



Our Hitler

Speeches in Honor of Hitler's Birthdays
1933-1945

Dr. Joseph Goebbels



Adolf Hitler

April 20th 1889

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Goebbels' 1933 Speech on Hitler's 44th Birthday

The source: I here use the published version of the text from Goebbels' book *Signale der neuen Zeit. 25 ausgewählte Reden von Dr. Joseph Goebbels* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP., 1934), pp. 141-149.

The newspapers today are filled with congratulations for Reich Chancellor Adolf Hitler. The nuances vary, depending on the tone, character, and attitude of the newspaper. All, however, agree on one thing: Hitler is a man of stature who has already accomplished historically important deeds and faces still greater challenges. He is the kind of statesman found only rarely in Germany. During his lifetime, he has the good fortune not only to be appreciated and loved by the overwhelming majority of the German people, but even more importantly to be understood by them. He is the only German politician of the post-war period who understood the situation and drew the necessary hard and firm conclusions. All the newspapers agree on this. It no longer needs to be said that he has taken up Bismarck's work and intends to complete it. There is enough proof of this even for those who do not believe, or who think ill of him. I therefore do not think it necessary for me to discuss the historical significance and still unknown impact of this man on the eve of the day on which, far from the bustle of the Reich capital, Adolf Hitler completes his 44th year. I feel a much deeper need to personally express my esteem for him, and in doing so I believe that I am speaking for many hundreds of thousands of National Socialists throughout the country. We shall leave it to those who were our enemies only a few months ago and who then slandered then to praise him today with awkward words and embarrassing pathos. We know how little Adolf Hitler appreciates such attempts, and how much more the devoted loyalty and lasting support of his friends and fellow fighters corresponds to his nature.

The mysterious magic that he exerts on all who come in contact with him cannot alone explain his historic personality. There is more that makes us love and esteem him. Through all the ups and downs of Adolf Hitler's career, from the beginning of his political activity to the crowning of his career as he seized power, he has always remained the same: a person among people, a friend to his comrades, an eager supporter of every ability and talent. He is a pathfinder for those who devoted themselves to his idea, a man who conquered the hearts of his comrades in the midst of battle and never released them.

It seems to me that one thing has to be said in the midst of the profusion of feelings. Only a few know Hitler well. Most of the millions who look to him with faithful trust do so from a distance. He has become to them a symbol of their faith in the future. Normally the great men that we admire from a distance lose their magic when one knows them well. With Hitler the opposite is true. The longer one knows him, the more one admires him, and the more one is ready to give oneself fully to his cause.

We will let others blow the trumpets. His friends and comrades gather round him to shake his hand and thank him for everything that he is to us, and that he has given to us. Let me say it once more: We love this man, and we know that he has earned all of our love and support. Never was a man more unjustly accused by the hate and slanders of his ill-wishers of other parties. Remember what they said about him! A mishmash of contradictory accusations! They did not fail to accuse him of every sin, to deny him every virtue. When he nonetheless overcame in the end the flood of lies, triumphing over his enemies and raising

the National Socialist flag over Germany, fate showed its favor toward him to the entire world. It raised him from the mass of people and put him in the place he deserved because of his brilliant gifts and his pure and flawless humanity.

I remember the years when — just released from prison — he began to rebuild his party. We passed a few wonderful vacation days with him on his beloved Obersalzberg high above Berchtesgaden. Below us was the quiet cemetery where his unforgettable friend Dietrich Eckart is buried. We walked through the mountains, discussed plans for the future, and talked about theories that today have long since become reality. He then sent me to Berlin. He gave me a difficult and challenging task, and I still thank him today that he gave me the job.

A few months later we sat in a room in a small Berlin hotel. The party had just been banned by the Marxist-Jewish police department. Heavy blows were falling on it. The party was full of discouragement, bickering and quarreling. Everyone was complaining about everyone else. The whole organization seemed to have given up.

Hitler, however, did not lose courage, but immediately began to organize a defense, and helped out where he was needed. Although he had his own personal and political difficulties, he found the time and strength to deal with the problems and support his friends in the Reich capital.

One of his fine and noble traits is that he never gives up on someone who has won his confidence. The more his political opponents attack such a person, the more loyal is Adolf Hitler's support. He is not the kind of person who is afraid of strong associates. The harder and tougher a man is, the more Hitler likes him. If things fall apart, his capable hands put them together again. Who would have thought it possible that a mass organization that includes literally everything could be built in this nation of individualists? Doing that is Hitler's great accomplishment. His principles are firm and unshakable, but he is generous and understanding toward human weaknesses. He is a pitiless enemy of his opponents, but a good and warm-hearted friend to his comrades. That is Hitler.

We saw him at the party's two large Nuremberg rallies, surrounded by the masses who saw in him Germany's hope. In the evenings, we sat with him in his hotel room. He was dressed in a simple brown shirt, the same as always, as if nothing had happened. Someone once said that the great is simple, and the simple is great. If that is true, it surely applies to Hitler. His nature and his whole philosophy is a brilliant simplification of the spiritual need and fragmentation that engulfed the German people after the war. He found the lowest common denominator. That is why his idea won: he modeled it, and through him the average man in the street saw its depth and significance.

One has to have seen him in defeat as well as victory to understand what sort of man he is. He never broke. He never lost courage or faith. Hundreds came to him seeking new hope, and no one left without receiving renewed strength.

On the day before 13 August 1932, we met in a small farm house outside Potsdam. We talked deep into the night, but not about our prospects for the next day, but rather about music, philosophy, and worldview issues. Then came the experiences one can only have with him. He spoke of the difficult years of his youth in Vienna and Munich, of his war experiences, of first years of the party. Few know how hard and bitterly he had to fight. Today he is surrounded by praise and thanks. Only fifteen years ago he was a lonely individual among millions. The only difference between him and they was his burning faith and his fanatic resolve to transform that faith into action.

Those who believed that Hitler was finished after the party's defeat in November 1932 failed to understand him. Only someone who did not know him at all could make such a mistake. Hitler is one of those persons who rises from his defeats. Friedrich Nietzsche's phrase fits him well: "That which does not destroy me only makes me stronger."

This man, suffering under financial and party problems for years, assailed by the flood of lies from his enemies, wounded in the depths of his heart by the disloyalty of false friends, still found the limitless faith to lift his party from desperation to new victories.

How many thousands of kilometers have I sat behind him in cars or airplanes on election campaigns. How often did I see the thankful look of a man on the street, or a mother lifting her child to show him, and how often have I seen joy and happiness when people recognized him.

He kept his pockets filled with packages of cigarettes, each with a one or two mark coin. Every working lad he met got one. He had a friendly word for every mother and a warm handshake for every child.

Not without reason does the German youth admire him. They know that this man is young at heart, and that their cause is in his good hands. Last Easter Monday we sat with him in his small house on the Obersalzberg. A group of young hikers from Braunau, where he was born, came by for a visit. How surprised these lads were when they got not only a friendly greeting, but all fifteen lads were invited in. They got a hurriedly prepared lunch, and had to tell him about his hometown of Braunau.

The people have a fine sense for the truly great. Nothing impresses the people as deeply as when a person truly belongs to his people. Of whom but Hitler could this be true: As he returned from Berchtesgaden to Munich, people waved in every village. The children shouted Heil and threw bouquets of flowers into the car. The S.A. had closed the road in Traunstein. There was no moving either forward or back. Confidently and matter-of-factly,

the S.A. Führer walked up to the car and said: "My Führer, an old party member is dying in the hospital, and his last wish is to see his Führer."

Mountains of work were waiting in Munich. But Hitler ordered the car to turn around, and sat for half an hour in the hospital at the bedside of his dying party comrade.

The Marxist press claimed he was a tyrant who dominated his satraps. What is he really? He is the best friend of his comrades. He has an open heart for every sorrow and every need, he has human understanding. He knows each of his associates thoroughly, and nothing happens in their public or private lives of which he is not aware. If misfortune happens, he helps them to bear it, and rejoices more than anyone else at their successes.

Never have I seen his two sides in anyone else. We had dinner together on the night of the Reichstag fire. We talked and listened to music. Hitler was a person among people. Twenty minutes later he stood in the smoldering, smoking ruins of the Reichstag building and gave piercing orders that led to the destruction of communism. Later he sat in an editorial office and dictated an article.

For those who do not know Hitler, it seems a miracle that millions of people love and support him. For those who know him, it is only natural. The secret of his success is in the indescribable magic of his personality. Those who know him the best love and honor him the most. One who has sworn allegiance to him is devoted to him body and soul.

I thought it was necessary tonight to say that, and to have it said by someone who really knows him, and who could find the courage to break through the barriers of reserve and speak of Hitler the man.

Today he has left the bustle of the capital. He left the wreaths and hymns of praise in Berlin. He is somewhere in his beloved Bavaria, far from the noise of the streets, to find peace and quiet. Perhaps in a nearby room someone will turn on a loudspeaker. If that should happen, then let me say to him, and to all of Germany: My Führer! Millions and millions of the best Germans send you their best wishes and give you their hearts. And we, your closest associates and friends, are gathered in honor and love. We know how little you like praise. But we must still say this: You have lifted Germany from its deepest disgrace to honor and dignity. You should know that behind you, and if necessary before you, a strong and determined group of fighters stands that is ready at any time to give its all for you and your idea. We wish both for your sake and ours that fate will preserve you for many decades, and that you may always remain our best friend and comrade. This is the wish of your fellow fighters and friends for your birthday. We offer you our hands and ask that you always remain for us what you are today:

Our Hitler!



Our Hitler

Goebbels' 1935 Speech on Hitler's 46th Birthday

The source: *Adolf Hitler. Bilder aus dem Leben des Führers* (Hamburg; Cigaretten Bilderdienst, 1936).

Fellow citizens! Two years ago on 20 April 1933, only three months after Adolf Hitler came to power, I spoke to the German people on the occasion of the Führer's birthday. It was not my goal then, nor is it now, to read out loud a passionate newspaper article. That I shall leave to better stylists. Nor will I praise Adolf Hitler's historic work. I intend today, on the Führer's birthday, the very opposite. I believe it is time to portray to the entire nation the man Hitler, with all the magic of his personality, all the mysterious genius and irresistible power of his personality. There is probably no one left on the planet who does not know him as a statesman and as a remarkable popular leader. Only a few, however, have the pleasure of seeing him as a man each day from close up, to experience him, and as I might add, to come as a result to a deeper understanding and love for him. These few wonder how it is possible that a man who only three years ago was opposed by half of the nation stands today above any doubt and every criticism. Germany has found a unity which will never be shaken. Adolf Hitler is the man of fate, who has the calling to save the nation from terrible internal conflict and shameful foreign disgrace, to lead it to longed-for freedom.

That one man has captured the hearts of the whole nation, despite the sometimes difficult and unpopular decisions he had to make, is perhaps the deepest, most amazing secret of our age. It cannot be explained only by his accomplishments, for it is just those who have had to make the heaviest sacrifices for him and for national reconstruction, indeed who must still bring them, who have sensed his mission in the deepest and most joyful way. They are the ones who have the most honest and passionate love for him as Führer and as a man. That is the result of the magic of his personality and the deep mystery of his pure and honest humanity,

It is of this humanity, which those who are nearest to him see most clearly, of which I speak today.

All genuine humanity is characterized by simplicity and clarity in being and in action. It displays itself in the smallest as well as the greatest matters. The simple clarity that is evident in his political nature is also the dominating principle of his entire life. One cannot imagine him putting on a front. His people would not recognize him were he to do so. His daily meals are the simplest, most modest, imaginable. He dines no differently, whether it is with a small group of friends or at a state banquet. At a recent reception for officials of the Winter Relief program and old party member asked him if he could have an autographed copy of the menu as a souvenir. He paused for a moment and then laughed: "That's fine. The menu stays the same here; anyone is welcome to look it over."

Adolf Hitler is one of the few state leaders who avoids medals and decorations. He wears only a single high medal that he earned as a simple personal soldier displaying the greatest personal bravery. That is proof of modesty, but also of pride. There is no one worthy to decorate him, other than he himself. Any form of ostentation is foreign to him, but when he represents the state and his people, he does so with impressive and appropriate grace. Behind all that he is and does are the words of the great soldier Schlieffen, who wrote: "Be

more than you seem!" His industry and determination in reaching his goal far exceed normal human strength. Several days ago I returned to Berlin at 1 a.m. after several hard days and was ready for sleep, but he wanted a report from me. At 2 a.m. he was still alert, still at work all alone in his home. For two hours he listened to a report on the construction of the national highways, a theme that would seem distant from the great international problems with which he had been occupied the entire day from early in the morning to late at night. Before the last Nuremberg rally, I was his guest for a week in Obersalzberg. The light shone from his window each night until 6 or 7 a.m. He was dictating the great speeches he would give a few days later at the rally. His cabinet approves no law that he has not studied to the smallest detail. His military knowledge is comprehensive; he knows the details of each weapon, each machine gun as well as any specialist. When he gives a speech he knows each detail. His working method is entirely clear. Nothing is further from him than nervousness or hysterical tension. He knows better than anyone else that there are a hundred problems to be solved. He chooses the two or three he finds most central and works on them, undistracted by the remaining ones, for he knows that if he solves the great problems, the problems of second or third magnitude will solve themselves.

His approach to problems shows both the determination necessary to deal with essentials and the flexibility essential in the choice of methods. He has principles and beliefs, but he knows how to reach them by careful selection of methods and approaches. He has never changed his basic goals. He does today what he determined to do in 1919. But he has always been flexible in the methods he used to realize his goals. When he was offered the vice chancellorship in August 1932, he rejected the offer. He had the feeling that the time was not yet ripe and that the ground offered to him was too small to stand on. But when he was offered a wider door to power on 30 January 1933, he walked courageously through it. It was not the full responsibility he wanted, but he knew that the ground he knew stood upon was sufficient to begin the fight for full power. The know-it-alls understood neither decision. Today they must reluctantly grant that he was superior not only in his tactics, but also in the strategic use of the principles in ways they short-sightedly failed to see.

Two pictures last summer vividly showed the Führer in all his aloneness. The first showed him greeting the Wehrmacht just after he was forced to bloodily put down the treason and mutiny of 30 June. His face showed the bitterness of the difficult hours he had experienced. The second photograph was of him leaving the house of the dying marshal and Reich president in Neudeck. His expression shows the shadow of pain and sorrow in the face of pitiless death that in a few hours would tear from him his fatherly friend. With almost prophetic foresight he told us in his innermost circle on New Year's Eve that 1934 would be a dangerous year, one which would likely see the death of Hindenburg. Now the inevitable had happened. One thing was plain in his granite face: the pain of an entire nation, a pain that would not descend to mere complaining.

The entire nation not only honors him, it loves him deeply and fervently, for it has the feeling that he belongs to them. He is flesh of its flesh and spirit of its spirit. That shows itself in the smallest aspects of everyday life. It is plain in the camaraderie in the Reich Chancellery between the least SS man and the Führer. When he travels, he sleeps in the same hotel and under the same conditions as everyone else. Is it any wonder that the least of those around him are the most loyal?! They have the instinctive feeling that his is no facade, but rather the result of his inner and obvious spiritual nature.

Several weeks ago, 50 young German girls from abroad, who had completed a year of schooling and were now about to return to their suffering home countries, visited the chancellor, hoping to see him for a moment. He invited them all to dinner. For hours they had to tell him of their modest lives. As they were leaving, they suddenly sang the song "If All Become Untrue," and tears flowed from their eyes. In the midst of them stood the man who has become the incarnation of eternal Germany, giving them friendly and good-hearted consolation to encourage them on their difficult journey.

He came from the people and remains a part of them. He who negotiated for two 15-hour days at a conference with diplomats of mighty England, who mastered arguments and facts on the great questions of Europe, can speak with complete ease to ordinary people, and can with a comradely "Du" restore the confidence of a fellow war veteran who greets him with a nervous heart after perhaps days of wondering how to greet him and what to say. The weakest approach him with confidence, for they sense that he is their friend and protector. The entire nation loves him, because it feels as safe in his arms as a child in the arms of its mother.

This man is a fanatic in his cause. He has sacrificed his personal happiness and private life. He knows nothing other than the work that he does as the truest servant of the Reich.

An artist becomes a statesman, and his historic work reveals his remarkable abilities. He needs no external honors; his greatest honor is the enduring permanence of his labors. But we who have the good fortune to be near him each day receive light from his light and want only to be obedient followers behind his flag. Many times he has told the circle of his oldest fellow fighters and closest friends: "It will be terrible when the first of us dies and there is an empty place here that can no longer be filled." May a gracious fate ordain that he live the longest, that for many decades the nation will continue under his leadership along the path to new freedom, greatness and power. That is the honest and passionate wish that the entire German nation lays in thankfulness at his feet. Not only we who stand near him, but the last man in the most distant village, join in saying:

"He is now what he always was, and always will be: Our Hitler!"



Our Führer

Goebbels' 1936 Speech on Hitler's 47th Birthday

The source: Joseph Goebbels, "Unser Führer. Rundfunkansprache Dr. Goebbels zum Geburtstag Adolf Hitlers," *Völkischer Beobachter*, April 1936, p. 2.

My German comrades!

Tomorrow, Monday, the Führer celebrates his 47th birthday.

As in previous years since the takeover of power, I take the opportunity on this festive occasion to speak to the whole German nation. On this day, our people thinks with rare unanimity and unique determination about the man who has become the personification of Germany's resurrection for all Germans, whether in the Reich or throughout the world, and who is the symbol of a strong and revitalized Reich.

Tomorrow morning, this whole people wishes to proclaim its love and honor to the Führer, but also its thankfulness for his impact on humanity and on history. Among them are those countless millions who cast their votes for him on 29 March of this year, and thus ceremonially affirmed that they saw him as the embodiment of faith in our national future, and of the security and honor of the Reich. Never before in history has one man so embodied the confidence and feeling of togetherness of a whole people. I am happy that tonight I am the interpreter of all these feelings.

We are still in the midst of the Führer's constructive work. Each of us has enough troubles and challenges to face, and there are countless tasks that confront us. And, of course, Adolf Hitler has not resolved all the tensions and differences, all the misunderstandings and frictions within the German people. But on this we can all agree: that Germany's leadership is in the best, most loyal and most dependable hands of Adolf Hitler, and that in him, in his person, and in his human and political impact, there is the assurance that these remaining problems will in good time find an appropriate organic solution. Like a rock in the ocean, he stands firm against all the troubles and difficulties of everyday life, the peaceful place in the flood of events.

The impact of his historic acts are already so deeply driven into the heart and soul of the whole German people that it seems entirely unnecessary to waste even a word about them. And that is not the reason that I wish to speak this evening about his birthday tomorrow. I want to speak personally about him. The whole world knows him as a statesman and Führer: Few have the privilege of seeing him close up as a person and to sense daily his personal force.

Millions of Germans were deeply moved by the gripping words of his speech on the election of 29 March of his year. They heard him say that he had given the German people strength for three years, and that now the German people must give him strength. He had often strengthened the nation's faith; now the nation had to strengthen his faith.

Over the past three years, those of us who are close to him have often seen how necessary strength and faith are to his work. No day or night, no hour, passed that did not bring for him a mass of work and challenges. It is often the case that a people comes to take the successes of its policies in a matter-of-fact way, that it gradually gets used to them.

It has no idea of the effort, of the courage, of the responsibility that are necessary to make those successes possible. Most people only become aware of that when dangers surface alongside the successes, the dangers that a far-sighted statesman has always seen and taken into account, which he has struggled with alone during long, sleepless nights. As great as the miracle of Germany's rebirth seems to us, greater still is the miracle of how one man, in a time when complete hopelessness had seized the widest circles of his people, found the courage and the strong and unshakeable heart that were needed. It is not easy to lift a people up from the ground; it takes not only intelligence, but also daring.

But even more, what does it mean when a man takes on the burdens of Atlas upon himself and earns not only the confidence and love of his own people, but becomes a factor in the morale of the entire world!

Over these three years, the Führer has had the courage to face a Europe that was in danger of collapse because of its senile dishonesty, giving it the truth that was at first bitter and painful, but which in the end restored its honor. He gave a sterile system new movement. He became in foreign policy what he had long been in domestic policy: a great simplifier who took the most complicated and intricate problems that Europe was incapable of solving, and found natural and understandable approaches.

The peace plan that he recently presented to the world is a masterpiece of constructive and simplifying work. It is European in the broadest and most modern sense. Future historians will undoubtedly see it as a deep and liberating breath on the part of the world that was trapped in its contradictions, and had become lifeless.

All of this assures the Führer of the confidence and blind allegiance of the broad masses of our people. The love that they bring him is directed above all to his person, to his deep and powerful humanity, that comes to expression in all of his words and deeds. On the afternoon of 29 March the first surprising election results came over the wires, reaching the whole world through the ether and giving powerful expression to the German miracle. There was hardly a politically aware person not only in Germany, but throughout the world, who did not think of the man who was the creator and builder of this miracle. He was at his home in Berlin with a group of young girls from the BDM [the Nazi organization for girls] who had come from every corner of the Reich to the Wilhelmplatz [the seat of Hitler's government] to express their love and support with modest bouquets of flowers. They had coffee with him, and he let them talk of their joys and sorrows. He gave their every word and gesture his full attention, not leaving them for even a second. That is the miracle of a man who will transform the small and apparently insignificant into a new world, and who gathers from the small and apparently insignificant the strength to do great things that move the world.

Before him, the German people was really never a world people in the real sense of the word. He gave them the will for that. The calm dignity he shows in representing the Reich is

a model for the entire nation. The simplicity of his character is bound to the monumentality of his historic impact, displaying generosity in matters and things that deserve it, paired with determination toward things and people that require it. He is not only called the Führer, he is the Führer.

His relationship to children never ceases to move and amaze us. They approach him with complete trust, and he meets them with the same trust. Children must have the natural ability to know that he belongs to them with heart and soul. Perhaps they realize dimly that he alone is to be thanked for the fact that for German children, a German life has once again become worth living.

When the Führer made his last appeal to the German people from Cologne on 28 March, the eve of the great day of German affirmation, the whole nation was deeply moved. One had the sense that all of Germany, every class, occupation and religious confession, had become one great, all-encompassing house of God, a place where their advocate approached the throne of the Almighty to bear witness of their will and deeds, and to ask his grace and protection for a future that was still uncertain and unclear to us. It was a call to fate, one never heard before in the German language with such monumentality. In Cologne, we saw hard and strong men who had faced many a danger break out in tears at the Führer's final words. It seemed to us that heaven could not fail to hear the cry of a people for freedom and peace.

That was religion in the deepest and most mysterious sense. A nation affirmed God through its advocate, and put its fate and its life confidently in his hands.

Afterwards, we took a short, deserted route to the railway station and sat in a dark compartment of the almost silent train, watching silently as we passed the cities and villages of this productive German province. In the distance we could see the chimneys and furnaces of the Ruhr. Thousands and thousand of lights glittered across the fields. Beneath us, hammers thundered, machines sang, drills rattled and sirens wailed. It was the song of labor that even now did not slumber. Masses of people were gathered at the stations where we made brief stops. They were probably following a mysterious, silent inner force, waving and cheering once again to the man whose voice had called them. But he sat silently at the window of his compartment and traveled through his land, through his people, and probably had the happy feeling of resting deeply and comfortably in the heart of his nation.

And the next day, this heart broke forth. People went to the voting booths with firm and confident step, to the north and south, the east and west, young and old, high and low, and helped him to build the unshakable foundation he needed to speak to the world in the name of this whole people in defense of its national right to life. Where else on this broad planet is there a statesman as firm and confident as he?

Respected in the whole world, but loved by his own people! That is the highest that a person can achieve in this earthly life.

Tomorrow, from wherever Germans dwell, their best wishes will rise to him. May a gracious fate keep him healthy and strong, and grant him a blessed hand. And may he be with us for a long, long time, for if he is with us, all is well.

He is for us what was for us, and he will remain for us what he is for us:

Our Hitler!

Our Hitler

Goebbels' 1938 Speech on Hitler's 49th Birthday

The source: Joseph Goebbels, "‘Es gibt Männer, die man achtet, bewundert und verehrt — den Führer aber lieben wir.’ Die Rundfunkrede des Reichsministers Dr. Goebbels am Vorabend des Geburtstages des Führers," *Völkischer Beobachter*, 21 April 1938.

The Führer has probably never had so many happy people gathered about him for his birthday as in this year. All the 75 million people of the Greater German Reich stand before him to express their heartfelt best wishes and deepest thanks to him. In the truest sense of the word, this is a holiday for the entire nation. The banners of National Socialism fly from north to south and east to west. And beyond our borders, millions upon millions of our ethnic clan join with the citizens of the Reich in a unique affirmation of loyalty, connectedness and faithful attachment.

The highest form of joy there is on this earth is to make other people happy. Who has had this joy in fuller measure than the Führer himself. The unhappiest people on whom God's sun shone has become the happiest in this wide

world. Not one German in our great fatherland would wish to be a member of another people or a citizen of another state. That for which all good Germans have always longed and hoped has now become reality under the blessed hand of the Führer: a single people in a great, free and strong Reich.

However justified it is for us Germans to rejoice in this new national good fortune, to be always aware of it, we may also not forget that it did not just fall into our laps like a ripe fruit, but rather that we had to earn it through difficult battle with hard and sometimes bitter sacrifices.

The success that we as a nation may so happily enjoy is the result of great challenges, endless work, and deep responsibility. The Führer was the one who over the past years had to bear most of the challenges, work and responsibility.

People realize this instinctively. In recent weeks, the broad masses of our people joined spontaneously and ever more loudly in the cry: We thank our Führer! They were joined by those in German Austria, and soon it was as if a fanfare resounded throughout the whole Reich. This had a deeper significance. People found their own way of expressing a feeling of thanks that today is shared by all people of German blood. It is a feeling of thanks that can no longer be put into words, but rather it can only call to action.

Often we sat next to the Führer on the terrace of his home on the Obersalzberg. Far in the distance between the mountains, German Salzburg would appear in the silvery sunlight. His mind at least, with all its cares and longings, leapt over the distance and sensed what history would bring, making for a moment reality of imagination. Long columns of people stood outside the Berghof [Hitler's mountain home], waiting to march past the Führer. They came from all parts of our great Reich, bringing flowers and mementos, and were heartened by being able to look into the beloved face of the man whom they saw as the embodiment of all our national hope.

It always brought tears when groups or individuals from German Austria came. They usually did not say very much; only rarely was there a shout from their ranks. Usually they marched

past the Führer in deep silence. If he called for some of them to come to him, they could rarely answer his questions because their voices became lost in tears.

In these moving moments, we saw in the Führer's face that the pain of his people was his pain, that he shared their pain and misery, that no one could suffer more for his homeland than he.

We remember those nighttime hours of a Wednesday in March, already part of history, in which the former Herr Schuschnigg gave his treasonous speech in Innsbruck, and the first alarming reports reached Berlin. The Führer strode with long steps across the room, and his face displayed godly anger and holy fervor. Here was the best German, whose cradle was in Austria, and who had a far greater right to speak in the name of German Austria than the then spokesman for this so-called independent state. He was deeply wounded by cowardly treachery. This was the decisive turn in events. There was no going back: either Schnuschnigg would succeed once again in legitimizing his terror regime through an election swindle, or the people itself would rise up and appeal to heaven for its rights.

Here we learned the Führer's true greatness. The two days of nervous tension that followed showed him at the height of his tactical and strategic command of the means and methods of a well planned and considered political program.

The people still had no idea of what was taking place. They went about as if nothing had happened, walking down Wilhelmstraße to Wilhelmplatz with only a shy and respectful glance toward the Reich Chancellery. Here the Führer lived, here he worked, here he bore all the burdens and responsibility.

Until the decisive Friday when things finally started rolling, and the Führer gave the order to march late in the night.

None of us would have been embarrassed by our tears as after midnight we heard on the radio the Horst Wessel Song being sung for the first time in Vienna. The hour of salvation had come.

If one were to ask me what the greatest difference between a parliamentary democracy and an authoritarian system was, I would answer:

The greater the danger, the more a parliamentary democracy is inclined to pull back, but the more a true leadership personality faces it. It was never a question for the Führer that he had to be with his people at the hour of liberation, and indeed, there where the decision itself was happening.

It is but one proof more of his deep political instinct, rooted in his connection to national feeling and thought, that the hour of greatest danger was also the hour of his greatest triumph.

How moving it was as he crossed the Innsbruck bridge, entering his hometown and birthplace Braunau for the first time in many years. We saw pictures in the newspapers of women giving him flowers as he stepped on Austrian soil.

The eyes of these women shone with the deepest and purest joy, such that one cannot imagine more beautiful human faces. We saw a picture of a man who climbed onto the Führer's automobile with his hands raised as if in prayer, and we had the sense that here the depths of the human soul came to the most perfect expression.

Probably never before have the hearts of all Germans beat faster or more passionately than in these afternoon and evening hours. The nation knew that the Führer was on the soil of our German Austria, and never did his beloved voice seem warmer and nearer than on this evening, when he spoke in Linz for the first time in his homeland. Hundreds and hundreds of kilometers from us, and yet near to us all, he spoke of the joy that filled his heart.

That was the Führer as a person, the same man who then spoke in Vienna as a statesman and ruler of the national fate as he made his greatest announcement to the German people [that Austria had been incorporated into the German Reich]. How he must have felt then, he who as a young man had so often demonstrated in Vienna's streets for the Greater German Reich, and who was therefore persecuted, mistreated and arrested by the dwarfs of the Hapsburg regime.

The dreams of his youth had been realized. He had entered the soul of his people as a man and as the Führer.

Bringing a miracle that was no miracle, only the result of tireless work blessed by the hand of the Almighty.

Perhaps it is also a religious act to put his whole life in the service of his people, and to work and act for the happiness of people. It is a religion without empty phrases and dogma, which nonetheless springs from the deepest depths of our soul. That is how our people understands it. We Germans are today perhaps more faithful and pious than others who, though they never tire of praising God with their lips, have hearts that are cold and empty.

It is therefore no empty phrase when all of us in our great Reich join with those beyond its borders, across seas and continents, in asking the Almighty to grant the Führer long years of health, strength, and a blessed hand. That is the deepest and holiest wish of all the children of our ethnic group and of our blood. May the ether bring through my voice this national prayer of a people to the furthest corner of the earth where Germans dwell, live, and breathe. It is a deep prayer, full of hope, faith, and national pride.

There are men one respects, men one admires, and men one honors. We love the Führer. He is the great symbol of the resurrection of our people, towering over our age.

He is to us what he was to us, and he will remain to us what he is to us: Our Führer!

Our Hitler

Goebbels' 1939 Speech on Hitler's 50th Birthday

The source: *Die Zeit Ohne Beispiel* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, 1941).

In an unsettled and confused world, Germany tomorrow celebrates a national holiday in the truest sense of the word. It is a holiday for the entire nation. The German people celebrate the day entirely as a matter of the heart, not of the understanding.

Tomorrow the Führer finishes his fiftieth year. The entire German nation takes pride in this day, a pride in which those peoples who are friendly with us also take deep and hearty part. Even those who are neutral or oppose us cannot ignore the strong impact of the events. Adolf Hitler's name is a political program for the entire world. He is almost a legend. His name is a dividing line. No one on earth can remain indifferent to his name. For some, he represents hope, faith, and the future, for others he is an exemplar of confused hatred, base lies, and cowardly slander.

The highest that a person can achieve is to give his name to an historical era, to stamp his personality indelibly on his age. Certainly the Führer has done that. One cannot imagine today's world without him.

Treitschke once said that men make history. If this is true, when more so than in our era? He has shown his simplicity and depth in the most wonderful way. Adolf Hitler has influenced not only the historical development of his country, but one can say without fear of exaggeration that he has given all of European history a new direction, that he is the towering guarantee of a new order for Europe.

Our part of the world looks vastly different today that it would without him, not to mention his impact on our own people and nation. He has given the German nation an entirely new face through revolutionary internal transformations.

Someone who saw Germany for the last time in 1918 would scarcely recognize it today. The people and nation are entirely different. What seemed like a miracle only a short while ago is self-evident today.

About a year ago, the Führer solved the problem of joining Austria to the Reich. The whole people celebrated his 49th birthday then. 7 1/2 million Germans had returned to the Reich. A Central European problem one almost believed to be unsolvable was miraculously solved.

On the eve of his 50th birthday, we can happily see that once again the map of Europe has changed in the Reich's favor, and — unique in world history — this change has occurred without bloodshed. It came as the result of a clear desire to establish peace in an area of Europe in which the contradictions were so severe that there was danger that they sooner or later would cause a general European conflagration.

This new peace in the threatened areas is not a peace of tired, moralistic theories that are endangered as often as the false bourgeois democrats praise them. It is much more a peace that is built on practical realities

Such a peace could be built only on the foundations of a higher, instinctive understanding growing from the knowledge that only strength gives a people the opportunity to finally resolve problems.

Successful policies require both imagination and reality. Imagination as such is constructive. It alone provides the strength for powerful, flexible historical conceptions. Realism on the other hands brings the ideas of political fantasy in agreement with hard reality.

The Führer possesses both characteristics in a unique harmony seldom seen in history. Imagination and reality join in him to determine the goals and methods of political policy. His contemporaries are constantly astonished and amazed by seeing how he brilliantly brings goals and methods together to influence history. He has no stubborn ideas, no tired tactical doctrines, to dim his vision and reduce his political imagination. His inflexible principles are joined with changing and flexible political methods that have lead to the greatest and most unexpected successes for Germany.

That is nothing new for us old National Socialists. We learned to admire the Führer's political abilities in the earliest phases of our party's hard struggle for power in the Reich. They were demonstrated in many small and apparently unimportant ways at the time, though they were then for us and the movement as important as the goals and problems of today.

Then too there were doubters who failed to see the greatness and brilliance of the Führer's decisions during the struggle for power. They favored the false wisdom that Clausewitz discussed: they wanted nothing but to escape danger. We are therefore not surprised or anxious to see the same or similar happenings in internal German politics that we earlier saw in the National Socialist movement.

The only thing that has changed over the years is the scale of the Führer's actions; his methods and goals have remained the same. Back then we saw in him the political instincts of a truly historic genius, able to understand problems and find the simplest and clearest solution to them from his own greatness and certainty. That is why we were then his most loyal and obedient servants of this man and his work, entirely aside from the human element.

So what we see today is nothing new for us old National Socialists. We therefore have no doubt of the outcome of Germany's current battle for its national existence. Our whole people has the same instinctive feelings, which are the cause of the blind and unshakable confidence it places in the Führer.

The man in the street is usually not in a position to understand the entire political situation. He lacks the practice, the experience and above all the background necessary to form a clear and certain judgment. It is therefore entirely understandable why he dislikes theories and programs, and prefers to place his firm and confident faith in a personality.

A nation inclines to doctrines only when it is poor in personalities. But when a man of historic greatness stands at its head, one who not only wants to lead but is able to do so, the people will follow him with its whole heart, giving him its willing and obedient allegiance. Even more, it will put all of its love and their blind confidence behind him and his work.

A nation is willing to sacrifice when it knows what it is sacrificing for and why it is necessary. That is true in Germany today. None of the numerous slogans that the broad masses of our people heard in the years after 1918 has had such powerful effect on the entire nation as the phrase "One People, one Reich, one Führer!"

The first two phrases were heard for the first time in 1937 at a singing festival in Breslau. The Führer stood high on the platform against the gathering darkness. Hundreds of thousands of people had gathered from every corner of the nation and from everywhere in Europe where Germans dwell to hear him speak. Suddenly, from the corner of this army of hundreds of thousands where the Austrians stood came the call "One people, one Reich." It gripped and fascinated the whole crowd, and for the first time gave concise but clear expression to a program.

A year later we saw the Führer on a hot Sunday afternoon standing on the platform at the Schloßplatz in Breslau once again. German gymnasts performed before him. As the racial comrades from the Sudetenland passed before him, without command or order, they suddenly formed a wall before him. These people who had come from the Sudetenland to Breslau only to see his face, refused to move. Weeping women seized his hand. One could not understand what they were trying to say, since tears drowned their voices.

Once again, it was only a few months before the problem they had brought to the Führer was solved.

The Greater German Reich, in the truest sense of the word, has now become a reality. Even more, the Führer has given his peace to Central Europe. It is clear that this is not to the pleasure of those democratic envious of the National Socialist Reich. Through the Treaty of Versailles they had build a ring of trouble spots around Germany that they could use to keep the Reich in constant difficulties.

A man has come from the broad masses of the German people who removed these trouble spots with the firmest measures. Democracy sees its hopes vanishing. That explains their rage and moralistic disappointments. Their hypocritical prayers came too late. The enemies of the Reich are at the end of their rope. They look ridiculous, and cannot understand why.

We greet their hysterical cries with sovereign contempt, a sovereign contempt shared by the entire German people. The German people know that the Führer has restored it to its rightful position in the world. The Reich stands in the shadow of the German sword. Germany's economy, culture and popular life are blooming under a security guaranteed by the army. The nation, once sunk into impotence, has risen to new greatness.

We remember all of this as we begin to celebrate the 50th birthday of the man whom we thank for our nation's might and our people's greatness. No German at home or anywhere else in the world can fail to take the deepest and heartiest pleasure in participation. It is a holiday of the nation, and we want to celebrate it as such.

A people fighting for its fate must now and again stop in the midst of the tumult of events to remind itself of its situation, methods and goals. Today is such a time. The nation puts on its best clothing and stands before its Führer united in loyalty and brotherhood, to bring him their heartiest best wishes on his 50th birthday. These are the wishes of all Germans in the Reich, as well as those in every other nation and continent. Germans throughout the world join with us who have the good fortune to live in the Reich in these warm and thankful wishes. To this choir of a hundred million are joined the voices of all those peoples want true peace and order in Europe, who love its history and its culture.

As we begin to celebrate the Führer's 50th birthday in this festive hour as a great national community, we join in a fervent prayer to Almighty God that he graciously preserve in the future his life and work. May he grant the German people's deepest wish and keep the Führer in health and strength for many more years and decades. Then we will not need to fear for the future of the Reich. The fate of the German nation rests in a strong and sure hand.

We, the Führer's oldest followers and fellow fighters join together at this festive hour with the hearty wish that we have always had on the birthday of this man: May he remain for us what he is and always was:

Our Hitler!

Our Hitler

Goebbels' 1940 Speech on Hitler's 51st Birthday

The source: I use the published version of the text from Goebbels' wartime book *Die Zeit ohne Beispiel* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, 1941). The text of the speech is also available in any German newspaper of 20 April 1940.

On 3 September last year, two hours after English plutocracy declared war on the German Reich, the British Prime Minister Chamberlain gave a radio speech to the German people in the most broken German. One might call it the first English act of war, and it proved to be the first, worst, and most fateful psychological error that the British plutocracy could make. Chamberlain did not betray who had given him the right to speak to the German nation. He was of the opinion that the German people he was attempting to speak to was in about the same intellectual and spiritual condition as it was after the capitulation of 9 November 1918, when it gave itself up to the arbitrary lust for revenge of the Western powers. The point of the speech was that England had no intention of waging war against the German people, but rather intended to help them. Germany needed only to accept the simple British proposal to get rid of the Führer or so-called Hitlerism, and the result would be a quick and easy peace. We can remark in passing that during the seven months of the war, British plutocracy had long since stopped telling the world such hypocritical platitudes. Its best and most eloquent publicists have long since made it clear that the goal of British plutocracy is to destroy the German people and the German Reich. They wish to return it to its state after the Peace of Westphalia in the year 1648.

At the beginning of the war, however, they sang the same old song. It was a bit too familiar to our ears to be effective. Its melody was dull and worn out. British plutocracy had tried to persuade the Boers during the South African war of the same thing. Britain was only fighting Krugerism. As is well known, that did not stop them from allowing countless thousands of women and children to starve in English concentration camps. During the World War as well, England was supposedly fighting only against the Kaiser, not the German people. Yet after we fell for the British swindle, we were forced at Versailles in 1919 to accept the most disgraceful and humiliating peace treaty of modern history.

But that is aside from the point. If the German people took any notice at all of the whining remarks of the English prime minister, it observed the lying tone even in the first days of the war. It took only a psychological interest in the speech. Mr. Chamberlain probably did not realize that the German people were fully aware that their struggle for existence had begun, and that they would think it infamous and entirely foolish for the head British plutocrat, of all people, to attempt to persuade them to give up their sharpest and best defensive weapon, namely the relationship between the Führer and the nation. It was really the most stupid thing that London could have done at that critical time. In his encouragement to separate from the Führer, Chamberlain hit the most sensitive part of the German people's soul. One might just as well try to persuade a believing and trusting child that he should leave his parents in the lurch at a moment of danger.

It is really more proof of the unlimited stubbornness with which the leading and governing English plutocratic class likes to see the world outside England. It has not the least idea of the transformation the German people has undergone since 1918, and particularly in the last seven years. It may be that in more peaceful times our people have debated minor and

trivial issues heatedly, even fought about them. One likes something, the next one does not. We Germans obviously come from the most varied political camps. We adult Germans were around before National Socialism. We had rather vague political positions and worldviews. Countless Germans were then members of other parties and adherents of other worldviews. It is even possible that some of us still have remnants of former views. That may be true, and is not all that bad. We Germans do all agree on one thing, though: There is nothing that can separate us from the love, obedience and confidence we have in and for the Führer. We all know that that is the strongest weapon that the German nation has in its battle for existence.

For the first time in German history, the political instinct of our people finds its expression and fulfillment in a leading personality. That is why the connection we feel to the Führer is so deeply rooted, and why particularly in challenging times this relationship of confidence between Führer and people reaches a degree that is incomprehensible to the so-called democratic peoples.

We face a hard test today. Modern war is fought not only with weapons. We see in the recent past a growing comprehensiveness to military thinking. War today is waged on all fronts, on the economic front and above all on the front of the struggle for the souls of nations. This war is a gigantic struggle that affects every area of popular life. It is not unknown to us that the British plutocratic class has won its past victories by destroying the spiritual foundations of its enemies, using selfish and dirty means to advance its own interests.

That is why London has always been particularly active in the battle for the popular soul. It does not cost much, and saves a lot of blood and money. Until the arrival of National Socialism, the German people were particularly susceptible in this regard. That explains why we first failed spiritually on 9 November 1918, collapsing only after that in all other areas. The Führer's educational work has made the German people forever immune to such attempts in the future. Plutocratic England is whistling in the wind when it even attempts to speak to the German people, which explains why it increasingly is giving up the numbing and seductive phrases it tried during the first weeks of the war. The German people simply laughs at them. It will accept neither orders nor advice or even good cheer from London. The whole flood of lies that London has unleashed against the Reich vanishes without having any effect at all.

Instead, the German people see in the Führer the incarnation of its national strength and a shining example of its national goals. He is a people's leader in the truest sense of the word. We recall a scene from a newsreel from the first weeks of the Polish campaign. The Führer and his generals are gathered around a map in a conference room. Ideas are weighed and plans forced. Anyone can see immediately that serious military problems are being discussed. The camera moves slowly away from the generals and focuses on the Führer, off to one side. The eye is struck by the man to whom we all look, his face worn with cares,

weighed down by his thoughts, an historical personality, great and alone. We saw this scene from the Polish campaign much later at the premiere of the Luftwaffe film "Baptism of Fire" in a large Berlin theater. One generally does not credit the Berliners with much respect for their leaders, but as the Führer's face appeared on the screen, a deep, quiet, silent movement spread through the packed theater. No one said a word, but all felt the same. Millions of people have seen the picture since then, and still this picture has a deep impression on viewers, as countless letters and messages tell us.

During the Polish campaign, people quickly browsed through the columns covering the huge battle of annihilation against the Polish army, then looked for information about where the Führer was, how he was feeling, what he was doing. Seldom has a people been so interested in the life and thoughts and wishes of a man. That is entirely natural, indeed it could not be otherwise. Every German instinctively senses the seriousness and dangers of the hour. His word, even his wish, is for we Germans an order.

How could an English merchant's soul understand that? Mr. Chamberlain recently said at an opulent breakfast held in his honor by the City of London that the polite applause he received was not the result of orders, as was the fashion in Germany. We could only laugh. How little the present British prime minister understands the German people that he has in a careless moment unscrupulously compelled to fight for its existence, and how this people will disappoint him and the British plutocratic class that stands behind him! He is leading an old and sinking world against a young and modern people, a people that since 1918 has survived a terrible lesson and has finally found itself. It is deeply conscious of its good fortune in having found in National Socialism the realization of its political faith and in the Führer the embodiment of its desire for a leading personality.

We are living in a great and decisive age. The German nation is gathering its whole strength together to defend its national life. The front and the homeland form a closed unity in common brotherhood, knowing that the fate of the German people is at stake. That is why, as foreign observers and reporters constantly note with astonishment, all Germans are filled with a calm, almost sovereign confidence. Today, we are fighting and working, that is all. No one complains and no one asks why. Our people certainly as war-related burdens and difficulties to deal with. All wait nonetheless for the Führer's order. When he calls, all are there.

We want to trust him and follow him! That is what the German people say today. This resolve gives us as a people and a nation enormous power, which other countries call the German miracle. It is a riddle to the world, but obvious to us! We can hardly imagine how things once were or how they could be any different.

Tomorrow we celebrate the 51st birthday of the man who brought this miracle about. We will not do so in loud and noisy parties, but rather as a people in the midst of battle and work. In the past, in Berlin above all, we gathered along the sidewalks of the east-west

avenue to watch his soldiers march past, and greeted him with storms of heils. This time there will be no parade, no uproar. Yet the love that binds us to him and the confidence we gave him is even more passionate, even deeper.

Tomorrow he may see in spirit a great parade of our people march past, both from the Front and the homeland — soldiers, farmers, and workers — all, all those who are filled with his spirit and who are defending Germany's life.

One wish fills the entire nation, whether at the front or at home, be they German soldiers in Norway and Denmark or the men of our U-boats and warships, or the soldiers up against the Western Front or the millions in the bunkers and interior positions, or the dead-tired flyer high in the heavens, or the farmer plowing his field, or the worker at the roaring machine, or the thinkers of the mind and spirit, or above all the millions of German mothers and their children:

The entire people has one thought: Long live the Führer!

May he lead us as he always has through grave and difficult times to a shining German victory. May he remain what he is to us and always was:

Our Hitler!

Our Hitler

Goebbels' 1941 Speech on Hitler's 52nd Birthday

The source: *Die Zeit ohne Beispiel* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, 1941).

We Germans do not have sufficient historical distance to evaluate the full scope of the age in which we are living. We are children of our age. We have been formed by our age, and we in turn are forming it. It will be the task of later generations to evaluate it properly and to determine what is really admirable and what is simply normal. Future generations will surely envy the fact that we have lived a life of struggle, that we had the good fortune to have political passion, a passion that Heinrich von Treitschke once said finds little room in the hearts of most people.

There are rare moments in the middle of the pressures of daily life when we suddenly are struck by the feeling that everything before us is history, and that a new world is now being born. We experience the birth pangs of all that is young and new, and realize that this new world is replacing the old and sinking one, with all its peculiarities, tenseness and prejudice. If there are men who make history, if great historical developments are the product of individual personalities, then the riddle of our era is to be explained only by the grace of a brilliant human being. It is no cliché to say that everything we experience today and for which we expend our best energies would not be, or at least would be very different, were it not for one man who forged the path and showed the way, giving meaning, content, and direction to our age. We are experiencing the greatest miracle that history offers: a genius is building a new world.

When is this more evident than today, as the entire German nation and countless millions beyond its borders send their thanks, their honor, their admiration, their deepest hopes and their unshakable faith in him and his historic mission, to the Führer on his 52nd birthday? They are the feelings that most deeply move each German above all. There will be in this hard year of war no noisy popular festivals, no parades, no splendid public performances. But these feelings are expressed even more deeply and warmly by those who do their daily duty, be it by our best fighting men at the front or at home in the armaments industries. The German people honors the Führer on his birthday by pledging redoubled efforts to support his work. Our love and honor for him give wings to our struggle and to our work for victory.

Two years ago we celebrated his 50th birthday with the most splendid parade that the Reich capital had ever seen. The German people saw clearly for the first time how strong the Reich had become under six years of National Socialist government. We hoped then that the Führer's efforts to preserve peace for our nation and the world would succeed. Already the fanfares of hatred were sounding from London and Paris, calling for war at any price. We knew that if our enemies once more forced the Reich to fight for its national existence, the German people for the first time in their history would be united in all their branches, prepared spiritually, economically and militarily, ready to present the world with a miracle of strength, manliness, sovereign political and spiritual superiority, military power and precision.

Our eternal enemies declared war on us in September of that year, and since then the German miracle has become reality. The German soldier defeated the enemy wherever he

met him. In breathtaking victories unique in history, brilliant offensives defeated Poland, Norway, Holland, Belgium and France. England has been thrown from the continent, and the British Empire is receiving powerful blows in the homeland, on the Atlantic and in North Africa that are shaking its foundations. If one asks how our enemies could declare war on the Reich under such conditions, the only answer is that they did not believe in the enormous power of a great personality nor in the strength of his work. They still thought of Germany as it had been in November 1918, cowardly, exhausted, defenseless against the false promises of its enemies, with no knowledge of its national mission and without determined and strong leadership. They did not think it possible that one man could bring about a miracle that would lift this people from the pit to which it had fallen and lead a wonderful regeneration that made it once more conscious of its strengths. Only rarely have the German people experienced a true national task. While other nations in the world did what was necessary to secure their political and economic security by establishing the necessary military bases and reserves of raw materials, we Germans poured out our blood chasing phantoms. For the first time in this war, Germany is a strong power, defending its interests, which are not the increased profits of a capitalist ruling class, but rather the preservation of its national existence.

Each of us knows this today. We gave no illusions as we fight the war. We all know what it is about. We know that its outcome will determine our national life. We know that it must be won by the whole people for the whole people, and that a German victory will mean that the Reich is firmly guarded on all sides and that Germany's national existence is secured. That will give our people the possibility to live and work politically and economically.

Foreign visitors who visit the Reich during the war are amazed at the calm with which the German people look at current and coming events. Nothing would be more false than to assume this was the result of indifference or lack of interest. Our confidence rests on security. Our people do not know, and do not even want to know, what the Führer is planning and how he will gain victory. They simply trust him. He will choose the right way, as he has always done. Our people had no worries before the Western offensive as to how the Führer would break through the Maginot Line to attack France. They simply believed that he had a plan and the means. When Holland, Belgium and France were defeated within six weeks as the world held its breath, the German people were more pleased than surprised. They saw only renewed confirmation of their faith in the Führer. Our people know that if the nation is loyal, obedient and dutiful, and if each does his job, Germany is unbeatable and victory after victory will accompany our troops.

What enormous strength lies in this confidence! How childish and silly, to the contrary, are the repeated stupid efforts by British plutocracy to shake this confidence, to bring the people in conflict with the Führer, to weaken the fighting spirit of our army by lying rumors. Every German soldier today knows that we have only been defeated when we succumbed

to such a temptation, and that Germany has always been triumphant which it was conscious of its strength and directed it outwardly, not inwardly.

The winter in which London placed such great hopes is long over. We filled it with feverish preparations. The entire nation worked day and night to supply our army with a surplus of weapons and munitions. The internal organization of our national life continues to function flawlessly, and the burdens war brings with it are fairly distributed and bearable for everyone. The attempts of British plutocracy to win victories on the periphery or to cause the German people to doubt or lose courage during the long waiting period have been in vain. These attempts had no impact on us. The German people did not only wait during the winter, they also fought and worked. We did not make as much noise about it as did the English. The enemy has already seen the results of our preparations in the campaign in the Southeast, in North Africa, in the Battle of the Atlantic, and in the air war against the English motherland. That all goes to show that wars are not won through newspaper articles, but rather with ideas, soldiers, weapons, and munitions. A people wins when it has the prerequisites to victory, when it wants to win, and when it must win. All that is true for us.

This evening we look back along the path we have followed since September 1939, and forward to what is still shrouded in darkness, illuminated by the light of our faith. It is the path to final victory. We have never believed in it as firmly as we do today. The Führer leads us, and that is the best foundation of our confidence.

When Mr. Churchill spoke recently about the outcome of this war, he declared that England would win, he just did not know how. We reply: The Führer will win because he also knows how he will win. He has filled the nation with his spirit. It is tuned to his will. This time, they will survive the great test of faith that will decide their future, ending the 400-year series of German mistakes and failures. That is why this age is so great for us Germans and why, despite the war, it is so encouraging. Our people have a chance, one that we will use. An armed people, led by one will and filled with fanaticism — that is victory!

A man who has created such things stands far above any words of praise. The nation can only bow in thankfulness before him. We all do that in this hour. We thank the fate that sent us the Führer in the midst of our deepest need. We, his old fighting companions throughout the German Reich and our soldiers at the Front above all are grateful to fate that it gave us in our early years the strength and insight to recognize his greatness and to be with him from the beginning along his eventful way to victory and triumph. Who among us would chose to miss even one day of these last hard years, always filled with battle and work? Who among us does not think it his highest good fortune, indeed the real meaning and fulfillment of his life, to have been with him as he won the revolution, and to be with him now as he is winning the great war for Germany's life and freedom? We have fought at his side long enough to know both from experience and knowledge that victory is as good as certain. We only must remain strong, faithful, brave and upright, striding with heads high toward the hour of our proudest triumph.

Thus we greet him on the eve of his birthday. The entire nation joins in this greeting, and in expressing its deepest and most profound thankfulness for him. Our soldiers bear his names on their lips, wherever they may stand or march. Our workers sing his name as they work. Our men on the battle fronts, above all those in the Southeast and North Africa who defend the nation's security, our officers and soldiers of the air force who carry death and destruction to the British Isles, our men in the navy who have set an iron ring around Great Britain, they all greet him as their supreme commander. Our farmers and workers greet him as their Führer and our women thank him for fighting for the future of their children. The German youth gives him their strongest faith. He is ours. He has made this people what it is today. Where would we be if he had not come?

We ask a gracious God to keep him healthy and to grant success to his work for the freedom of our people. Then we need not fear the future. Then the German people can face the proudest period of their historical development. Once the flags of our revolution fluttered over the entire Reich. Now we long for that happy day, and fight for it with all our might, when the flags of our victory will fly over the entire Reich.

Tomorrow we celebrate his fanatic devotion to his work. Despite the war, a festive air fills the whole nation. It is his day, and it is our day. It reminds us once more what our lives have become because of him. We therefore wish him what we have always wished for: May he remain for us what he was and is:

Our Hitler!

Our Hitler

Goebbels' 1942 Speech on Hitler's 53rd Birthday

The source: "Führergeburtstag 1942," *Das eherne Herz* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, 1943), pp. 286-294.

The film "The Great King" is playing in the movie theaters of the Reich. It treats the hard trials and historic challenges that Frederick the Great endured during the critical phase of the Seven Years War, before he led his army to final victory over his enemies. The film takes the unique figure of this great Prussian king off his pedestal and removes the anecdotal incrustations in order to show us how things really were and what really happened. The film avoids the usual portrayal of the attributes of this historic figure, instead giving us a personal and human picture of a unique statesman and military genius. As curious as it may sound, today he seems to us even greater in his defeats than in his victories.

Shallow popular accounts of the great Prussian king sometimes make it seem as if he dealt easily with the difficulties and problems of warfare. In this film, however, we see a struggling titan with a deep heart who endured for seven years an inferno of sorrow, pain of every conceivable physical and spiritual nature, the deepest human disappointments and the hardest tests. He was alone, deserted, almost toothless, the wreck of a man plagued with gout. Then came the day when Berlin jubilantly received its returning king. He sat in tears in the Charlottenburg Palace chapel after an almost inconceivable release from the nameless miseries and anxieties he had faced as the thundering tones of Grauns' "Te deum" resounded from the organ.

It is clear that such a portrayal of the life and struggles of our greatest Prussian-German king is somewhat risky, even if it is more historically accurate and more educational for our day. It is more pleasant to present historical persons and events in a way pleasing to the average person, Nothing is easier to believe than that the great victories in history were the result of military and political superiority, that the goddess of war ever smiles, even to think that presenting an occasional danger or threat defames the reputation of historical personages.

This film presents history from a different standpoint. It shows the human side of a true genius as a way of emphasizing his superhuman attributes. The greatness of this historic figures grows not from themselves, but rather from the weight of fate they bear. The physical suffering, the spiritual burdens and the temptations of the heart allow the character of a great man to stand out more vividly, they mark his outline more clearly. The film shows why Frederick II earned the right, uniquely, to bear the name "Great." Despite the numbing blows of fate that often drove him to the edge of the abyss, he found the strength to rise triumphant above the trials and defeats. He set a shining example of steadfastness in misfortune to his people, his soldiers, his doubting generals, wavering ministers, conspiring relatives and protesting civil servants.

This film proves the sound political and historical instincts of our people. It makes no compromises, presenting unadulterated historical truth. It is not the usual historical romance. Despite what one might expect, the broad masses have taken it as a wakeup call, making it into a success with hardly a precedent in the history of German film. No one fails to be moved deeply by this film. The parallels to the present, the words that great king speaks, the spiritual crises that he and his people overcame through battle and passion,

sometimes seem so striking that the makers of this film felt obliged to remark that it was planned not just before Christmas for educational purposes, but rather in the early summer of 1940, with no idea of today's duties and challenges. The contemporary significance of the words and the resemblance of many events to those of today is not the result of conscious propaganda, but rather of deep historical laws.

That is the truth. Each century has its historical mission. They do not repeat themselves, indeed are so bound to their era that posterity can hardly bring more than historical understanding for the political problems of past epochs. What remains is the ways in which history is made, the style and manner of expression that a statesman or military genius uses, the resistance that raises him far above his era, above all the superhuman strength with which he meets the challenge. How can the fact that Frederick defeated the Austrians be relevant to our day? His value for the present generation is in the worth of his personality, in the powerful strength of his historic genius, in his faith that moved mountains, in his steadfastness in misfortune, in the completeness with which he fulfilled his secular mission and in the heroic isolation with which he bore the dark shadows of his fate. He was the one who said that he who wants to transform the world cannot at the same time enjoy it.

We are living in a time that is being transformed, one that therefore cannot be enjoyed. As perhaps never before in history, the fate of our people is in the hands of a single generation. Its desire for life, for self-assertion must decide whether we are at the beginning of new and unprecedented age for our people, or whether we perhaps stand at the end of our history. Such moments in the rise and fall of nations always exert a powerful magic on brave and manly people. They see in the dangers and burdens a change to prove their mettle, which they know they must do if they are not to be weighed in the balance of fate and found wanting. The path to victory leads ever through the depths of danger and historical testing. A people must withstand many trials during a war. It must be armed against the tricks of a fickle fate that likes to subject its favorites to hard and bitter testing, until it finally wears the wreath of victory on its brow.

A generation blessed with a great personality in such dangerous times is to be envied. In the course of this war people have found all sorts of causes that might bring victory. Some thought of greater economic and military resources, or a higher population, or a better geographical position, or the famed bravery of soldiers or tough civilian morale. One pitted system against system and world view against world view, seeking whose chances of success were better. We believe, however, that victory will fall to the side with the better leadership, as it always has. Leadership is crucial. If it also has the better material resources at its command, no power in the world can keep victory from it.

We have come through a winter whose hardness and length have no equal in human history. It posed challenges to our leaders, to the front and to the homeland that we only now realize. Later generations of historians will write the accounts of this most moving chapter of the great battle. No one among us can doubt the almost legendary heroism

German soldiers demonstrated. If ever our people have shown that we are not only able along with our allies to assume the leading role on our continent, but that we have a historical right to do so, it was here. The German people proved its merit this past winter. A nation that survives such a test is destined for victory.

How often in these last hard weeks and months the German people looked in spirit to the Führer. Never has the whole nation felt so bound to him as in these hard times, which have spared no one. We felt as if we had to see him, be it only in a photograph, to gain the strength each needs to overcome the difficult daily tasks we all face. Each of us has felt obligated to him! Each word that he spoke to the nation was for every man woman and child, for every soldier, worker and farmer an order! All were with him, without many words and without being told! The whole nation lived in the unspoken assurance that while we were dealing with our lesser or greater troubles, he was fighting his gigantic battle in the East. He planned until late into the night, weighing and risking, standing watch at his headquarters. From there his will flowed to the most distant part of the battle field, filling even the last soldier in the most embattled unit.

The power of his personality is felt nowhere more powerfully than at the front. A soldier must feel led, else he cannot endure the daily risk of life. When does he need that more than in those hours when he must risk his life for that of the nation, far from his commander, following the leading of duty and conscience. This is where the value of a great and powerful personality is proven, that which as Goethe says is the highest blessing among mankind. The confidence that there is one who stand above all, who knows all and weighs all, who knows the sorrow and pain of his people even without daily contact, who feels each individual loss that touches a mother, a women, or children, yet still is able to summon the strength to advance the greater national life of his people — this confidence lets one endure all the sacrifices and burdens of the day more easily.

Nothing is harder than to accept the responsibility for the future of a great nation. It requires not only courage, the readiness to risk all, bravery of soul and steadfastness of the heart, but above all renunciation. From this renunciation grows the historical personality able to endure the lonely heights at which the sole duty is to serve the cause.

This is how the German people saw the Führer in the past winter. Surrounded by his aides, politicians and generals, surrounded by the love of countless millions of people, and yet in the end relying on himself, carrying the heavy burden of responsibility on his shoulders alone, fighting for the life and fate of his people. No matter how high we may climb, whatever the burdens we may carry, each of us has at least one who is still above him, on whom we may rely, whom we may obey, because he leads and orders, because he takes the heaviest weight from us when it grows too great for us, who fills us with new strength when we lose courage, begin to doubt, or tire. He reminds us of the great lessons of our time, of our world view, and gives us new life. Whether we have the great fortune who work in his vicinity or even with him personally, or whether we are called to fight for him as unknown

soldiers, workers or farmers, we all feel a strength that supports and sustains us. We feel ourselves safe in the protection of a man who has changed our century. We need only follow. His task is to show the way. He stands alone, waging a titanic battle with fate for the life of our people.

On the eve of his 53rd birthday, the whole nation gathers around the loudspeaker. It is far more than a festive event. It confirms what all Germans sense and feel, indeed more deeply and with greater obligation than ever before. In some sense it is a renewal of our loyalty and faith, proven already a million-fold through deeds, through uncounted sacrifices, at the risk of body and life, in a multitude of bitter deaths. It does not need words.

If ever the German people has felt united in thought and will, then it is in this: to serve him and to obey his commands. The sounds of heroic and titanic music streaming from every German heart raises our confession to a solemn and holy height. When we finish our celebration, the voices of men and the sounds of instruments will join in the great conclusion to the Ninth Symphony. As the powerful Ode to Joy sounds and a sense of the greatness and scope of these times reaches even to the most remote German hut, as its sounds reach to distant countries where German forces stand watch, each of us, man or woman, child or soldier, farmer or worker or civil servant will know both the seriousness of the hour and the joy of being a witness and a participant in this great historical epoch of our people.

We call the eternal power that rules over us the Almighty or God or Fate or the Good Father, he who as the Ninth Symphony says, lives beyond the stars. We ask the Almighty to preserve the Führer, to give him strength and blessing, to favor his work, to increase our faith, to make our hearts steadfast and our souls strong, to give our people victory after its battles and sacrifices, to bring the times to fulfillment.

There is no greater good fortune on earth than to serve a brilliant leader, to do his work. May we do that each day. The difficulty of our day is also its greatness. We would change places with on one.

In gratitude and loyalty, we send the Führer our greetings. An unbreakable band unites the front and the homeland. Germans throughout the world are united in the fervent wish that we bring each year on the eve of his birthday:

May he remain to us what he was and is:

Our Hitler!

Our Hitler

Goebbels' 1943 Speech on Hitler's 54th Birthday

The source: The German text of the speech is available in any German newspaper of 20 April 1943.

The German people celebrate the Führer's birthday this year in a particularly somber manner. This fourth year of the war has been the hardest yet, and an escape from its burdens and sorrows, or its end, is nowhere in sight. Its enormous political and military events span all five continents. Wherever one looks, peoples and nations are affected by its pains and sacrifices. Hardly a nation that has been spared the grave political and economic impacts of this vast military drama.

Here and there critics of weak nerve and character, usually from those nations least impacted by the war, question whether human culture and civilization will be able to survive the war at all, and make worried calculations as to what part of humanity's proud inheritance will remain once the war is over.

In the midst of the trials and burdens of the moment, it is all too easy to forget that this war, in contrast to those of the past, has a thoroughly national or racist character. That is why both sides fight with such bitter determination. The participant peoples know that this time it is not a matter of a more or less significant change in national boundaries, but rather a matter of national survival.

A small event has had world-wide effects. But it would be false to see the real cause in that event. Back then our opponents had a thousand chances to meet our just demands, without in the least harming their own power, image, or prestige. The enemy did not want it that way. They wanted war, because as the English prime minister said as early as 1936, Germany had become too strong.

Now and again we must remind ourselves to look back on the start of this war to understand its progress to the present state. A hypocritical enemy propaganda is constantly at work to conceal the war's true causes, to make people forget the liberal-democratic phrases of yesterday and accept the seductive ones of today, to make the guilty seem innocent and the innocent seem the cause of this great misfortune.

We need only to recall the Führer's many unfortunately unsuccessful attempts to prevent this war by limiting armaments to a rational level. He made every conceivable effort to prevent the clash of nations that he foresaw. And how often he has tried to end this war at the earliest possible moment.

It was all in vain. The wicked forces that wanted this war cynically and frivolously desired, and still desire, all out war. What are the misery and misfortune of the world's peoples, their own included, to them? They want only their personal enrichment and unlimited power over all the nations and continents. They did not come from the people, as we did. They therefore will never understand the real needs of their people.

Their brutal cynicism, the result of their alien, indeed their perfidious attitudes, causes them to passionately hate the National Socialist people's movement and the National Socialist German people and nation, and above all the Führer himself. They see him as a newcomer

to the business of leadership, which to them always means the betrayal of the people under the rule of money.

Just as the enemy's hated world is personified for us by certain men, so, too, certain men personify the world we love and defend. By the nature of such an enormous war, he who leads it gives it its mark. And not only that. Just as he feels its good fortune and successes with double or triple depth, so too he feels two or three times as deeply the misfortunes of grim fate. Naive people may imagine that leadership in times of peace is easy and pleasant, but even they sense that in war, with the heavy responsibilities it brings, those at the bottom who need only follow orders have it much easier than those at the top who must give the orders. They are the Atlases who bear the world on their shoulders.

Every great figure in history has at times been filled with the intoxicating feeling of holding, like God, the fate of the nations in his hands. Much more common, however, are long hours of bitter and passionate struggles for historical responsibility, of silent and desperate battles with forces that sometimes seem superhuman, of struggles against an unjust and hard fate which sometimes brings to ruin carefully made plans and destroys hopes that once seemed near.

It is easy to speak and write about the beginning or the end of military crises. Only he is in the position to judge who has himself faced a crisis with only the strength of his own strong heart. Long days and long nights over weeks and months leave their unmistakable marks on his face. The sorrow and pain of individual people pile up around him as a mountain of sorrows and pain of the entire people.

While the normal individual must master only his own fate, however difficult it may be, the Führer bears the fate of the entire nation. During critical moments, millions of eyes look toward him. They gain consolation and hope from his face, from the firmness of his manner, from the certainty of his gestures, from the confidence of his appearance.

People often say that the Führer is the image of the German people. That is true in a way deeper than we often think. If one could watch the face of our nation change during this war, we would see the same transformation that we see with serious pride in the face of the Führer. The lines, the hardness, the decisiveness, but also the deep passion for the people and, in a broader sense for a humanity forced into so much bitter difficulty against his will and plans, are unmistakable.

How cynical in contrast are the stupid and frivolous grins of the current leader of Britain during his public appearances. One hardly has to ask which of these two enjoys war, and who therefore wanted and provoked it. The face of the guilty one betrays him.

Despite all their shouting, our enemies have not been able to weaken the magic force of the Führer's personality. It grows in power every day. In a time like ours, so short of great men, the presence of such a man on our side amazes even our enemies.

It is clear why Anglo-Saxon agitators spread their lies and slanders about the Führer and his work. They realize that his programs and aims are reaching the whole world, even their own nations. A nation has no greater possession than such a powerful, timeless personality who casts his spell on both friend and foe.

Even some in Germany may complain that the Führer is totally absorbed in his work during the war, though it is the decisive factor in all that is happening. His behavior is in eloquent contrast to that of his counterparts with the enemy, who never miss an opportunity to stand in the spotlight. They apparently need that, perhaps because they sense that their lives and work will not last all that long.

Men of real historical stature are above such behavior. They do not draw their strength from the changing applause of publicity, but rather from their historical mission which fulfills a higher law. We know of no great historical achievement that did not involve the hardest blows of fate. Indeed, the hardness and bitterness of the tests demonstrates their true worth.

When we look back on the past two fearful winters when the Führer stood at the head of the army to meet and overcome an almost unconquerable fate, we remember Prussian-German history. He and we do not need to shy away from the comparison. The German people, betrayed by its entirely cowardly leadership in the late fall of 1918, became weak, and the hardest fate fell upon it. In the past two winters, however, the Führer and his people have proven that they are prepared to overcome historical failures and to pay the price of a great victory.

It is not easy for me, in his fourth birthday of the war, to portray the personality of the Führer in its proper relationship to the sweeping events we are witnessing. He himself is entirely absorbed in his work, the end of which he foresees. Though we may sometimes regret his intense commitment, his modest style and nature bring him even closer to our hearts. In the great, breathtaking victorious phase of the war, we admired and honored him. Today we have learned to love him from the depths of our hearts as we have seen him overcome with bitter determination the hard and painful blows of fate. What a consolation it is for a nation to have as its leader a man who embodies for all an unshakable confidence in victory! He shows no trace of the chattering that our enemies love so much, but rather we see only a realism driven by deep fanaticism.

Often in the course of this war people have praised the technical weapons and claimed that the final victory would be determined by the amount and quality of material. We do not want to underestimate their importance. Even more important, however, is the spiritual readiness of a warring nation to bear all, even the worst, rather than to bow to the strength of the enemy. The Führer embodies this attitude for us. Before he gave his all to the cause of peace; now he gives it all to the cause of war.

He did not want war, and did everything in his power to prevent it. Now that it has been forced upon him, he stands at the head of his people to wage it with every means. How often in the history of our movement have we seen him avoid a conflict that he thought unnecessary or harmful, but once it became unavoidable he fought to victory, whatever the obstacles. So it is today.

We gather on the evening before his 54th birthday, according to our custom. We do so as a united and determined nation, bring him greetings of honor, thankfulness, and every possible good wish for his person and for his historic mission. We do it this year with particular confidence.

The danger that surrounds us has not weakened us, but rather made us fully alert. When a people must take the greatest risks to ensure its survival, it is well advised to banish the devils of doubt and discord so as to concentrate completely on its historical mission. It is not possible to make this clear in all its details to every citizen. It must therefore find expression in the will and the orders of the Führer.

Confidence is the best moral weapon of war. When it begins to fail, the beginning of the end has arrived. No matter where we look, we see no cause for such concern. It exists only in the propaganda dreams of our enemy. The more hopes they put in the moral weakness of the German people, the greater will be their disappointment.

The fact that we do not speak of Germany's confidence every day is no reason to believe that it is absent. One usually does not need to talk about the obvious. If anything has become obvious to we Germans, it is the loyalty and absolute subordination of all at the front and at home to the man who embodies for us not only the German present, but also our expectations for Germany's future.

I say this in the name of the entire German people, the spokesman of whom I now feel myself more than ever to be. I say it in the name of millions of soldiers in every branch of the armed forces who are fulfilling their hard duty at the front, in the name of millions of workers, farmers and artists, of millions of women, who bear the difficulties of the war with patience and bravery, and in the name of the German youth, who bear his name with pride,

As a nation of 90 million, we lay before him our faith. We believe in a German victory because we believe in him. Our good wishes for him rise from the deepest depths of our heart. God grant him health and strength and his grace. Loyally and faithfully we want to follow him, wherever he may lead. He is our faith and our proud hope. We will walk firmly into the future his hand points toward.

A people that calls such a leader its own, that follows him with such unconditional loyalty, is destined for greatness. It need only desire that greatness.

We, the Führer's old fighting comrades gather around him now as always in the decisive moments of our struggle. We belong to him. We were the first he called. How often we walked with him through trials and dangers. At the end of the way was always the shining goal.

So it is today. We never want to lose sight of it. With our gaze fixed on the goal we will fight and work on. We are the example of faith, of bravery, of unchanging conviction. We are the old guard of the party that never wavers.

As the first soldiers of our people, our wish for the Führer on his birthday is the same one that has always moved our hearts. May he remain in the future what he is today and always will be:

Our Hitler!

Our Hitler

Goebbels' 1944 Speech on Hitler's 55th Birthday

The source: The German text can be found in any German paper dated 20 April 1944.

German citizens!

Not only fortune, but also reputation is always shifting during a war between great men and nations. It is therefore difficult, perhaps even impossible, to determine the political and military importance of individual events in the midst of war. What yesterday seemed a brilliant move can within several weeks or months prove a major mistake, and that which seemed short-sighted and mistaken can later become a decision of deep wisdom. Only when a war is over, and usually some time after that, once its lasting results have become clear to all, is it possible to objectively weigh and evaluate its individual events.

That was true of every past war, and presumably of this one as well. The war can be evaluated only as a whole. Beside the events of the moment, a war has larger historical significance. Only a trained and practiced eye can understand that larger significance during the war itself. For example, consider the vast differences in Frederick the Great's reputation during the Seven Year War, particularly from 1760 to 1763. His personal reputation and that of his work during his day was influenced by partisan considerations, but today we evaluate him historically, that is, objectively and justly. His individual actions and decisions were evaluated in various ways. Given the circumstances of the time, some seemed to lead to victory, others to defeat. Even those in his entourage could not properly evaluate them.

A genius acts from instinct, sometimes consciously but often unconsciously, which raises his actions out of the ordinary sphere. Great, timeless personalities have to fulfill not only the tasks of the moment, but larger historical missions as well. Unfortunately, the two do not always agree. A war of vast historical significance brings with it the heaviest sacrifices and burdens. The less these problems are seen by people in their broader historical significance, the likelier the struggling generation will be misunderstand them, or even to think them avoidable.

This explains why those at the time and posterity evaluate historical events differently. We can think of numerous historical examples. We can hardly understand today why the contemporaries of Alexander the Great or Caesar or Frederick the Great did not understand their true significance. To us there are no secrets any more.

It is somewhat surprising that those who may get the most excited about historical misunderstandings are also the ones who are least able to make the proper historical judgment regarding their own day. They are people who have the ability to evaluate the events and developments of earlier eras, but who lack the capacity to judge the historical happenings of their own era in a way that posterity will respect.

Which of the events of the present war will be significant in a hundred years? It is difficult to judge individual events, but even today one can with some assurance predict the factors that will influence posterity's evaluation of this great drama of the European peoples. It is not a matter of things whose traces, even by our present understanding, will have vanished

several years after the war is over. For example, few signs of the damage to Germany's cities caused by enemy air terror are likely to remain ten years after peace comes. What is likely to be recalled are the attitudes and behavior of those who withstood the terror.

Whether Europe becomes Bolshevik or whether we succeed in rescuing our continent and its people from this deadly threat will influence the future of many, perhaps all, future generations. This is the decisive historical significance of this war. The man who in the end frees our continent from its spiritual and military difficulties will be at the conclusion of the vast struggle, from the standpoint of history, the man of the war.

That does not change the fact that his opponents have done and are doing everything in their power to hinder the historical mission of the man who stands above his times. They are using their material superiority in population and weapons in an attempt to bring his work to naught. But all this will only increase the honor history will give him and add immortal fame to his name. Once the foul mist of vile and despicable wartime polemics has lifted, he will suddenly appear as the great historical figure of this enormous international drama, both to the living and even more to the coming generations.

And what of his opponents, who were ready and willing to throw the two thousand year history and civilization of our continent into chaos? They will be of interest only as the dark background to the greatness and foresight of this shining figure.

Was not this also true when we were fighting for power? How often did the Führer battle long-forgotten political parties when rescuing the Fatherland? How often did cowardly journalists attempt to persuade us that they were not only his equal, but his political superiors! Today even their names are forgotten. All that remains is the historical personality, one who stands above his times, and who despite all the challenges that sometimes seemed insurmountable found the solution to the German dilemma and saved the nation.

Victory determined everything then, as it will today. The end of this war will bring with it either the end of European history and any historical meaning from our point of view, or our victory will give our continent a chance for a new beginning. The fame belongs alone to the man who saved Europe from its most terrible danger, who despite the turns of triumph and defeat came through at the end and thereby saved not only his own nation, but the continent. This conclusion springs not from any desire for fame or national superiority, which is granted nonetheless by the sense of justice of the best in every nation who understand the graveness of the hour.

I am sure that I speak to the heart not only of every old National Socialist, but to that of every German. We all feel part of a historic mission. For us, the goal of the war is not only clear, it is also unalterable and unchangeable. The longer the war lasts, the more fanatically and committedly we pursue it. To seek the goal means to follow the Führer, to do his work

with loyalty and devotion, to turn in the midst of the storms of the war every personal thought and deed toward him. We are happy to have him on our side, for he incorporates not only our firm faith in victory, but also the constancy of our national leadership, the character of our war outlook, and the integrity of our war aims.

We only need to look over our borders to foreign and enemy peoples to see what he means to the nation and what he is to us all. It is easy and comfortable during times of great national successes, especially when they have been achieved without great cost of blood and sacrifice, to join the crowds of those shouting praises for the accomplishments of the national leadership, which everyone can see. It is harder to stay loyal to the cause in the middle of a long struggle for a nation's very existence. Such a struggle demands the full energy of those who are not spared periods of sleeplessness or even occasional nervous exhaustion. But the harder and more bitter the circumstances, the more their deeper historical significance is revealed.

We old National Socialists have never seen the Führer in a different role. Our greatest honor was always to stand by him in such hours, to protect his rear as he stepped forward into still unknown and dangerous territory, to give him the certainty that he was never alone. The National Socialist movement, the core of our present national community, developed in circumstances like these. The virtues of our movement, which overcame all barriers and obstacles during the hard years of the struggle for power, have become during this war the virtues of our fighting people, tested a million-fold by trial and danger: Our loyalty to ourselves finds its most visible but also its deepest expression in our loyalty to the Führer.

When has there ever been such a fruitful relationship between a people and its leader, and *vice versa*?

People of other countries see their leaders as the representatives of class interests, of parliamentary majorities more or less cleverly constructed, as necessary evils in the absence of a better alternative, or as the result of blind mass terror that stands upon millions of corpses.

For us, the Führer is the spokesman and the agent of the will of the whole nation. Despite all the prophecies of the enemy, there has not been a single case, from the beginning of the war until today, in which a soldier broke his oath to the Führer or in which a worker in the home front renounced his loyalty to the Führer by ceasing his labors.

We know that the enemy is unable to understand this, and attributes it to force or violence. But what we as a people and leadership have accomplished cannot be brought about by such methods. Other forces must be at work, forces of loyalty and community that cannot be understood by people who are unable to perceive them. That which we sowed before the war begun has grown to fruition: the rich harvest of solidarity between the leadership and the whole people.

Permit me the freedom in this speech to say some things to the entire German people, at home and at the front, about the Führer personally. I have had the good fortune to be at his side during the period of struggle for power and during this great war, to be present at many, indeed most, of the particularly happy and critical hours. I never saw him doubt or waver. He always followed the call of his blood, and where it called he went, regardless of the difficulties. He stands above all other statesmen of our time in that he recognized danger at the proper time and took courageous action. The German people thanks him for that today, as will one day all of civilized humanity.

If there is a divine gift to leading peoples and nations which allows great historical leaders to perceive instinctively the necessary and right, and to combine this knowledge with an unerring sense of what needs to be done at the moment, he is that blessed man. That the parliamentary mayflies on the other side fail to realize this is more a proof of his abilities than of their absence. Even the best leadership sometimes suffers defeats and reverses. They are in fact the test that proves its merits. For all people and nations, war is a hard and pitiless force that separates the strong from the weak and the industrious from the lazy.

Has the Reich and its leadership ever failed the test? Have we ever stood confused and desperate before an approaching fate, unsure of what to do? We have always stood ready. A man always stood at the head of our people who was a bright and shining example. Even under the hardest blows he stood firm and the confidence of his heart turned the greatest misfortunes to our advantage.

We don't speak about it often, but we all know it. Never has the German people looked with such faith toward its Führer as in the days and hours when it knew the full gravity of the situation. It did not lose heart, but rather affirmed even more firmly and strongly its goals.

When we looked back on November 1918, we could not rid ourselves of the bitter feeling that it was in part our own responsibility. But this time we have earned victory, and the goddess of history will not withhold it from us. The price of our coming victory is our loyalty. The war is not an occasion for loose talk and empty promises. It is a time to realize what we have so often said in the past. It depends on our oath to the flag and on the silent oath in our hearts.

Wherever in Europe our soldiers stand in battle or on watch, wherever Germans work, wherever German farmers sow and harvest, wherever inventors, artists, and scholars ponder with crinkled brow the future of the Reich, wherever mothers pray for victory and children trust in it with quiet confidence, in distant nations and continents, on every ocean, wherever Germans breathe, the warmest wishes from the truest hearts for the Führer rise to the heavens.

The fact that he stands at the head of our nation is for us all the surest sign of coming victory. Never was he so near to us as in the moment of danger, never were we so bound to him as when we felt that he needed us as we needed him.

Through this we have dashed the great hopes of our enemy. They hoped that we would do what they could not. It was the only way we could be defeated. We have done what is necessary for victory.

I am happy to speak to the German people at this hour. We have affirmed in the past year our support and our confidence in the Führer's work. On his birthday we want also to speak the words that come from the depths of our heart. We want to tell him what he is to us all, both in the trials of the moment and in the shining future.

We all wish him health and strength and a blessed hand. He must know that he can always rely on his people. When trial and danger is before him, we will stand more firmly behind him. We believe in him and in his historical mission, and believe that in the end he will be crowned with victory. He will be the man of the century, not his opponents. He gave this century its meaning, its content, its goal. Affirming the meaning and understanding the content, we will reach the goal. He points the way. He commands, we follow. We, his old and tested comrades, march in the first row behind him. We are tested by danger, steeled by misfortune, hardened by storm and trial, but also crowned with the first victories and successes of the coming new world. We are at the head of a countless multitude who carry and defend the future of the Reich.

We defend the cause of the nation, which has found its visible form in the Führer .

In this battle between life and death, he is and will remain for us what he always was:

Our Hitler!

Our Hitler

Goebbels' 1945 Speech on Hitler's 56th Birthday

The source: This was printed in most German newspapers on 20 April 1945.

German citizens!

At the moment of the war when — so it seems — all forces of hate and destruction have been gathered once again, perhaps for the final time, in the west, the east, the southeast and the south, seeking to break through our front and give the death blow to the Reich, I once again speak to the German people on the eve of 20 April about the Führer, just as I have done every year since 1933. That has happened at good and bad times in the past. But never before did things stand on such a knife's edge, never before did the German people have to defend their very lives under such enormous danger, never before did the Reich have to draw on its last strength to protect its threatened self.

Times such as these are rare in history. They are unique and unparalleled for the fighting generation that must survive them. Historical events of similar nature and extent fade in our memory under the pain that we bear, under the sorrows that almost overwhelm us, under tortured questions about our own future and that of our brave, sorely-tested people...

This is not the time to speak of the Führer's birthday in the usual way or to present him with the usual best wishes. More must be said today, and by one who was won the right both from the Führer and the people. I have been at the Führer's side for more than twenty years. I have seen his rise and that of his movement from the smallest and most improbable beginnings up to the seizure of power, and gave my best efforts to them as well. I have shared joy and sorrow with the Führer, from unprecedented historic victories to the terrible setbacks in the remarkable years from 1939 until now. I stand beside him today as fate challenges him and his people with its last, most severe test. I am confident that fate will give him and his people the laurel wreath of victory. The fact that Germany yet lives, that Europe and the civilized world have not yet fallen into the dark abyss that looms before us, is thanks to him alone.

He will be the man of this century — who was sure of himself despite terrible pain and suffering — who showed the way to victory. He is the only one who remained true to himself, who did not cheaply sell his faith and his ideals, who always and without doubt followed his straight path toward his goal. That goal may today be hidden behind the piles of rubble that our hate-filled enemies have wrought across our once-proud continent, but which will once again shine before our burning eyes once the rubble has been cleared.

Times like those we experience today demand more of a leader than insight, wisdom and drive. They demand a toughness and endurance, a steadfastness of heart and soul, that appear only rarely in history, but that, when they do appear, produce the most admirable achievements of human genius. Burkhardt said in his "Observations on World History": "The fates of people and of states, of entire civilizations, can depend on whether an extraordinary person can bring forth the proper strength of soul and action. Normal minds and spirits, no matter how numerous, cannot replace such a person."

Who can deny that only the Führer has the right to feel these words apply to him and his deeds in our and many coming generations? What can enemy statesmen say in response? They have nothing but superior numbers, their stupid and insane destructiveness and their diabolical lust for annihilation, behind which lurk the chaos of the collapse of civilized humanity. What has come of their loud and emotional theses of happiness, what of their Atlantic Charter and their Four Freedoms? Only hunger, misery, pestilence and mass death. A whole raped part of the earth cries out against them. Once flourishing cities and villages in every nation of Europe have been transformed into fields of craters, and hundreds of thousands, even millions of women and children in the north, east and southeast of the continent sigh and weep under the raging scourge of Bolshevism.

The most shining culture the earth has ever seen sinks in ruins and leaves only memories of the greatness of an age destroyed by satanic powers. The peoples are shaken by the most severe economic and social crises, which are but foretastes of the terrible events to come. Our enemies claim that the Führer's soldiers marched as conquerors through the lands of Europe — but wherever they came, they brought prosperity and happiness, peace, order, reliable conditions, a plenitude of work, and therefore a decent life. Our enemies claim their soldiers came to the same lands as liberators — but wherever they come there is poverty and misery, chaos, devastation and destruction, unemployment, hunger and mass death. And what remains of their so-called freedom is a life that no one would dare call decent even in the darkest corners of Africa.

Here is a clear broad outline of a program of construction that has proved itself useful, humane and beneficial, positive and forward-looking, in its own as well as in all the other lands of Europe. It stands against the fantasies of Jewish-Plutocratic-Bolshevist destruction. Here stands a man, sure of himself, having a clear and firm will, against the unnatural coalition of enemy statesmen who are only the lackeys and tools of this world conspiracy. Europe once had the choice between these two. It chose concealed anarchy, and must today pay for its mistake with million-fold agony. It will not have much time any more to choose its fate a second time. It is a matter of life or death!

A British newspaper wrote a few days ago that the result of the insane policies of the enemy powers would surely be a revolution of the European peoples against the Anglo-American plutocracy, and that Hitler was the man who was hindered by the same plutocracy through an unholy alliance with Asiatic Bolshevism as he began to bring Europe political and economic happiness. That is how it is, and nothing can whitewash our plutocratic enemies of their crimes.

Opposing this apparently all-powerful coalition of destructive satanic forces brings with it tests and burdens of superhuman nature, but that is not dishonorable — the opposite in fact! To bravely accept a battle that is unavoidable and inescapable, to wage it in the name of divine providence, to have confidence in it and its eventual blessing, to stand before fate with a pure conscience and clean hands, to bear all suffering and every test, never even

thinking of being untrue to one's historic mission, never wavering even in the most difficult hours of the final battle — that is not only manly, it is also German in the best sense of the word! Would our people not accept this task and not fight for it as if it were the word of god, it would not deserve to live any longer, and would lose any possibility of further life.

What we experience today is the last act of a powerful drama that began on 1 August 1914 and which we Germans gave up on on 9 November 1918 just before the end. That is why we had to begin again on 1 September 1939. What we hoped to spare ourselves in November 1918 we have paid for two- or threefold today. There is no escape — unless the German people surrenders any kind of decent human life and is ready to forever live in a way that would shame even the most primitive African tribes.

If it is manly and German as Führer of a great and brave people to depend wholly on oneself in this struggle, relying on one's own strength and certainty as well as the help of god in the face of an enemy who threatens with overwhelming numbers, to fight rather than to capitulate, then it is just as manly and German for a people to follow such a Führer, unconditionally and loyally, without excuse or reservation, to shake off all feelings of weakness and uncertainty, to trust in the good star that is above him and us all. This is all the more true when that star at times is covered by a black cloud. Misfortune must not make us cowardly, but rather resistant, never giving a mocking watching world the appearance of wavering. Rather than hoisting the white flag of surrender that the enemy expects, raise the old swastika banner of a fanatic and wild resistance, renewing the oath that we swore so often in the happy and safe days of peace, thanking god again and again that he gave us a true leader for these terrible times, feeling bound in our hearts to his sorrows and trials, thus showing the enemy world that they can wound but not kill us, that they can beat us bloody but not force us down, torture us, but not demoralize us!

Is there a single German who disagrees? After six years of battle, could our people debase itself so low as to forget honor and duty, surrendering in the turmoil of the moment its holy and inalienable right to its great coming life for a pot of soup? Who would dare suggest that? Who holds us in such contempt that he believes that now, just as we stand before the final and decisive round of the war, we would be untrue to all our sworn ideals, that we would throw all our hopes for the future of our Reich overboard, giving up in the midst of the confusion of misfortune that has overcome us on ourselves, our land and people and the lives of our children and children's children?

The world speaks of loyalty as a German virtue. How could our people have withstood the tests of this war without it, and how could it survive the war's coming end without it? For it is ending! The war is nearing its end. The insanity that the enemy powers of unleashed on humanity has gone beyond all bounds. The whole world feels only shame and disgust. The perverse coalition between plutocracy and bolshevism is collapsing! Fate has taken the head of the enemy conspiracy [U.S. President Roosevelt had died the week before]. It is the same fate that the Führer escaped on 20 July 1944 [the date of an assassination attempt on

Hitler], amidst the dead, the wounded and the ruins, so that he could finish his work — through pain and trials it is true, but nonetheless as providence ordained.

Once more the armies of the enemy powers storm against our defensive fronts. Behind them is the slaving force of International Jewry that wants no peace until it has reached its satanic goal of world destruction. But its hopes are in vain! As he has done so often before, god will throw Lucifer back into the abyss even as he stands before the gates of power over all the peoples. A man of truly timeless greatness, of unique courage, of a steadfastness that elevates the hearts of some and shakes those of others, will be his tool. Who will maintain that this man can be found in the leadership of Bolshevism or plutocracy? No, the German people bore him. It chose him, it by free election made him Führer. It knows his works of peace and now wants to bear and fight the war that was forced upon him until its successful end.

Within a few years after the war, Germany will flourish as never before. Its ruined landscapes and provinces will be filled with new, more beautiful cities and villages in which happy people dwell. All of Europe will share in this prosperity. We will again be friends of all peoples of good will, and will work together with them to repair the grave wounds that scar the face of our noble continent. Our daily bread will grow on rich fields of grain, stilling the hunger of the millions who today suffer and starve. There will be jobs in plenitude, the deepest source of human happiness, from which will come blessing and strength for all. Chaos will vanish. The underworld will not rule this part of the world, but rather order, peace, and prosperity.

That was always our goal! It is our goal today. If the enemy powers had their way, humanity would drown in a sea of blood and tears. War would follow war and revolution would follow revolution, finally destroying the last remnants of a world that was once beautiful and lovely, and that will be so again.

But if we achieve our goals, the project of social construction begun in Germany in 1933 and was rudely interrupted in 1939 will be taken up again with renewed strength. Other peoples will join in — not because we force them to, but rather of their own free will — because there is no other way out of the world crisis. Who could show the way save the Führer! His work is the work of order. His enemies have only a devil's work of anarchy and devastation to set against his work.

German history is not rich in great statesmen. But where one has appeared, he mostly had something to say and give not only to his own people, but to the world. What would there be European about Europe had not German kaisers and kings, counts and generals and their armies ever again withstood the onslaughts from the east! Usually only a disunited continent stood behind them that either did not understand or even fell upon Germany in the midst of its saving work for Europe. Why should it be any different today? At the present state of things, which the war is just before, or perhaps even in the midst of, a peripeteia, it

is difficult to understand this great battle between peoples. One thing, however, can no longer be disputed: If there had been no Adolf Hitler, if Germany had been led by a government like those in Finland, Bulgaria or Rumania, it would long since have become the prey of Bolshevism. Lenin once said the path to world revolution leads through Poland and the Reich. Poland is already in the possession of the Kremlin, despite all the attempts of the Anglo-Americans to conceal it. If Germany had followed, or would follow, what would become of the rest of our continent?

To ask the question is to answer it. The Soviets would probably already be at the Atlantic coast, and England sooner or later would receive its just reward for its betrayal of Europe that finds its most wretched expression in its marriage with Bolshevism. In the United States too, one would soon think differently of the dreadful world phenomenon that a Jewish press entirely and fully conceals from the American public.

If the world still lives, and not only our world but the rest of it as well, whom has it to thank other than the Führer? It may defame and slander him today, persecuting him with its base hatred, but it will have to revise this standpoint or bitterly regret it! He is the core of resistance to the collapse of the world. He is Germany's bravest heart and our people's most passionate will. I permit myself to make a judgment that must be made today: If the nation still breathes, if it still has the chance of victory, if there is still an escape from the deadly danger it faces — it is thanks to him. He is steadfastness itself. I have never seen him fail or falter, or weaken or tire. He will go his way to the end, and there awaits not the end of his people, but rather a new and happy beginning to an era in which Germanism will flourish as never before.

Listen, Germans! Millions of people look to this man from every land on the earth, still doubting and questioning whether he knows the way out of the great misfortune that has befallen the world. He will show the peoples that way, but we look to him full of hope and with a deep, unshakable faith. We stand behind him with fortitude and courage: soldier and civilian, man, woman and child — a people determined to do all to defend its life and honor. He may look his enemies in the eye, for we promise him that he does not need to look behind him. We will not waver or weaken. We will never desert him, no matter how desperate and dangerous the hour. We stand with him, as he stands with us — in Germanic loyalty as we have sworn, as we shall fulfill. We do not need to tell him, for he knows and must know: Führer command! — We will follow! We feel him in us and around us. God give him strength and health and preserve him from every danger. We will do the rest.

Our misfortune has made us mature, but not robbed us of our character. Germany is still the land of loyalty. It will celebrate its greatest triumphs in the midst of danger. Never will history record that in these days a people deserted its Führer or a Führer deserted his people. And that is victory. We have often wished the Führer in happy times our best on this evening. Today in the midst of suffering and danger, our greeting is much deeper and more profound. May he remain what he is to us and always was — Our Hitler!

