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The German Riddle. (Speech.)

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Tag d. Veranstaltung

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THE GERMAN RIDDLE

(Speech; December 7, 1943; Joplin, Kiwanis Club)

.....Glad to be with you here - just a few days before leaving for overseas duty... :

..... : to be with you on a day the significance of which I don't need to emphasize: PEARL HARBOR - means a stirring symbol to every American.... Will be ~~av~~enged, before long...

Speaking of our coming victory over Japan:

One Man's "Peace-with-Japan Plan":

American officer, who learned to speak Japanese as a boy in Tokyo:
"You know, I think the war will go this way. In about a year the Japs will be fed up with the whole thing and overthrow the TOJO government and sue for peace. And I think we should give it to them. Then we'll be happy over here, and they'll be happy raising flowers and goldfish over there..... In six months or so everyone will have forgotten the whole thing. Then's when we can bomb the holy hell out of them, like they did at Pearl Harbor..."

→ We - coming from Europe - inclined to UNDERRATE importance of war in the Pacific.

However, Japanese danger as ominous and universal as Nazi challenge...

Affinities between Nazi-Jap philosophies and tactics:

"Master Race" - World Domination...

Cult of the Leader (Emperor-Fuehrer)

Contempt of human life...

Contempt of truth (rampant propaganda)

"The New Order" (in Asia & Europe...)

*Ruthlessness
Heroism
Trickery*

fanaticism

→ Hitlers plan - when he recognizes that defeat is inevitable, he will not committ suicide nor will he surrender; but gather picked Party chieftains, generals, technical experts, and lead them in an enormous SUBMARINE FLOTILLA to Tokyo. There he will prolongue War for some years, by boosting Nipponese production to never-dreamed-of height. In due time - Hitler presumes - Allies will quarrel among themselves; their power will disintegrate, and he will return to his triumphant re-conquest of Europe....

Weird tale - maybe fabrication.... There may be something to it, however. No reason to doubt that Japan plays important role in Hitler's sinister projects and calculations...

*Japan would now have dared to
provoke present war, without
encouragement from Germany...*

Paradoxical combination: the nation who has established veritable cult of Nordic Race - fraternizing with other nation despising white man altogether and determined to conquer world for yellow race....

..... However, this is by no means the only enigmatic and paradoxical aspect of Germany ^{policy} ~~German national character~~ - consists of riddles, contradictions...

~~How is it possible that the same people produced symphonies & cathedrales - and concentration camps? Created books - to burn them.... Highly civilized - and barbaric...~~

HAROLD NICHOLSON:

~~but also~~ "The German character is one of the most fascinating and most disturbing developments of human nature..."

The term "disturbing" - typically British understatement...

Germany responsible for two world wars within three decades....

some minor disturbance indeed!

What is wrong with the Germans?

Clearly, there must be SOMETHING wrong with them... Most of them seem nice enough fellows - efficient, friendly, punctual, sensible. But if the average German is a civilized human being - as he appears to be - how can it be explained that the Germans, as a national body, are obviously possessed by morbid impulses and aggressive manias? If Germany's great men - musicians, scholars, poets and inventors - were capable of contributing so richly and essentially to the grandeur of human culture, why is the sum of all Germans - GERMANY - so alarmingly prone to destructive follies? The very nation which produced lofty symphonies and cathedrales, which excels in scientific discoveries and solid craftsmanship - the neatest, smartest, most ingenious nation is also guilty of the most sordid excesses - polluting civilization with blatant lies and rampant violence....

The nation of Weimar and Bayreuth is responsible also for the horrors of Warsaw, Rotterdam and Lidice; for the disgrace of concentration camps and programs. What extraordinary contrasts! What perplexing contradictions!

What is German? Who represents the German character?

If Goethe is German - how could Goebbels be German too?

It was Goethe - Germany's most illustrious son and most merciless critic - who said:

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

This means: Germans, gifted, trustworthy as individuals;
treacherous, dangerous.... as a nation...

Lack of political instinct, interest; common sense....

~~lack of~~ German intellectuals - anti-political; ready to follow
leader... Political consciousness awakens ^{despite} slowly....

Family Example...

Munich memories.... Father, anti-political...

Cultural interests.... :theater, music, etc.

Ignoring Hitler - minor charlatan....

Travels; successes; etc. Meanwhile: danger growing...

1930: Nazi triumph in Reichstag elections....

Begin to sense imminence of disaster....

Start campaigning against Nazis...

Half re-assured when watching Hitler in Munich team room...

my impression: "mean little man... not to be taken seriously"

1933: Exile as a matter of course....

Friends arrested...

PARENTS ABROAD..... : unforgettable telephone conversation...

EXILE.... "EXPATRIATED"

Our unwished-for warnings...

Appeasement..... : MUNICH.....

Going to U.S.

Now, whole family contributing to Allied War Effort:

Father.... (Kansas City meeting...)

Erika.....

Golo

Micheal (babies...)

Elizabeth Borgese...

Monika (TRAGEDY)

Family example proves: German individuals can change...

Necessary re-education: may take long....

One of the leading nations within the framework of our civilization
has to be handled as a gifted but dangerous boy, who must be
watched and controlled by strict though well-meaning masters...

~~Defeated Germany: has to be disarmed, policed, (maybe Reich
dismembered)~~ Defeated Germany: has to be disarmed, policed, (maybe Reich
dismembered) and re-educated.... Long, tedious process:

but vitally necessary!

Of more direct relevance: GERMAN MORALE.... Effect of air raids;

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Speech
(Notes)

+ Effect of ⁴ - History. A Real Announcement

Berlin destruction.... "Twilight of the Gods....": Wagnerian memories.... Astounding song of official HITLER YOUTH - glorifying 800 doom....

Rosenberg's preparations:

"Even in the case of a German defeat and the sort of peace that would result from it, National Socialist ideas must never be abandoned..."

....organizing so-called Ordensburgen (orders of Teutonic Knights: 13th Century....: to keep Nazi doctrines alive...)

.....: That is exactly what has to be prevented.

Majority of population, weary, disgusted...

Paralell, 1918 (Emperor Wilhelm, "next to God"...)

Feeling of relief...

"Thank God..."