

ADDITIONS, INTEGRATIONS, CORRECTIONS AND SUPPLEMENTS TO THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ARNOLD JOSEPH TOYNBEE*

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Addition to Part I, Works by Arnold J. Toynbee

A.J. Toynbee, Contribution to *Germany and the Rhineland*, A record of the proceedings of three meetings held at Chatham House on March 18th, March 25th and April 2nd, 1936, Special Supplement to «International Affairs», The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, London, April, 1936, pp. 18-19.

NOTE

Toynbee's comment on Harold Nicholson, *Germany and the Rhineland*, Address given at Chatham House on March 18th, 1936, with the Viscount Astor in the Chair, ivi, pp. 3-12, summed up in the related "Summary of Discussion", ivi, pp. 12-20.

* *A Bibliography of Arnold J. Toynbee*, compiled by S. Fiona Morton, with a Foreword by Veronica M. Toynbee, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1980.

TOYNBEE'S IMPRESSION OF HITLER

Dr. Arnold Toynbee said he was particularly interested in Mr. Nicolson's sketch of Herr Hitler, as he had had the privilege of seeing him for the first time a short while previously, at a very interesting moment. It was the very day after the French Chamber had ratified the Franco-Russian Treaty, and the Chancellor and Herr von Ribbentrop had gone off immediately afterwards to the country, where they had probably decided upon the plan of entering the Rhineland.

Undoubtedly Herr Hitler believed that he had a mission to be the saviour not only of Germany but of Europe from Communism. He had explained to the speaker what sacrifices he had made in order to carry out what he felt to be his European task – for example, in his policy towards Poland; and he was undoubtedly sincere in his belief.

The real crisis was not so much the immediate problem in the Rhineland as that of Eastern Europe. It was because France had made a treaty with *Russia* that Hitler had gone into the Rhineland.

Mr. Toynbee considered that British policy towards Eastern Europe might be a decisive factor in determining German policy in that quarter at the present moment. It was certain that Hitler wanted our friendship, and he might even be prepared to pay a rather high price in order to get it.

It was also true that Hitler was on strong ground with his own people when he was able to say that he was demanding the restitution of Germany's rights; but he would be on much weaker ground if he were to go out frankly to acquire something which Germany had never possessed before, as would be the case, for instance, if he were to take up the Rosenberg Plan. It would be more difficult to carry his people with him over the non-German regions of Eastern Europe, and the backing of the people is of even more importance with a dictatorial government than it is with a democratic government. In this matter, he would be much more likely to be swayed by the general attitude of Europe than he would be in anything that touched the restitution of German rights. His policy towards Eastern Europe was probably not yet decided, and the line we took would make a great deal of difference.

What we all wanted to know was "What is Germany's limit?". You might take the view that Hitler's system required him to have about two stunts a year, and if he were to govern Germany for another twenty-five years, this would mean about fifty more stunts! But if you took the other view – that Germany might stabilise and settle down – then there might come a point, as it had come in 1922 with her old ally Turkey, when she might say that she had now got restitution and would therefore now stop.

Mr. Toynbee considered that many Germans felt like this. One German, who was rather in the public eye at the present moment, had recently put the matter to Mr. Toynbee in this way: «A widow woman has four children and they are kidnapped by bandits. She screams and she screams, until the bandits say to each other: "Let us give her back one child to stop her screaming!". So they give her back the one child, but she goes on screaming for the other three, and the bandits say again that she is very unreasonable, but they finally give her back two more. Then she still goes on screaming for the fourth, and the bandits say "This woman is impossible; we have given her back three children out of the four, and still she goes on screaming for the fourth child!". The point of the parable was that if you did give her back the fourth child, she would not go on screaming for a fifth, which would be, of course, not hers, but somebody's else's!

Were the Germans going to take that view, which would make it possible to settle with them, and to live in the same world with them? Or was there going to be no limit to their ambition?

Mr. Toynbee thought that the present rulers of Germany were extraordinarily undecided themselves; they seemed to make up their minds on the spur of the moment, and our actions might be the deciding factor in the shaping of their policy. Supposing Hitler said to us: "What terms would you English propose in the East of Europe?". Our answer should be "Come back to the League, but please don't run away with the idea that we English are going to pay mere lip-service to the League when it is a question of the East of Europe. Don't imagine that, if you break out eastward, we shan't mind!". If we did not take this attitude, we might wake up one day to find the Germans masters of Europe, and thereby able to dictate to us. If we said "No!" then, it would mean war. The time to say "No!" was the present – to make it clear that in the East, as in the West of Europe, we intended to take the Germans at their word by

negotiating with them on their offer to stabilise the whole of Europe on the basis of the Covenant of the League of Nations.