency, and they are not mutually exclusive. They are: actual proof of German inability to crush Russia, and the epileptic's abandonment of a programme that has been unsuccessful.

It may well be that the General Staff has concluded that German transport is insufficient for the task of subjugating Russia. Hitler boasts of having changed the gauge of Russian railways over a mileage greater than that of English railways. This would mean the provision of locomotives and rolling stock roughly equivalent to what serviced the Reich before June, 1941. It is quite possible that Leningrad and Moscow were not taken last autumn, simply because a sufficiently heavy attack could not be made at the end of long lines of insufficient communication. Then the winter destroyed large numbers of motors and locomotives, as Hitler admits. It may have become clear that a general advance in Russia is incompatible with a maintenance of communications at home.

When Hitler refers to the locomotives, etc., that will be prepared for next winter's needs, he has in mind the knowledge that the necessary extra transport cannot be made in time for a

1942 campaign. If this surmise be correct, it would mean that the talk which German publicity maintains about a general offensive against Russia, is designed to comfort those at home and keep the armies of the Reich's enemy on tenterhooks.

"If you don't succeed at once, try, try, try again" is not the motto of an epileptic. The epileptic, when frustrated, loses interest and abandons the quest. Pride is his chief motive, and if he fails, he is undone. In my last memorandum I wrote: "So long as German might was invincible and Hitler's plans were successful, the Volk could believe they were a Chosen People, and that their Führer was its Messiah. Now that a set-back has come, they can regard it as temporary, but their leader cannot, if he has regarded himself as all-wise and all-powerful." In October 1941 Hitler predicted the capture of Moscow and the annihilation of the Russian army as specific achievements. For the first time in this war he has been unequivocally wrong. But even when his name was not associated specifically with the campaign he has twice abandoned an effort which failed of immediate success, and thereby lost whatever return might have been possible for the initial sacrifices. When the R.A.F. maintained defence against day raids, the Luftwaffe abandoned them although Fighter Command was almost utterly exhausted. Similarly, night bombing was dropped when the British public failed to panic.

If these were Hitler's decisions, they were what might be expected of an epileptic who can continue any programme only as long as it seems to be successful. This speech is compatible with the assumption that Hitler has given up hope of wholesale destruction of the Russian armies, although he may still hope for local successes, such as capture of the Caucasus, while he really does bank on U-boat successes as the only way in which a German victory could be achieved. The speech is not compatible with the assumption that he believes Russia can be crushed, and at least on the date of the Reichstag Meeting he had given up the idea of a general offensive this year. No-one interested in the maintenance of morale would have painted a highly coloured picture of the Russian winter, and then spoken of that ordeal having to be faced again, if there was any chance of victory this year.

The third aspect of Hitler's abnormality is in his paranoid ideas. These are concerned with his Messiahship, his leading the Chosen People in a successful crusade against the forces of Evil, which are the Jews and the governments under their control. This system has now somewhat expanded: The New Order in Europe has been substituted for the Nordic "Blood-soil" myth. Considering the speech was to the Reichstag, and therefore essentially domestic, it is astonishing to hear so little in it about Germany and so much about Europe. His epileptic egotism seems to have dominated over his paranoia. He cannot be leader of the "allies" and the Messiah of the Nordics; so he chooses the former. There has, however, been a complementary extension of the Jew phobia: at one time international Jewry was bent merely, or chiefly, on destruction of Germany. Now it is more of a universal diabolical agency. Here his thinking becomes quite disordered: on the one hand it is the Jewish poison, identified with Bolshevism, that will destroy the British Empire, the U.S.A. and Russia, these countries being assumed to be victorious in this war and, on the other, the non-Jewish peoples in these countries will rise against the Jews as Germany has done. To a psychiatrist this part of his speech suggests that Hitler is caught up in a web of religious delusions: the Jews are the incarnation of Evil, while he is the incarnation of the Spirit of Good. He is a god by whose sacrifice victory over Evil may be achieved. He does not say this in so many words, but such a system of ideas would rationalise what he does say that is otherwise obscure. The notion of a great military victory has passed into the background, while he poses more as a martyr, the speech ending on the theme

of his death. The tendency of the epileptic to abandon an endeavour that seems fruitless, and the paranoic's delusion of divinity are combined in this "dying god" myth. It is probably impossible to exaggerate the importance of this delusion for German morale.

Hitler has owed his mystical sway over the people to his personification of fundamental German ideas and ideals. So far, he has been the Super-man representing Nordic superiority and conquest, but paralleling this there has always existed in Germany a superstitious belief in the forces of Evil, which is expressed in pessimistic philosophy, defeatism, nemesis and so on. Germans seem to swing between the extremes of vainglorious triumph and supine fatalism. Being undemocratic by habit, movement in one direction or the other is - from our point of view - strangely dependent on the attitude of their leaders. The Weimar Republic failed largely because it lacked confident leaders. Hitler was able to displace it because of his convincing pose of assured aggressiveness. If he swings, emotionally, towards defeatism, the people will flop over towards that extreme.

In composing this speech, Hitler, although reacting to them in a morbid way, must have been moved by events themselves. It is therefore possible that he may have betrayed certain facts that ought to have been censored, or more likely, that he may have given away what really worried him about the contemporary situation. He shows no concern over food or raw material shortage, none about man-power or munitions. But he does let one cat out of the bag. That is: transport. He says that in conquered Russian territory a mileage greater than that of Britian's railways was converted from broad to standard gauge. This would put a strain on supplies of German rolling stock, particularly of locomotives - a strain that could be met only by reducing traffic in the Reich, unless there had been held in readiness a large surplus. Did it exist? Hitler inadvertently admits that it did not. The intense cold was hard on the troops, but worse for motors and locomotives. Many of them were destroyed. The maintenance of supplies became the major problem, and this was solved by his taking ruthless action. What the action was, we can only guess, but by it he had conquered the fate that had overcome Napoleon. (See Footnote). How disciplinary action could affect the weather is obscure, but I believe that this very obscurity and the apparent irrelevancy of discipline is significant of Hitler's perturbation over this problem. He goes on to make what must have been for his audience the most depressing utterance in his speech, namely, that next winter equipment will be more "cold-proof". It is shortage of transport which necessitates another year of war. Transport seems in Hitler's mind to be Germany's Achilles heel.

There is, of course, evidence that the German railways are overburdened, and that bombing of centres like Cologne are not easing the situation. But from the psychological point of view, a fact is not so important as the belief arising from evaluation of the fact. If Hitler is determining German strategy, and if he believes transport to be weak, then certain predictions may be made as to the enemy's military plans for the coming months.

1) No general offensive against Russia, no attempt to annihilate the Bolshevik armies. Such offensives as are made will aim only at advances which will not greatly extend lines of communication.

2) So long as the Russians seem able to maintain pressure in the East, no invasion of Britain would be possible.

3) This leaves U-boat warfare and bombing as the only possible forms of aggression against Britain.

4) Because Hitler has tried the Luftwaffe against England and failed, with his epileptic defeatism, he will not try it again.

Assuming these predictions to be valid, the following should be useful tasks for our propoganda:

- 1) Build up the picture of Hitler as a stricken Messiah and of the tragic fate which always dogs German footsteps.
- 2) Present, in parallel, the necessity of speedy victory, and the proof that the war has become one of attrition and will therefore be a long one.
- 3) Argue, specifically that there can be no large offensive against Russia and none at all against Britain, until transport is built up, and keep pointing out the manifest weakness of the German railways.
- 4) Discount the success of U-boat warfare by continual stories of English comfort and growing armaments.
- 5) Taunt the Luftwaffe with its impotence.
- 6) Emphasise the power of the R.A.F. to destroy food stores and to prevent food distribution by attacking communications.

J. T. M. 10th June, 1942

Footnote: This might or might not represent an illusion of divine control over the weather. One would think that even German credulity would be strained by such an assumption of divinity. But Dr. Ley accepts just this interpretation in a speech on May 5th, that was largely a commentary on Hitler's Reichstag pronouncements: "Napoleon was broken by the Russian winter: but Hitler broke the Russian winter."