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Peace.

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Ladies and gentlemen,- I am very happy, to be in your midst to-day. The telegram, which invited me to your lovely college, contained, aside from this kindly invitation, nothing but the information, that this is a "peace-strike-meeting" and that I was to speak briefly to the point. Very well. Let us speak briefly and to the point.

I am no politician,- am as little a politician as any of you,- indeed to tell you the truth: some five or six years ago, I was a person politically completely disinterested. One lived in Germany, under a republican form of government: one was passionately interested in such things as art, people, and foreign lands. "Politics" was something for "politicians", who would be sure to make something at least moderately satisfactory of the job,- for was it not their profession and their duty? At least that was, how I thought, and how most of my friends and contemporaries thought. Young Liberals in Germany were not politically minded. They were totally unaggressive in matters of politics, and unwilling to fight. It was their opinion, that Right, Truth and Justice could confidently rely on their inevitable victory, without the need of their specifically battling for this victory, against evil and falsehood, which were sure to resolve themselves into absurdity. In this optimistic composure, however, lies a great danger. We have learned by experience, that it is an error, to leave the offensive in the hands of the powers of evil and violence. The present conditions in this world demand, that the spirit,- Geist,- should desert its innate benevolence and indolence and in spite of these do battle and learn to defend itself. The young German Liberal was interested,- but only in a manner, that was neither sufficiently active, nor sufficiently earnest,- that was rather a little too playful to meet ~~the~~

what was happening in politics among the more determined circles,- at the extreme left, or at the fascistic right. But he was barely involved. And, while in Hamburg, in Berlin, in the industrial centres, deadly fights were occurring each night, while the Nazis were already publicly perpetrating their gross misdemeanours MHHHHHHHHHHHHH in word and deed, and while there could be no manner of doubt as to the murderous and barbarous quality of their aims,- the young German Liberal still believed, he had the right to be "unpolitical", and not to trouble himself about the political witches'-cauldron, whose poisonous emanations were soon to take away his very breath.

In the winter of 1931-32,- that is approximately a year before Hitler came into power, the Frenchwoman Marcelle Capi, renowned pacifist, made a trip through Germany. In all the large cities she spoke of the cause, that she had most at heart,- of the peace, which must reign over Europe, of the readiness for peace existing in her own country,- in France,- of the friendship, which was both possible and necessary between France and Germany, and,- of the other side of the picture: the horrors of war. I, who was at that time a young actress at the Munich Kammerspiel-Theatre, was asked to recite something at Marcelle Capi's meeting,- to speak a bit of prose in favour of peace,- something quite unaggressive, idealistic and pacifistic,- and I accepted the invitation. I shall not forget that evening as long as I live. Marcelle Capi spoke French, so the Nazi-Youths, who were seated sprinkled throughout the audience, did not understand her. Hardly, however, had I begun to speak my little German piece, when they gave their signal to kick up a row. A horde of armed Nazis broke into the hall, overcoming the doormen,-- in from the street they poured,- screaming, yelling, throwing chairs about. The "liberal" police, of course, arrived on the scene much too late. After
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a rather lengthy battle quiet had finally been restored, but, had, in the

midst of the tumult,- had time to wonder: what do these fellows want? Why are they wrecking this evening? Why are they forcing their way in here? How have we angered them? For what purpose had Marcelle Capi come to this land? And what was it, that I myself had said? She had come for the sake of peace, and I myself had done nothing but speak the word "peace". And that had sufficed, to put this horde of wild and despairing young men into the most warlike frame of mind imaginable. Peace,- that then was something revolting to them, - something to be negated, - even something dishonourable. The next day they called me "traitor" in their news-papers, - and "a dangerous hyena of peace", - and that made me pensive.

From this evening, - now almost six years ago, - dates my interest in "politics", - my being involved in politics, - and my conviction, that one is obliged to be concerned, - that one must actively participate, - and that a democracy is hopelessly doomed to disaster, if the majority of its young people, leaves its "politics" in the hands of the rowdies, - and does this out of sheer Liberalism. For the rowdies hate peace, - the Nazis hate it, because they live for war. "A peace-loving national-socialist", - that is a contradiction in adjecto; I know this fact since that evening in November 31, - and many things have happened since then, painfully to deepen this knowledge.

In a letter to the Dean of the University of Bonn, of which my father, Thomas Mann, was an honorary doctor, and which, upon his being deprived of his German citizenship, cancelled his title, my father writes, speaking of national-socialism and its relation to peace, as follows:

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Ladies and gentlemen, - there was a time, in Europe at least, when the words Peace, Freedom, Progress, had, to a frightening degree lost much

of their accustomed radiance: during the years following those immediately after the war, peace did seem assured after a fashion, but a sort of freedom was prevalent, in which no one seemed to feel quite safe. This freedom was too boundless, - everything was permitted under its banner, - everything was possible, even deadly adventurousness and crime. Now that various nations have so thoroughly embarked on the path of bloody adventure and crime, now that freedom has vanished in so many places, and peace is threatened from so many sides, the words "Freedom" and "Peace" are regaining their radiance. The world needs peace. It needs nothing else, in order to be able, to devote itself, to its great and urgent tasks: to the creation of order in the distribution of its goods and giving mankind the real benefit of the technical achievements of the past decades. Nothing, however, is g i v e n to mankind in this world. Man must be active and alert. He must consciously earn his peace and liberty and fight for it. We need more today, than the vaguely friendly theoretical Pacifisme of ~~pas~~ ~~HHHH~~ decades, which kindly ladies indulged in with their tea, - and which was swept away in the first onslaught of nationalisms, so fragile were its fundaments. The present demands from us a masterful love of peace, endowed with power of resistance. And the world will have its peace only, if its youth is watchful and courageous, and if future generations are at their posts, in the battle against Stupidity, Reaction and Barbarity. To me it seems the mission of your country, this great and strong America, to safeguard the peace of the world. Our tormented and cloven little Europe is looking hopefully across the ocean to the United States, where ordered liberty rules and a watchful peace.

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