

THE FÜHRER TO-NIGHT

BROADCAST ON THE CRISIS

A "LAST WORD"

From Our Correspondent

BERLIN, SEPT. 25

Herr Hitler, it is officially announced, will broadcast a speech from the Sports Palace in Berlin to-morrow night. It will be his last word on the demands which the German Government have made to Czechoslovakia and will probably be in strong terms.

The fullest measures are being taken to make Herr Hitler's speech a national event—perhaps the greatest of its kind since 1933. This is shown by a proclamation issued by Dr. Goebbels, the Minister for Propaganda and National Enlightenment, which appears fully displayed in the morning newspapers:—

HISTORIC SPEECH

CALL TO THE PROPAGANDA MAN THE STREETS. The Reich Propaganda Director of the National-Socialist Ministry, Reich Minister Dr. Goebbels, announces as follows:—

"On Monday, September 26, at 8 p.m., in the Sports Palace in Berlin, a great speech to the people will be delivered.

"The Führer speaks.

"This speech will be broadcast from all German stations. It will be heard in all towns and villages of the Reich, and, for those who themselves do not possess a wireless set, through public loud-speakers.

"The local party directors will immediately begin preparations for this communal wireless reception.

"There must be no one in the whole Reich who fails to listen over the wireless to this historic speech."

The local party authorities in Berlin add to this proclamation the following appeal:—

"Berliners, come out to the great speech. If you can find no room in the Sports Palace, form a boundless crowd on the Führer's way to and from the Palace and prepare for him a welcome in accordance with the feelings which move us all in this historic hour."

Herr Hitler, it is expected, will refer to a broadcast by the Prague Government to-day which, in the version given to the German public, has created furious indignation here. The broadcast related to the general mobilization order by the Czechoslovak Government on Friday. It stated, so it is alleged, that the Czechoslovak Government mobilized on the advice of and with the knowledge of the British and French Governments. The speaker represented the British and French Governments as having advised mobilization because Herr Hitler at Godesberg made demands of a more far-reaching nature than those the Czechs had already been induced to accept. [A British denial of this version, and the actual text of the broadcast are reported in other columns.]

TIME LIMIT

As to the first point, it is known that there was no man more surprised or disturbed than Mr. Chamberlain when the news of the Czech mobilization was communicated to him at Godesberg on Friday night. It was anything but good news to

CZECHOSLOVAKIA UNDER ARMS

A SUDDEN SUMMONS

THREE FRONTIERS CLOSED

From Our Special Correspondent

PRAGUE, SEPT. 25

Czechoslovakia is standing to arms. It has been a week-end without parallel in all the month of tension and crisis; and the end of it finds all men under 40 fully mobilized, either already at the frontier forts or moving up in long troop trains that push out from Prague in all directions. General Sirovy's Cabinet is sitting almost continuously, considering Herr Hitler's memorandum—or, as the people here call it, the German ultimatum. No official statement on the memorandum has yet been published, but it is generally believed to ask the Government to withdraw their troops from the frontier within six days and to allow a German occupation by then of the Sudeten districts.

The people are in a grim and resolute mood. What the six days may bring no man can foretell; at the present moment neither Army nor people are willing to make further concessions. The Prague population believe that they showed their mind clearly enough in the demonstrations when first the Hodza Government announced that they had agreed to the cession of the Sudeten districts; and the events and alarms of this week-end seem only to have confirmed the resolve that no change shall be abruptly forced upon them. On the other hand, General Sirovy—hated in Germany—is both popular and trusted here. The Army could be persuaded to follow his lead whichever way it turned, though in the popular mood here extraordinarily persuasive powers would be needed to secure a further compromise or concession.

CUT OFF FROM WORLD

For two days Czechoslovakia has been almost completely cut off from the rest of the world except for diplomatic cables, and this evening it is reported that the Czechoslovak-French wires have been cut. The frontiers over to Germany, Poland, and Hungary have been closed; only the narrow strip that leads to Rumania is open. Several groups of foreigners who have attempted to cross the other frontiers have been turned back. No private or business telephone calls are taken far abroad. The mails are scanty. Press censorship is becoming stricter. Rumour flies round in ever wilder circles. The man in the street and the soldier take nothing for granted—except their belief that they will be fighting on the frontier within the next few days.

Against this background the Government mobilized the reserves late on Friday evening—with the foreknowledge of the British and French Governments, it is reported here. No one who was there to see could ever forget the quietness and dignity with which the Czechoslovak

POLAND AND THE CZECHS

HOPES OF FRIENDLY SETTLEMENT

From Our Own Correspondent

WARSAW, SEPT. 25

The Polish-Czechoslovak conflict, which has seemed for several days to contain the gravest possibilities, may have been brought within reach of a friendly settlement by the receipt of word from Prague to-day that the Czechoslovak Government are prepared to begin discussions over the claims of the Polish minority in Czech-Silesia.

M. Papée, the Polish Minister in Prague, delivered a Note last Wednesday—immediately it was known that Czechoslovakia, in response to pressure from the British and French Governments, had agreed to cede Sudeten territory to Germany—inquiring whether the Czechoslovak Government were prepared to give the Poles equal treatment with all other national minorities. The inquiry was repeated with some urgency by M. Papée on Friday evening, and it is now hoped that Czechoslovakia will take speedy action to settle the dispute in the manner desired by that, in addition to the formal reply, a personal message has been sent to President Moscicki by President Benesh.

ALLEGED CLASHES

The semi-official Press by this morning had become almost hysterical in its denunciation of Czechoslovakia and in its reporting of clashes between Poles and Czechs which are alleged to have occurred during the last few days in the part of Teschen on the Czechoslovak side of the River Olza. No names or precise details of casualties have been given, but the language used in the reports was violent in the extreme. The attitude of the semi-official Press, in fact, left no doubt that the moment any other Army moved into Czechoslovakia Poland had decided at least to occupy the disputed area "beyond the Olza"—and that notwithstanding the warning implied in the Soviet *démarche* made last Friday morning to the Polish Chargé d'Affaires in Moscow.

All the Opposition newspapers here, which are by tradition friendly disposed towards Czechoslovakia, have supported the Government's demand for the "restitution of the wrong done by the Czechs to the Poles in 1919."

FOUR MEETINGS OF CABINET

A LATE SESSION

Since Mr. Chamberlain's return to England on Saturday afternoon there have been four long meetings of the British Cabinet—one on Saturday and two yesterday; a fourth is due to begin at the time of going to press.

On Saturday Mr. Chamberlain lunched at No. 10, Downing Street with Lord Halifax. Afterwards there was a meeting of the "Inner Cabinet" (Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Halifax, Sir John Simon, and Sir Samuel Hoare) before the full Cabinet—less Lord Stanley—met for two hours at 5.30. Later the Prime Minister saw

THE CZECH DECISION TO MOBILIZE

PRAGUE'S ACCOUNT

A statement broadcast from the Prague wireless station yesterday replies to hostile "propaganda which is even now being issued describing the mobilization methods adopted by the Government as an attempt to frustrate the discussions between Mr. Chamberlain and Herr Hitler at Godesberg." The statement describes this suggestion as a lie, and adds:—

On September 21 the Czechoslovak Government accepted the official British and French proposals which included the cession, after the delimitation of new borders by an international commission, of the Sudeten territories.

The Government accepted these conditions only because this course was advised by the Governments of Great Britain and France, who added that should we not accept this offer France could not keep her word regarding assistance as an ally, and that England could no longer show an effective interest in the fate of Czechoslovakia. So as not to be accused of having hindered the possibility of creating peace for Europe and thus for all the world we accepted the conditions.

As soon as the British Prime Minister placed our acceptance before the German Chancellor at Godesberg entirely different proposals were submitted to him. These went much further than was agreed at Berchtesgaden. The usual technique of following every concession by increased demands once more became apparent.

While receiving these new conditions at Godesberg Mr. Chamberlain was already aware that neither the French nor the British Government would be able to advise Czechoslovakia to accept them, and that they could no longer advise the Czech Government to remain passive and not to prepare for self-defence.

Therefore at 6.15 p.m. on Friday the British and French Ministers in Prague made a statement to the Czechoslovak Government upon instructions from their own Government to the effect that they could no longer take the responsibility of advising us to remain passive, and that they could not recommend that we should not make preparations of a military nature.

Immediately afterwards, at 8 p.m., the Czech Government concluded that the international situation demanded that preparations for defence should be made.

Surely nobody will believe that the mobilization of small Czechoslovakia could constitute a menace to anyone else. We repeat with all possible emphasis that this step was not taken against the advice and without the knowledge of the great Powers, and that the propaganda which tries to put a different complexion on the matter is entirely false, and is intended not to preserve, but to wreck peace.

GERMAN PRAISE OF MR. CHAMBERLAIN

"SERVICE TO PEACE"

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

BERLIN, SEPT. 25

The *Diplomatisch-Politische-Korrespondenz*, which speaks for the Foreign Office, commented upon Mr. Chamberlain's mission last night in the following terms:—

In the course of one short week the British Prime Minister has rendered valuable service to peace in order to bring to an end an untenable and, therefore, dangerous situation. He has helped to open up a prospect, on the basis of the Berchtesgaden conversations, that a threatening racial struggle, which even appeared unavoidable, may be diverted into the course of peaceful separation and that thus all indirect and direct complications and disputes may be set aside. He was also able to convince himself that the German demands, now as hitherto, remain within the limits which correspond to the fulfilment of the principles of self-determination which have been recognized by all responsible parties—even by Prague. In any case, the German people, for its part, thanks the British Prime Minister for the efforts he has made to establish better and more healthy foundations for Central Europe. The German people expect also that this wish will be shared by all who earnestly desire the establishment of better relations and that negotiations to this end will everywhere receive the support which they require, since conditions in the Czech State to-day no longer allow of a postponement.

A GENERAL EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

MR. DE VALERA'S PLEA

FROM OUR LEAGUE CORRESPONDENT

GENEVA, SEPT. 25

Mr. de Valera, the President of the Assembly, broadcast an address this evening to the United States from the League radio station.

He said that the delegations at Geneva were following with anxiety but with hope the effort that was being made on Mr. Chamberlain's

THE LAST TRAIN FROM PRAGUE

BRITISH PARTY'S ADVENTURES

OVER POLISH FRONTIER

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

DJEDERICE (POLAND), SEPT. 25

In the early hours of this morning a group of British people—some with babies in their arms—walked in pitch darkness over the frontier from the Czech half of Teschen to the Polish half.

Instructed by the British Legation in Prague, we had come from Prague in the last train which got through before the frontier was closed. Indeed it had been closed before we got there. At the arranged point of crossing, Buhomin, we were refused leave to cross by the Czechoslovak officials. So, still in the long troop train, we crawled slowly along the frontier to Teschen.

The station was in pitch darkness. "But the frontier is closed," we were told by Czech soldiers with fixed bayonets. "There was a good deal of shooting in the town this morning. We cannot let you through. In any case the Poles will refuse." These sentences were punctuated by heavy explosions among the hills, sounding ominously of cannon fire, but probably telling only of the blowing up of bridges.

About a mile ahead along a straight road was a gleam of light—the Polish frontier. We sent a deputation on ahead, under a military guard. They returned to say that there was probably a chance. So, still in complete darkness—there was not a light in the town—we walked on, carrying a bag in each hand.

"Drop down if they shoot," said the guard. "Walk slowly, keep stopping, and keep close to the houses." It was a curious walk, something of the John Buchan in it, but much more of the Brighton trip, with the added worry of wondering whether the last train home had gone.

At the frontier we all crossed with no more hitches than in an early morning landing at Harwich, and we were greeted soon after dawn by two British Consuls who had been searching for us along the frontier throughout the night and had mourned us as lost.

WITH THE TROOPS

From Prague our own train had been packed to overflowing with troops, some in uniform, most in their working clothes. They slept in the corridors, on the seats and against our shoulders. Continuously we were passing other trains, again packed with men singing quietly or sleeping; some in the old "eight horses or 40 men" trucks, others in wagons-lits, all going to the frontier prepared to face fearful odds. They were crowded on the platforms of every large station we passed. We heard them in the late evening marching along the road singing the old song "Hej Slovany!—Now the Slav!" It was not a cheerful journey.

The most bewildering and disheartening experience in crossing the frontier is to realize how completely differently the situation is reported by the newspapers and wireless of these two countries. Almost everything that is black in Czechoslovakia is white here.

The Czech has no doubt that M. Litvinoff promised him unconditional aid. The Pole reads that M. Litvinoff said that Soviet Russia would keep out of any trouble. The Czech is convinced that the Soviet Government has given Poland something like an ultimatum. The Pole has not heard of anything a tenth so drastic.

This morning again a Polish newspaper man told us that the British Government had officially announced an hour before that they had washed their hands of Central Europe. He further said that any fighting in the Sudetenland would simply be between rival Freikorps, but seemed not to know of the mobilization. The Czech, on the other hand, is almost convinced that it would be a European war with Great Britain and France on his side. Misleading publicity has much to answer for in the present situation.

ATTITUDE OF THE DOMINIONS

CANADIAN SUPPORT FOR BRITAIN

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

OTTAWA, SEPT. 25

Officials of the Departments of External Affairs and National Defence are working long and late and Cabinet meetings are now taking place almost daily. Although newspapers such as the *Winnipeg Free Press*, which have been consistently critical of the British Government's foreign policy, are using their editorial lash upon it, most of the Press is ready to suspend judgment until the final results of Mr. Chamberlain's efforts for peace can be appraised. But in many directions there is evidence of a steadily growing solidarity of national sentiment that if the British Government should decide that Nazi aggression must be resisted by force of arms Canada must range herself with the other nations of the Commonwealth.

Ministers are naturally gratified by these signs, and while they are keeping their own counsel about their policy the impression prevails that they have definitely decided to give vigorous support to Great Britain in the event of war. There have been rumours of acute dissensions in the Cabinet, but they appear to have little foundation, and Ministers who are strong for wholehearted cooperation in war are now much easier in their minds about the attitude of their French Canadian colleagues. Herr Hitler's persecution of German Roman Catholics has left a very bad impression in Quebec. The gross stupidity with which the French Canadians were handled in the last war is not being repeated. The Deputy Minister of the Department of National Defence, Colonel L. R. La Flèche, is a distinguished French Canadian soldier. There are more French Canadians in the permanent forces than ever before, while the militia regiments in Quebec were never so strong.

GENERAL HERTZOG'S DECLARATION

"OBLIGATIONS" TO BE CARRIED OUT

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

CAPETOWN, SEPT. 25

Dr. Malan, leader of the Nationalists, attempted again in the House of Assembly yesterday to induce the Government to declare a policy of rigid neutrality in view of the seriousness of the European crisis.

General Hertzog maintained the attitude that Parliament would decide the country's course of action when the need arose, and said that it would be mischievous to make any premature statement of policy. He seemed, however, to go farther than in previous statements, for after emphasizing that the repeated assurances by General Smuts that South Africa would stand by Great Britain were specifically intended to apply to an aggressive attack on Great Britain by which she was endangered, he said in reply to an interjection that he would agree with that "if only because South Africa was a member of the League of Nations."

He would see to it, he added, that when it became necessary South Africa's obligations towards the League would be carried out. Although he personally still had the greatest confidence that there would not be war, he emphasized the need for the utmost discretion to avoid making the situation graver. It was not for the Government to say anything to-day, except that they were a free nation with certain obligations to other nations, and that if those obligations developed in the future they would be carried out at any cost.

Mr. Pirow, Minister of Defence, supporting General Hertzog, repeated the Government's firm intention of maintaining its obligations in the defence of Simonstown, and added in reply to an interjection that South Africa would keep South-West Africa and would maintain her rights and obligations thereto under the League by force of arms if necessary.

SOUTH AFRICA AND THE BRITISH CASE