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"Vogue"

1. I. 42

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His predictions regarding Germany were always based on both exact and detailed information, and an almost uncanny instinct for the "inner German." But his advice was *never* followed—in the case of Spain, for instance, as little as in that of Germany. Conservative, aristocratic Sir Robert, though far from being "pro-red," recognized that a Fascist victory in Spain would be a minor disaster to the Empire; the farce of non-intervention, he argued, was damaging to Britain's political interests, as well as to her moral prestige. He warned, he protested—in vain.

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His face was lit with passionate intelligence and intelligent passion. Surely he is not a "professional hater"; he is neither a frustrated nor a lonely man. Why, then, should he love to hate? His house—an enchanting seventeenth-century house—is filled with beautiful things—pictures, carpets, books. He is an artist, a writer, and by no means primarily the author of propaganda pieces like *Black Record*. He is fond of composing French verses. He has written numerous plays and film scenarios. In fact, even his tactics and concepts in politics are not without certain artistic features.

His emotions are as lucid and definite as his ideas. It is not hatred which he feels, but anguish—the deep and burning anguish of a man who has long seen and foretold the disaster, and has known the means to avoid it. He hates Germany as little as I do—I thought. But too deeply have I experienced myself the agony of an imperative knowledge which nobody chose to share, not to understand his feelings.

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"Your critics," I said, "insist that in *Black Record* you have entirely omitted the brighter and more human elements which can be found in Germany as anywhere else. You have seemingly forgotten all about Germany's great and numerous contributions to our civilization. You have—so they say—distorted the truth by telling it only partly...."

I did not lower my voice, but waited for an answer. "Never," said Lord Vansittart, "never had it been my intention to write a comprehensive study of the German character. *Black Record* meant just to prove two things: (1) the enemy is formidable, and all our efforts are needed to defeat him; (2) defeat is not likely to tame the enemy whose insatiable aggressiveness is a matter of long and notorious standing and has never been affected by either defeat or victory."

"His victory of 1871 has produced no more of a pacifying effect on him than his defeat of 1918. The peaceful and civilized elements which undoubtedly exist and always have existed in Germany are negligible; they are not, and never had been, capable of exercising any moderating influence. To rely on them and again stake the fate of humanity on their ability suddenly to acquire such influence, would be suicidal. In fact," he said, looking at me earnestly, "it would have been better for the Germans themselves if we had abandoned our illusions about them—when it still was time!"

For even now, so he feels, people are not being told the complete and terrible truth; even now, they fail entirely to grasp the real size of the danger. "Most people," Vansittart has written in one of his articles, "are confusing their minds by talking and thinking far too much about Germany. Do not always think how to be safely just to her. Make up your minds that you are going to be just to Germany's victims first and to Germany after. That is vital."

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1. The steps that must be taken immediately following the collapse of Hitler's war-machine must be prepared, politically as well as psychologically. Not only must plans be set up now, but people must also be informed of such plans. For, unless they realize in advance that with the signing of the armistice, nothing will be settled yet, they may be unwilling to face their new tasks when the hour comes.

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PLAN FOR HITLER'S COLLAPSE, FOR A DE-PRUSSIANIZED GERMANY

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Germany must be re-educated, rather than punished, but re-educated to the core. This could not be done without the most elaborate preparations, and it may take a long time.

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