

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

The German Riddle. <Speech; delivered in Carthage, November 23>

Mann, Klaus

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THE GERMAN RIDDLE

(30-minute speech; delivered in Carthage, Mo., November 23)

Sometimes when reading or hearing about hardships, suffering of American, British, Russian boys, I feel something like a sudden pang of bad conscience: it's all Germany's fault... (Even Japanese aggression not thinkable without German example and support...)

What is wrong with the Germans???? (Harold Nicholson quotation: "The German character is one of the most fascinating but also but also most disturbing developments of human nature...")
The term "disturbing" - understatement, considering the dimensions of German guilt...:
Germany responsible for two world wars within 3 decades...

Yet, there are decent Germans... now mostly in exile; but not all of them. Would like to believe that even in Germany proper there are still people who know difference between good and evil...

Why don't they revolt??

Our disappointment in 1939, when we expected German revolution as soon as people would be armed - but nothing happened...

Should not have been disappointed -- knowing the Germans as they are... (No resistance in 1933, either) *[Italy I]*

The decent Germans -- most refined, most creative minds -- not interested in politics -- indeed, devoid of any political sense... *

We (Mann family) used to be that way ourselves...: unaware of political developments...: exclusively interested in culture...

Munich memories...

Hitler raises gradually to power, but we refuse to take him seriously...

(Description of Hitler as he watched him in Munich tea room)

Recognized danger only when it had already become overwhelmingly strong... (1939)

Then -- from 1930 on -- tried to warn: in vain.

Our compatriots -- blinded; hypnotized... Believed they could conquer the world with their Fuehrer's help...

They will pay for their folly...: they are paying now (air raids)

But mankind suffers with them, all over the world:

flood of blood, sweat and tears -- caused by the morbid dreams of German would-be conquerors...

How can repetition of disaster be avoided?

→ UNITY OF UNITED NATIONS GERMANS TO BE DISARMED

RE-EDUCATION OF GERMAN PEOPLE ←

DIFFICULTIES & PROSPECTS

* Goethe: "Germany is nothing, but every German is a great deal, though the Germans fancy the reverse to be true..."