

HERR HITLER REPLIES TO SOME FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

An Interview With the Nazi Leader in Which He Throws Light on His Policy in Some Foreign and Domestic Matters Not Explained Before and States the Main Points of His Program for Germany

Let in democracy but by bloody brutality. If America had 20,000,000 Communists and Social-Democratic Marxists, the American people would readily understand why the National Socialist movement inculcates in its members the highest discipline and a readiness for self-sacrifice.

"It is also assumed," continued the interviewer, "that you would like to revive the traditional type of discipline which Oswald Spengler identifies with Prussianism and which the old German Army and the system of universal military service exemplified."

"The abolition of universal military service in Germany seems to the rest of the world to have been a great achievement," remarked Herr Hitler. "But if it leads to the disruption of the German nation and to bolshevistic chaos, the world then will prefer German universal military service to a German Red army."

Monarchy Held Not an Issue.

"Would not the abolition of the republic be a first step to the restoration of the monarchy, and does not your movement tend to strengthen monarchistic tendencies?"

"The National Socialist movement," replied Herr Hitler, "has nothing whatever to do with monarchism. The vital problem now facing the German nation is not whether a King of Prussia will again become German Kaiser but whether bolshevism will destroy the German people, their culture and their economic system."

Herr Hitler was asked whether anti-Semitism was a fundamental part of his party's platform.

"The attitude of the National Socialist movement to every inhabitant of this country," he said, "is determined by that inhabitant's attitude to Germany. Moreover, it was America, in spite of its enormous territory, that was the first country to teach us—by its immigration law—that a nation should open its doors equally to all races. Let China be for the Chinese, America for the Americans and Germany for the Germans. We have a very small amount of territory for our 65,000,000 people, but at least—within our restricted area—we can be our own masters. Let me add that I should severely condemn every German who would take part in public affairs in Palestine or seek to influence them."

The Kaiser's Overthrow.

Herr Hitler had often referred to the German revolution as "the crime of 1918," so the interviewer asked him what he would have done at that time.

"In the hour of the greatest need of my people," he answered, "I should never have made a revolution. Even if I had thought my former government had been guilty, I should have covered up the fact instead of proclaiming it to the world. Only after the end of the war and the signature of the peace should I have made that government answer for its sins. I am convinced that no American would have behaved in any other way."

When asked what he thought about the prospects of reducing armaments, apropos of the world disarmament conference next February, Herr Hitler replied:

"We National Socialists see a prospect of maintaining peace only if the menacing situation of one-sided disarmament disappears. There are just two possibilities: Either the armed nations will remove the disturbing and threatening pressure of their unreasonable and unjustified military superiority or else the disarmed nations will one day rearm. What we ask is the removal of this menace."

"Do you mean that if France had an army of 100,000 men, then Germany would be satisfied with her army of 100,000?" Herr Hitler was asked.

"Yes," he said. "What we want is equality. Moreover, because of her financial position Germany is more interested in disarmament than in further armament."

Revision of the Peace Treaty.

Reference was made to a recent book ("Morgen wieder Krieg," by Dr. Bauer) in which Germany's insistence upon revision of the Versailles Treaty was rated as one of the disturbing factors in Europe, and Herr Hitler was asked to comment upon this contention.

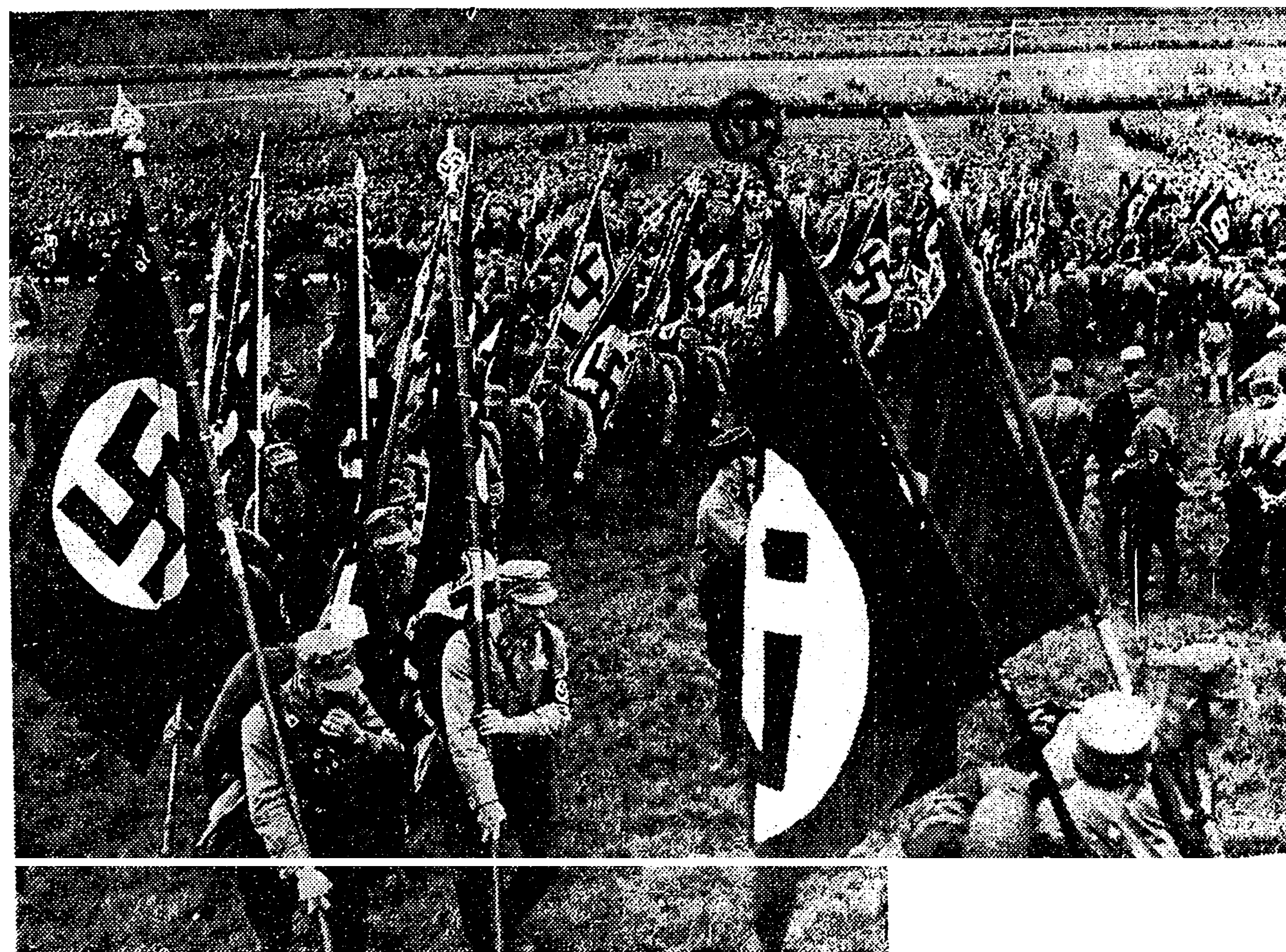
"We oppose the treaty as a form of continuous throttling, oppression and extortion—morally, politically and economically. It was not a peace treaty but a settlement dictated by hatred! 'Hassdiktat' was the word Herr Hitler used, which cuts the world sharply into two groups of peoples, victors and vanquished. We shall not allow ourselves to be kept eternally in the position of a second-class nation, mistreated by France."

"But if you demand that the treaty be revised, you cannot logically expect the French to disarm, since they contend that their army is needed precisely to prevent treaty revision and the changing of frontiers."

"In 1871," replied Herr Hitler, "the French opposed the Treaty of Frankfurt just as we oppose the Treaty of Versailles today, but Germany made no effort on that account to limit France's armament."

Herr Hitler was then asked about his party's demands that Germany withdraw from the League of Nations.

"We do not regard the League as any sort of guarantee of peace," he said. "If it were such a guarantee, why should France require her enormous military force? Moreover, I am not aware that the League's intervention in the conflict between Japan and China has kept the peace. We do not want to be either Japanese or Chinese."



Times Wire World Photo.
A Field Review—the Nazis Consecrate Their Flags.



Photo by H. Hoffmann, Munich.
A Town Demonstration—Nazis on the March.



Photo by H. Hoffmann, Munich.
Adolf Hitler, Leader of the Nazis.

The conflict between the government of Chancellor Brüning and the National Socialist party led by Adolf Hitler is moving toward a climax. Last Wednesday Hitler attacked the Chancellor in an open letter, accusing his government of pursuing a policy of illusion, and on the same day three organizations—the Social Democrats, the General Federation of Labor and the Reichsbanner—rallied to the support of the republic, pledging themselves to a continuing fight against Fascism. In the following interview Herr Hitler, in replies to some basic questions by a correspondent of THE TIMES, states the aims of the Nazis and their policies on the great problems now before the Reich.

By HAROLD CALLENDER.

MUNICH.

IN his office in the Brown House—officially known as his Chancellery—from which he directs the rapidly advancing National Socialist forces whose challenge to the German Republic seems to grow more formidable with every day that passes, Adolf Hitler, supreme chief of this highly organized and disciplined movement, recently answered some of the questions to which it has given rise in the minds of foreign observers.

Both sides are mobilizing their strength for the crisis they feel sure is approaching. Socialists and Nazis are in complete agreement at least on one point—that a showdown must come by Spring, if not sooner. All those with whom the present writer has spoken, whatever their personal political views, have recognized that the trend in Germany is definitely, perhaps irresistibly, to the right; that the strength of the Nazis, which has grown steadily for fifteen months, is still on the rise and might suffice to force a decision even if there were no Presidential election next April and no Prussian legislative election next May.

On the day before Herr Hitler expressed himself in the interview that follows, Dr. Frick, the Nazi parliamentary leader, had declared that the Nazis would not recognize any new foreign political obligations which the Brüning Government might assume; he urged the Centre party (Dr. Brüning's party) to sever its alliance with the Socialists and throw in its lot with the Nazis; "It is five minutes to 12," he said, "and the coming elections must bring the final decision."

Other Forecasts of Struggle.

On the same day Herr Severing, the Socialist Minister of the Interior in Prussia, also spoke of the test of strength that he thought soon would come. "It has been possible to rally the police to the support of the republic," he said. "Now the army must be won over." Meanwhile, the Reichsbanner, the republican military organization, was issuing a manifesto calling upon "all republican forces" to rally for "the struggle against National Socialism which must be waged with a united front."

Since they started the world by winning 6,400,000 votes in the national election of September, 1930, and became the second largest party in the Reichstag, the Nazis have gone from victory to victory. State elections that followed the national poll showed their votes steadily mounting; in Hesse in November they received more than twice the number of votes they polled last year. Their organization of "storm troops," workers, students and propaganda, extending to nearly every village in Germany, is a work of genius; their appeal to the disheartened millions of Germany is potent.

On the night before his conversation with Herr Hitler the present writer saw him in action before an audience that packed the Bürgerbräu Keller (the Munich beer hall where his frustrated uprising of 1923 began) and overflowed into a nearby hall. He spoke for more than an hour and a half. There were no extravagant flights of oratory and only two or three ventures into humor. It was a steady, hammering speech, sustained throughout on a single note, at a single level, with hardly a pause. Herr Hitler clenched his fists and spoke with the utmost vehemence for ninety minutes. It was an athletic feat which few orators could have performed.

Hitler During the Interview.

Herr Hitler is a born orator. Even when answering questions in his office he instinctively assumed his platform manner. He quickly warmed up to his subject and spoke at a racing speed. He rose from his chair, walked about the room, sat upon a table, but was never quite at rest. He emphasized his assertions with nervous gestures, save when he occasionally became more guarded and checked his rapid flow of speech to make sure that his words were carefully noted.

"The National Socialist party considers reparations to be unjust," began the interviewer. "But how would you do away with them?"

"We regard them as not only unjust but unreasonable," said Herr Hitler with considerable vehemence. "The Entente demands that we pay from 2,000,000,000 to 2,500,000,000 marks annually as tribute. This can only be done if we export from 20,000,000,000 to 25,000,000,000 marks worth of goods every year. Since other nations build up high tariff walls to protect their own industries, it is extremely difficult to find markets to absorb such a huge volume of exports."

"Consequently, we rationalized and modernized our industries, went in intensively for mass production and borrowed heavily abroad for the purpose. That is, we took on huge loans at high interest rates and have to pay 1,500,000,000 marks yearly to foreigners in interest alone. The whole

thing is insane. We could reduce our exports considerably if we were not obliged to pay this interest.

"Foreigners sometimes say we have lived luxuriously and spent money wastefully. They criticize us for building stadia and swimming pools. But how could we employ our people otherwise? These expenditures may not have been productive from the point of view of our creditors, but they were for us. We live in a time when the interest of bankers dominates, and industry goes to ruin."

"How will the reparations question be settled? We hope by the application of reason—by showing what the actual facts are. For instance, our need to export on such a huge scale makes us more formidable competitors of the other industrial nations and contributes to unemployment in England and America."

"What about the repayment of the foreign loans which have made it possible to pay reparations?" Herr Hitler was asked.

"If France insists that the political debt must have priority, then the issue becomes one of our ability to pay, not of our will to pay. This is a question the rest of the world will have to decide. If France presses for payment, the German economy will go to smash."

"You recognize the obligation to pay back these foreign loans?"

"We recognize it, yes. But it does not follow that it will be possible to pay them. This depends upon the economic situation and the policies of foreign countries."

"What would you do regarding the short-term loans which fall due in March, 1932, seeing that Germany still relies upon foreign capital whether she pays reparations or not?" the interviewer asked.

"There is nobody anywhere who thinks they can be paid in March," Herr Hitler replied. "The money is invested in business and trade. Foreigners lent us capital at interest

rates that often were as high as 10 per cent and more. Only by intense production and export was it possible to bear this burden. The interests of finance and of industry were in conflict."

"We cannot and should not bring in more foreign capital, because we cannot pay the interest on what we have already borrowed. If the lenders insist upon having their funds back, we can only say that it is impossible to liquidate them now. If they were withdrawn, Germany would break down. One of the things for which we reproach the present government is that it, like all other governments, has hidden the facts and kept these truths from the people. If we were to pay both the political and the commercial debts, we should have to export from 60 to 80 billion marks' worth of goods a year because we cannot safely count upon more than 10 per cent profit."

French Pressure Criticized.

The next question touched upon Franco-German relations. Herr Hitler was asked whether he favored a rapprochement with France and, if so, on what basis.

"Of course we want peace and friendship with every country," he said. "But the vital needs of each country must be recognized. We could not propose, for instance, that England give up her colonies, her shipping and her trade so that we might live in friendship with her. Germany needs a foundation for her national life. When France recognizes this, nobody will be more pleased than I. Until she does, no rapprochement is possible. Senator Borah realizes this when he says that the pressure France holds over Germany is the worst threat to peace."

Herr Hitler was asked what he thought of the Brüning-Laval attempt to work toward an economic rapprochement while leaving political differences aside.

"Economic rapprochement," he said, "cannot be separated from the general political situation."

"I have read in numerous National Socialist pamphlets," said the interviewer, "that the party would abolish the gold standard in favor of a currency based on goods. May one assume that this is your purpose?"

"The gold standard, as everybody knows, is based upon an almost universally accepted theory," Hitler re-

plied. "However, everybody must realize that even the most widely accepted theory, if overstrained, is bound to collapse in practice. Germany today possesses only a negligible quantity of gold. Therefore it can hardly be expected that Germany should take the lead in this grave matter."

"As a matter of fact the country which is doing most to unbalance the world gold standard system is

France. What France is doing today in the way of world gold hoarding is out of all proportion. It is a threat to world peace and happiness. But who is to check France, whose secret purpose in her gold hoarding is the re-establishment of the policy of Louis XIV of dominating Europe by political extortions gained through financial scheming. If the world doesn't intervene to establish a normal balance of political power, France will be able to say not 'I am the State,' as did Louis XIV, but 'I am Europe.'"

Tactics of His Party.

The conversation then turned to the National Socialist movement and its tactics. "I believe you have said," the interviewer observed, "that you intended to gain the power in Germany by means of the ballot and by no other means—that you would wait until you had a clear majority in the Reichstag before attempting to carry out your program. Is this true? And if you got that majority, would you retain parliamentary government or seek to change the Weimar Constitution so as to do away with parliamentary government?"

"The National Socialist movement will win the power in Germany by methods permitted by the present Constitution—in a purely legal way. It will then give to the German people the form of organization and government which suits our purposes and which will give us the power to conquer communism and the pest of Marxism. The present State, with its present constitution, is not in a position to do this."

"Would you join a coalition Cabinet, for instance, with the Centre [Dr. Brüning's party]?"

"The Nationalist Socialist movement will collaborate with the political forces in Germany which are willing to accept our platform, our policies, our purposes. The move-

ment will not continue the present government's policies, since they are responsible not only for the weakening of Germany but to a great extent also for the disasters that have overcome other nations. Had it not been for the 'policy of fulfillment' in Germany, there would have been no world economic crisis such as we have today."

In speaking of the political groups with which his party could collaborate, Herr Hitler evidently referred to the German Nationalists and the Stahlhelm, whose members share many of the National Socialists' ideas and joined with them at Ludlitzburg in the great demonstration against the government. The three organizations form what is known as the Nationalist Opposition. In saying that the "policy of fulfillment" brought on the world economic crisis, he meant that it was the payment of reparations which disorganized the world's systems of money and credit.

"The military form which the National Socialist movement has taken," said the interviewer, "has given rise abroad to the impression that it is a militaristic movement and would not be averse to using force to gain the power in Germany and to change the frontiers. What could you say on that point?"

"The National Socialist movement," answered Herr Hitler, "is not a military but a political organization. It is characterized, however, by very strict discipline. The form and nature of a political organization are determined not only by the will of its members but also by its opponents. Germany has today more than 6,000,000 Communists and from six to seven million other varieties of international Socialists. These represent the advance guard in our own country of a formidable foreign power. Democratic theories and admonitions do not suffice to resist a force which is motivated not by be-