

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

The Fortress of Europe.

Mann, Klaus

Sendetermin.

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Of course, it would be dangerous, indeed, disastrous to indulge in wishful thinking, just at this crucial point. The Fortress of Europe has not fallen as yet. Nazism is doomed, but the German armies are still formidable. We must not underrate the resources still at the disposal of the enemy, nor should we belittle his desperate will to resist as long as possible.

But if we ought to be fully and clearly aware of the vast dangers and obstacles still confronting us in Europe, we should perceive and appreciate also the encouraging, indeed, inspiring aspects of the European picture.

The continent we are to invade, or which we are on the point of invading, is by no means a hostile land that has to be conquered, inch by inch, against the will and against the interests of its populations. Quite the contrary, the European peoples are our potential allies. I daresay "the European peoples" without even excluding the Germans, although their case is, of course, particularly complex and ambiguous. But as for the others, they all are on our side - more or less openly, more or less actively so. Nazi Germany has helpless victims and corrupt agents but she has no friends. The Third Reich is utterly isolated. Hitler has succeeded in uniting Europe - against Germany. His "New Order" is one of the most tremendous flops in history.

I know what I am talking about. I know Europe. There is hardly any European country in which I didn't live, for longer or shorter periods of time. I am in a position to tell you, positively and decidedly, that no European nation - none of them! - likes to be dominated by Germany. And that is exactly what Hitler's "New Order" means: the absolute hegemony of the Germanic "master race" over Europe and, subsequently, over the world.

The Germans have never been really popular ^{with the other} ~~among the~~ peoples of Europe. This may sound surprising to many Americans; for in this country there is, as far as I can see, very little or no instinctive animosity to the German nation as such. Hitler and his ilk, Nazism and all it stands for are loathed and despised ^{here} ~~in America~~ - naturally they are; but the Germans, as a people, are not. Yet, curiously, they are rather disliked in Italy and Holland, Belgium and Spain, France and Norway, ~~Germany~~ Poland and Czechoslovakia. Indeed, not even in those countries where the German language is spoken - like Austria and Switzerland - the "Reich" enjoys any particular popularity. On the contrary, the Austrians (- both the sophisticated upper class and the average man in the street) - always heartily disliked the Prussian type, whom they considered unpleasantly arrogant and at the same time slightly ridiculous. And in Switzerland the general aversion to German manners and accents is even more obvious and more deep-rooted. The Swiss - proud and suspicious by nature - profoundly distrust their aggressive, powerful ~~neighbour~~ neighbour. The German-speaking part of Switzerland has more cultural and political affinities to the Western and Latin sphere than to Germany. Cities like Zurich, Bern, and Bale, seem to be closer to Paris than they are to Berlin. Switzerland - for all her jealously cherished "neutrality" -

(The Swiss Republic)

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I remember the faces of Norwegian men and women, I saw and admired when I drove through that beautiful country, from its northern tip down to Oslo - the intelligent, courageous faces of Norwegian peasants and sailors, working men and scholars, housewives, school boys, and soldiers. This is not a race that surrenders or makes compromises. They will know how to get rid of their Quisling, and how to punish him, when the day of reckoning comes.

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I was in Barcelona, Valencia, and Madrid, during the Spanish Civil War, as a correspondent for French and Swiss papers. I have witnessed the fortitude, the dogged endurance of the Spanish anti-Facists and their spirited leaders. Evidently, the Axis cannot count the Spanish people among their potential allies.

And the French? It is absurd to believe that a majority of them ~~ever~~ have ever been in favour of an alliance with Nazi Germany. It was only a corrupt and decadent clique that believed in Collaboration. The French nation was cheated by scoundrels like ^{Pierre} Laval and senile reactionaries like Marshal Pétain. And if France was confused and weary in 1940, she atoned long since for her errors: with infinite suffering she paid for her lack of unity and determination. The France that will emerge from the present calamity will not be the France of Vichy, maybe not even the France of Algiers. It will be the France we used to love and ~~to~~ admire - "la Grande Nation" once ~~again~~ more: the immortal nation which was for

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This is also true of countries like Sweden and Finland, both of which were relatively pro-German, out of their traditional animosity to Russia. But the ^{Nazis} ~~German~~, who may be efficient murderers, are certainly poor diplomats. It seems that their appalling conduct in Norway and

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But the German drama - the abysmal riddle of German psychology is too involved and intricate a subject to be discussed here and now. Suffice it to say that - according to information I have from friends still in Germany - the German faith in victory is crumbling. ~~That is~~ Not that they think themselves already ~~on~~ the verge of defeat. It is senseless to make predictions as to the date on which the Germans will finally recognize the hopelessness of their situation and the wicked madness of the Nazi régime. The ^{only} prophecy I venture to submit is, that this day - (the day of ultimate awakening) - will bring to the Germans a feeling of profound and unexpected relief, rather than a feeling of loss and bitterness. Maybe they don't realize now how degraded and unhappy they are under Hitler's sinister dictatorship. But they will ~~feel~~ understand under what appalling strain they lived for so many years, once they get rid of their tyrant.

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THE WAR IN OUTLINE
15 July 1943

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(Music, ten bars, Wagner selection)

VOICES /

Today at Camp Crowder, there is a young writer and correspondent who lived in Europe during the rise of the Nazis. He saw the spread of Hitlerism in his native countries and now, as a member of the United States armed forces, he hopes to return to Europe in time to witness the downfall of the Nazi leaders. He is Sergeant Klaus Mann, of the 825th Signal Repair Company. His father is the famous author, Thomas Mann. Sgt. Mann will tell us "How Hitler Has United the Fortress of Europe (pause) Against Germany". Sgt. Mann.

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