

## **The Speech of the Fuehrer, Adolf Hitler, in the Reichstag, Berlin, 19. July 1940 Declaration of Victory over France and the British Forces in the Western Campaign**

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The session opened with a very moving speech by the Deputy Fuehrer, Reichsmarschall Hermann Goering, paying tribute to fallen of both the German and then the Italians. He also spoke again following the speech by Adolf Hitler, the text of his speech are not available, but both speeches are included in the original German audio archive.

I have provided some definitions and annotations within the body of the text of Hitler's speech for clarity..

### **Adolf Hitler:**

Deputies, Men of the German Reichstag!

In the midst of the mighty struggle for the freedom and future of the German nation, I have called on you to gather for this session today. The grounds for it are: to give our **Volk** insight into the historic uniqueness of the events we have lived through; to express our thanks to the deserving soldiers; and to direct, once again and for the last time, an appeal to general reason.

Das **Volk** = the united German people, as a single entity, with a distinct culture, language, heritage, customs, beliefs and traditions, etc and not synonymous with simple translation as Folk or "the people" in general

Whoever contrasts the factors which triggered this historic conflict with the extent, the greatness, and consequence of the military occurrences, must realize that the events and sacrifices of this struggle stand in no relation to the alleged causes, unless these causes themselves were but pretexts for intentions yet concealed.

**The program of the National Socialist Revolution, insofar as it concerned the future development of the Reich's relations with the surrounding world, was an attempt to obtain a revision of the Treaty of Versailles under all circumstances-and as far as this was possible-by peaceful means.**

This revision was by nature a necessity. The untenability of the provisions of Versailles lay not only in the humiliating discrimination, the disarmament of the German Volk secured with the result that they lost their rights, but above all in the resultant material destruction of the present and the intended destruction of the future of one of the greatest civilized peoples in the world, in the completely senseless accumulation of vast terrains under the mastery of a few states, in the depriving of the losers of irreplaceable foundations for life and indispensable vital goods.

The fact that insightful men on the side of the adversary, even while this **Diktat** was being composed, warned against the conclusive realization of the terms of this work of lunacy, is proof of the persuasion prevalent even in these ranks that it would be impossible to maintain this Diktat in the future. **Their misgivings and their protests were silenced by the assurance that the statutes of the newly created League of Nations secured the possibility of a revision of these provisions, indeed that it was authorized for such a revision. At no time was hope for a revision regarded as something improper, but**

always as something quite natural.

**Regrettably, contrary to the will of the men responsible for the Versailles Diktat, the institution in Geneva never regarded itself as an agency for procuring sensible revisions, but rather, from the beginning, as the custodian of the ruthless implementation and maintenance of the provisions of Versailles. All endeavors of democratic Germany failed to obtain, by means of revision, an equality of rights for the German Volk.**

**Diktat** noun

1. a harsh, punitive settlement or decree imposed unilaterally on a defeated nation, political party, etc.
2. any decree or authoritative statement: The Board of Education issued a diktat that all employees must report an hour earlier.

Origin: 1930–35; < German: literally, something dictated < Latin dictātus, past participle of dictāre to dictate <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/diktat>

**It lies in the interest of the victor to portray as universally sanctified those conditions that benefit him, while the essence of the instinct of self-preservation compels the vanquished to strive for a restoration of his general human rights. For him this Diktat penned by an arrogant enemy has even less force of law insofar as the victory of this enemy was a dishonest one. It was a rare misfortune that the German Reich was led exceedingly badly in the years 1914 to 18 ! To this, and to the not otherwise instructed trust and faith of the German Volk in the word of democratic statesmen, must our fall be ascribed.**

**It was thus that the joint British-French endeavor to portray the Versailles Treaty as some type of international or higher justice must have appeared to every honest German as nothing other than an insolent usurpation. The supposition that British or French statesmen of all people were custodians of justice itself, or even of human culture, was a stupid effrontery. It was an affront which is sufficiently elucidated by their own inferior performances in these fields. For rarely has this world been governed with a greater deficit of cleverness, morality, and culture than in that part of it which is presently at the mercy of the fury of certain democratic statesmen.**

**The National Socialist Movement has, besides its delivery from the Jewish-capitalist shackles imposed by a plutocratic-democratic, dwindling class of exploiters at home, pronounced its resolve to free the Reich from the shackles of the Diktat of Versailles abroad. The German demands for a revision were an absolute necessity, a matter of course for the existence and the honor of any great people. Posterity will some day come to regard them as exceedingly modest.**

**All these demands had to be carried through, in practice against the will of the British-French potentates! Now more than ever we all see it as a success of the leadership of the Third Reich that the realization of these revisions was possible for years without resort to war. This was not the case-as the British and French demagogues would have it - because we were not then in a position to wage war. When it finally appeared as though, thanks to a gradually awakening common sense, a peaceful resolution of the remaining problems could be reached through international cooperation, the agreement concluded in this spirit on September 29, 1938, at Munich by the four great states, predominantly involved, was not welcomed by public opinion in London and**

Paris, but was condemned as a despicable sign of weakness.

The Jewish-capitalist warmongers, their hands covered with blood, saw in the possible success of such a peaceful revision the vanishing of plausible grounds for the realization of their insane plans. Once again that conspiracy of pitiful, corrupt political creatures and greedy financial magnates made its appearance, for whom war is a welcome means to bolster business. The International Jewish poison of the peoples began to agitate against and to corrode healthy minds. Men of letters [authors, writers of letters to editors] set out to portray decent men who desired peace as weaklings and traitors, to denounce opposition parties as a "fifth column," in order to eliminate internal resistance to their criminal policy of war. Jews and Freemasons, armament industrialists and war profiteers, international traders and stock-jobbers [market speculators] , found political blackguards: desperados and glory seekers who represented war as something to be yearned for and hence wished for.

It is to be ascribed to these criminal elements that the Polish State was incited to assume a posture which stood in no relation to the German demands and even less to the consequences that resulted. The German Reich, in particular with regard to Poland, has shown restraint ever since the National Socialist rise to power. One of the basest and stupidest provisions of the Versailles Diktat, namely the tearing away of an old German province from the Reich, already cried for a revision in and of itself.

**But what was it that I demanded at the time?**

I must in this context refer to my own person. No other statesman could have afforded to propose a solution to the German nation in the way I did. **It comprised merely the return of Danzig** - that is to say of an ancient, purely German city - to the Reich **as well as the creation of a connection of the Reich to its severed province**. And this only pursuant to plebiscites conducted, in turn, under the auspices of an international forum.

**If Mr. Churchill or any other warmongers had but a fraction of the sense of responsibility I felt toward Europe, they could not have played so perfidious a game. For it need be ascribed solely to these vested interests in war, both within Europe and beyond, that Poland rejected the proposals which neither compromised its existence nor its honor, and instead resorted to terror and arms. And it was truly superhuman restraint, without precedent, which for months led us, in spite of persistent assassination attempts on ethnic Germans-yes, indeed, in spite of the slaughter of tens of thousands of German Volksgenossen [our people], to continue to search for a path toward peaceful understanding.**

**For what was the situation like?**

One of the creations of the Diktat of Versailles, the most divorced from reality, a boggy [Poland], inflated militarily and politically, insulted a state [Germany] for many months, threatening to beat it, to fight battles before [at] Berlin, to smash the German Army to pieces, to transfer the border to the Oder or the Elbe [rivers] ; it went on and on. And this other state, Germany, watched the goings on patiently for months, although one good swipe would have sufficed for us to burst this bubble, that was inflated by stupidity and arrogance!

On September 2, this struggle could yet have been avoided. Mussolini made a proposal to put an immediate end to the hostilities and to negotiate peacefully. Though Germany saw its armies advancing victoriously, I accepted this nonetheless. But the **Anglo-French warmongers needed war, not peace.**

**And they needed a long war, as Mr. Chamberlain put the matter at the time. It was to last for at least three years, since they had in the meantime invested their capital in the armament industry, bought the necessary machinery, and now needed the precondition of time for the thriving of their business and for the amortization of their investments. And besides: what are Poles, Czechs, or other such nationalities to these citizens of the world?**

### **SECRET DOCUMENTS:**

**A German soldier found a curious document while rummaging through train wagons at the La Charite station on June 19, 1940.** He immediately handed over the document-which bore a particular remark-to his superiors at departmental headquarters. From there the paper passed to agencies. It became clear that what had been discovered constituted evidence in a most important investigation. The train station was once more thoroughly searched. And it was thus that the High Command of the Wehrmacht came into possession of a collection of documents of unique historical significance.

**What was found were the secret files of the Allied High War Council, including the protocols of all sessions of this illustrious association. And this time it shall not be possible for Mr. Churchill to simply deny or to lie about the authenticity of these documents, as he had attempted to do at the time in the case of documents found in Warsaw. For these documents feature handwritten notes in the margins penned by Gamelin, Daladier, Weygand, and so on. Hence these gentlemen are free either to admit to these or to disown them at any time. And these documents enlighten us as to the dealings of these gentlemen who have an interest in the war and in its expansion.**

**They will above all demonstrate how these cold-blooded politicians and military men have used all these small peoples as a means to an end; how they tried to subject Finland to their interests; how they determined to make Norway and Sweden the theater of war; how they planned to set fire to the Balkans to procure the assistance of 100 divisions from there; how they prepared to bomb Batum and Baku under the cover of a shrewd as well as unscrupulous reading of the Turkish neutrality in favor of their own interests; how they spun their web around the Netherlands and Belgium, pulling its strings constantly tighter, and finally engaging them in general staff agreements; as well as many other things.**

**The documents afford us, moreover, a good picture of the entire amateurish method which these policy-making warmongers employed in an attempt to contain the fire they had kindled. These speak of their military pseudo-democracy which is jointly responsible for the gruesome fate which they have inflicted on hundreds of thousands and millions of soldiers of their own countries; of their barbaric lack of conscience which led them to drive their own peoples from their homes in cold blood and deliberately, in a mass evacuation whose military consequences were not necessarily**

**favorable to them, while the general human results were shockingly gruesome. The same criminals are at the same time responsible for whipping up the Poles and inciting them to war. Eighteen days later this campaign ended-for all practical purposes.**

For a second time in the war, I spoke to the German Volk from this stand on October 6, 1939. I was then able to report to it the glorious military defeat of the Polish State. **I then also directed an appeal to reason to the men responsible in the enemy states and to their peoples. I warned against further pursuit of the war, the consequences of which could only be devastating. I warned the French especially not to start a war which, by necessity, would eat its way inward from the frontier and which, irrespective of its outcome, would have dire consequences.**

**At this time, I directed an appeal to the rest of the world as well. However, as I said then, I did so with the apprehension that not only might I not be heard, but that thereby I might only elicit the wrath of the warmongers interested. And this is precisely what came to pass.**

The responsible elements in England and France smelt a rat, seeing my appeal as a dangerous assault on their lucrative profiteering in the war.

Thus **they hurriedly and eagerly declared that any thought of an understanding was a waste of time** - yes, that this would even have to be regarded as a crime. The war had to be pursued in the name of culture, humanity, good fortune, progress, civilization, and - Good God!- even in the name of sacred religion, and in subservience to this end, even Negroes and Bushmen (Buschmenschen) had to be mobilized. And then, of course, victory would come about of its own accord, so to speak. It would then be within grasp; one need only reach out for it, so they said. **I was very well aware of all this myself, and indeed had known it for a long time, and it was only because of this, that I had laid before the world my appeal for peace. For, if I were in a position to believe in victory, I would not have approached England and France with an understanding without any conditions attached. In a few days these agitators succeeded in portraying me as a coward before the eyes of the world.**

**I was scolded for my peace proposal, even personally insulted. Mr. Chamberlain virtually spat in my face before the world public and declined to even talk of peace, according to the directives of the warmongers and agitators backing him: Churchill, Duff Cooper, Eden, Hore-Belisha, and so on. Not to mention negotiating a peace.**

**And it was thus that the big capitalist clique of war profiteers cried for a continuation of the war. And this continuation has now begun.**

I have already asserted, and all of you, my **Volksgenossen**, know this: that if I do not speak for some time, or nothing much happens, then this does not mean that I am doing nothing. With us it is not necessary to multiply by a factor of five or twelve every airplane built, and then to proclaim it loudly to the world. Besides, hens would be ill-advised to cry out to the world every egg just laid. It would be all the more ill-considered of statesmen to announce projects barely beyond the planning stage, in nervous chatter, to the surrounding world, so as to inform it in a timely manner.

**To the excited garrulousness of two of these great democratic state leaders we owe ever-current information on the plans for an expansion of the war by our adversaries, and especially on the concentration of the war effort in Norway and Sweden.**

**Volksgenossen** = fellow people of the German community

**garrulousness**

1. Given to excessive and often trivial or rambling talk; tiresomely talkative.
2. Wordy and rambling: a garrulous speech.

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/garrulousness>

**While the Anglo-French clique of warmongers was on the lookout for new opportunities to expand the war, and trying to trap new victims, I have labored to bring to a conclusion the organizational buildup of the Wehrmacht, to set up new units, to start up production for the war, to get material to flow, as well as to order training of the entire Wehrmacht for its new missions.** Beyond this, however, the bad weather of the late autumn and winter forced a postponement of military operations.

In the course of the month of March, **we gained knowledge of British- French ambitions to intervene in the Russo-Finnish conflict; which was less to help the Finns and more to damage Russia, the latter being seen as a power cooperating with Germany. This ambition grew into the determination to intervene actively in Finland itself and, if possible, to gain a base for carrying the war to the Baltic Sea. And, at this time also, suggestions of the Allied High War Council appeared with ever greater insistence either to set afire the Balkans or Asia Minor in an effort to bar the Reich from its Russian and Romanian oil imports, or to gain possession of Swedish iron ore. Landings in Norway were to serve this end with the goal of occupying all ore railroads leading from Narvik across Sweden to the port of Lulea.**

**The Russo-Finnish peace accords prevented, at the last minute, the carrying out of the already envisioned action in the Nordic States. Yet, merely a few days later, similar ambitions surfaced anew and precipitated a clear decision.**

**England and France had agreed to move, in one sudden strike, to occupy numerous important locations in Norway under the pretext of preventing further support for the German war effort with Swedish ore.**

**To secure access completely to the Swedish ore, they intended to march into Sweden themselves and to push aside the few forces Sweden could muster, either, if possible, in a friendly manner or, if necessary, by force.**

**Of the imminence of this danger we were informed personally by the untameable garrulousness of the First Lord of the British Admiralty. Moreover, we received confirmation through a hint made by the French Premier Reynaud in a talk with a foreign diplomat. That the date had been postponed twice before the eighth of April, and that the occupation was scheduled for the eighth, that the eighth, therefore, was the third and final day - of this we gained knowledge only recently. It was conclusively established only with the discovery of the protocols of the High Allied War Council. I then ordered the Wehrmacht, as soon as the danger of dragging the North into the war was becoming apparent, to take the appropriate measures.**

The case of the **Altmark** already demonstrated that **the Norwegian Government was not willing to uphold its neutrality**. Beyond this, **reports of secret agents also revealed that, at least insofar as the leading heads of the Norwegian Government and the Allies were concerned, there was already full agreement. Finally, Norway's reaction to the violation of its territory by British minelayers dispelled all remaining doubts.**

**Altmark** = a German tanker ship. The "Altmark Incident" was a naval skirmish of World War II between the United Kingdom and Nazi Germany, which happened on 16 February 1940. It took place in what were, at that time, neutral Norwegian waters.

The German operation, prepared down to the last detail, was launched. In fact the situation was a bit different from what we perceived it to be on April 9. While we then believed, **we had anticipated the British occupation by a few hours, we know today that the landing of the English troops had been scheduled for the eighth. The deployment of the British contingents had already begun on the fifth and sixth.** However, the moment the first news reached the British Admiralty of the German steps, i.e. that a German fleet had put to sea, this development so impressed Mr. Churchill that he decided to have the contingents already embarked disembark once again, so that the British fleet would first be able to search for and attack German ships. This attempt ended in failure.

Only a single English destroyer came into contact with the German naval forces and was shot out of the water. This vessel could not relay any sort of message to the British Admiralty or to the fleet of the English naval combat contingents. And thus, **on the ninth, the landing of German forward units was carried out along a coastal front stretching from Oslo north to Narvik.** When news of this reached London, the First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. Churchill, had already been on the lookout for many hours-eagerly awaiting first reports of the successes of his fleet.

**And this strike, my Deputies, was the most daring undertaking in the history of German warfare!**

Its successful implementation was possible only thanks to the leadership and the behavior of all German soldiers involved. What our three arms, the Army, the Navy, and the **Luftwaffe**, have accomplished in the struggle for Norway assures them mention in the records of the highest soldiership.

**Luftwaffe** = German Airforce

The Navy conducted its operations, and later handled the troop transports, faced by an enemy who, all in all, possessed an almost tenfold superiority. All units of our young Reich War Navy have covered themselves with eternal glory in this venture. Only after the war will it be appropriate to discuss the difficulties faced especially in this campaign: the numerous unexpected setbacks, losses, and accidents suffered. To have overcome all this in the end goes to the credit of the behavior, the leadership, and the troops.

The Luftwaffe, which often was the only means of transport and communications in so gigantically vast a terrain, outdid itself in all respects. Death-defying attacks on the enemy, on his ships and landing troops, are hardly more impressive than the tenacious heroics of the

transport plane pilots, who in spite of unimaginably adverse weather started time and time again on their way to the land of the midnight sun, only to unload soldiers or freight in the midst of a snow storm. Norway's fjords have become the graveyard of many a British warship.

Because of the uninterrupted wild attacks of German bombers and Stukas, the British fleet was forced to retreat from and to evacuate the very arena of which a few weeks earlier an English newspaper had so tastefully stated "that it would be a pleasure for England to oblige the German invitation to do battle there." The Army. The crossing already constituted a great challenge for the soldiers of the Army. In a few cases, airborne troops had opened up the area where they first set foot. Then division after division flooded the land which, due to its natural characteristics, already possessed considerable defenses, and which - as far as the Norwegian units were concerned - was very valiantly defended.

**Of the Englishmen who had landed in Norway, one can say that the only remarkable thing was the unscrupulousness with which such badly trained, insufficiently equipped, and miserably led soldiers had been put ashore as an expeditionary corps. From the beginning, they were certain to lose. By contrast, what our German infantry, the pioneers, what our artillery, our communications and construction units, have achieved in Norway can only be termed the proud heroism of struggle and labor.**

**The word Narvik will enter our history as glorious evidence of the spirit of the Wehrmacht of the National Socialist Greater German Reich.**

**The gentlemen Churchill, Chamberlain, Daladier, and so on, have, until recently, been exceedingly ill-informed as to the essence of the Greater German unification process. At the time, I announced that the future would probably teach them better. And I may well assume that in particular the deployment of mountain troops from the Ostmark at this front furthest north in our battle for freedom has enlightened them sufficiently as far as the Greater German Reich and its sons are concerned.**

**It is lamentable that the grenadiers of Mr. Chamberlain did not pay sufficient and, above all, persistent attention to this conflict, and instead preferred to be satisfied with the first test of the inner disposition of the tribes of our Volk which have newly come to the Reich.**

**General von Falkenhorst** led operations in Norway. **Lieutenant General Dietl** was the hero of Narvik.

Operations at sea were conducted under the leadership of **Admiral General Saalwachter** and the **Admirals Carls and Boehm**, and **Vice Admiral Lutjens**.

Operations of the Luftwaffe were under the leadership of **Colonel General Milch** and **Lieutenant General Geissler**.

The High Command of the Wehrmacht, **Colonel General Keitel**, as the Chief of the High Command, and **General Jodl**, as the Chief of the Wehrmacht leadership staff, **were responsible for implementing my directives for the entire undertaking.**

**Even before the conclusion of the campaign in Norway, news in the West took on an**

ever more threatening character. While, in fact, preparations had been made before the war to break through the Maginot Line in the event of a necessary conflict with France or England, an undertaking for which the German troops had been trained and had been equipped with the weaponry required, the course of events in the first months of the war compelled us to contemplate the possibility of moving against Holland and Belgium. While Germany had positioned hardly any units against Belgium or the Netherlands, other than those necessary for security reasons, as well as beginning to expand upon its fortification system, a visible mass of French units began to array itself along the French-Belgian border. In particular, the concentration of tanks and motorized divisions in this sector revealed that it was intended - at any rate it was possible-for these to be hurled at lightning speed through Belgium at the German border.

Decisive in this context was the following observation:

While, in the case of a loyal reading of the Belgian-Dutch neutrality, these two countries would have been forced, by the concentration of strong Anglo-French forces at their border, to focus their attention on the West, both began to reduce their troop strengths along this border to the same degree they began to build up the units stationed along the border with Germany. News of ongoing talks at the general staff -level, also shed a peculiar light on [this interpretation of] Belgian-Dutch neutrality. I need not emphasize that these talks, had they been conducted in the spirit of true neutrality, would have had to be held with both sides. Besides this, such an intensification of signs indicating that a move of the Anglo-French troops across Holland and Belgium against the German industrial area was taking place required that we should regard this threat as a serious danger.

Hence I took the German Wehrmacht into my confidence, informing it of the possibility of such a development and entrusting it with the appropriate, detailed directives. In numerous conferences at the High Command of the Wehrmacht with the Commanders in Chief of the three branches of the Wehrmacht, the leaders of the Army groups and of the armies, down to the leaders of important, individual undertakings, the tasks facing us were enumerated and thoroughly discussed. Among the troops these were taken up with great understanding, as the basis for a special type of training.

Correspondingly, the entire German deployment underwent the necessary adjustments.

The thorough observations which had been conducted everywhere gradually led to the compelling recognition that, from the beginning of May on, an Anglo-French advance had to be expected at any moment.

In the days of May 6 and 7, telephone conversations between London and Paris took place, of which we gained intelligence and which reinforced suspicions that an invasion of the Netherlands and Belgium by the so-called Allies had to be expected at any moment. Thus on the following day, May 8, I ordered an immediate attack for May 10, at 5:35 in the morning.

The basic thought behind this operation was to deploy, without worrying about

peripheral successes, the entire Wehrmacht - especially the Army and the Luftwaffe - in so decisive a manner, that the envisioned operations had to attain the complete annihilation of the Anglo-French forces.

In contrast to the Schlieffen Plan of the year 1914, I ordered the main thrust of the operation along the left flank of the breakthrough front, while, however, keeping up appearances of a reversed version. This deception was successful. Conduct of the entire operation was made easy for me by measures our adversaries themselves took. For the concentration of the entire Anglo-French motorized combat forces against Belgium revealed as certain that the High Command of the Allied armies had arrived at the decision to advance most speedily into this area.

We relied on the steadfastness of all German infantry divisions deployed in the thrust against the right flank of the Anglo-French motorized Army Group. Such a drive had to lead to its complete shattering and dissolution - yes, perhaps even to its encirclement.

As a second operation, I had planned the taking of the Seine up to Le Havre, as well as securing bases at the Somme and Aisne for a third assault. This was intended to break through, with strong forces across the plateau at Langres, to the Swiss border. Reaching the coast south of Bordeaux was to conclude operations. Within this framework and in this sequence, operations were in fact carried out.

The success of this mightiest sequence of battles in world history we owe first and foremost to the German soldier himself. He held his own at all places he was deployed to the highest degree. The German tribes all share equally in this glory.

The soldiers of the young, new Reichsgaus, added only since 1938, also fought in an exemplary fashion and took a heavy toll of lives. The heroic risk of life by all Germans in this war will make the emerging National Socialist Greater German Reich eternally sacred and dear not only to the present generation, but to all that follow.

When I undertake to honor all those forces to whose activities we owe this most glorious of victories, then first mention is due to a leadership which, in particular in this campaign, has met the highest of requirements.

### **The Army:**

It has performed the tasks imposed upon it, under the leadership of **Colonel General von Brauchitsch** and his **Chief of Staff Halder**, in a truly glorious fashion.

If the leadership of the German Army of long ago was regarded as the best in the world, then it is deserving today of at least equal admiration. Yes, since success is decisive for passing judgment, the leadership of the new German Army must be considered even better!

Subdivided into three Army Groups, the Army in the West was placed under the orders of **Colonel Generals Ritter von Leeb, von Rundstedt, and von Bock**.

The Army Group of **General Ritter von Leeb** had the initial mission to maintain the left flank of the German front in the West, stretching from the Swiss border up to the Moselle, in a state

of highest defensive readiness. It was anticipated that, in the later course of the operation, this front would also actively intervene in the battle of destruction with two armies under the leadership of **Colonel General von Witzleben** and **General Dollmann**.

At 5:35 in the morning of May 10, the two Army Groups under **Colonel Generals von Rundstedt and von Bock** launched the attack. It was their mission, along the entire front from the river Moselle to the North Sea, to break through the enemy lines along the frontier; to occupy the Netherlands; to move against Antwerp and the troops stationed at Dyle; to take Liege; and, above all, to reach the left flank along the river Meuse with massive forces for the attack, to force a crossing between Namur and Carignan with a main thrust of the tank and motorized divisions at Sedan and, in the further course of operations, to assemble all available tank and motorized divisions to push onward, along the system of canals and rivers between the Aisne and the Somme, to the sea.

To **Rundstedt's** southern Army Group fell also the important task of preventing a repetition of the Miracle of the Marne of 1914. He was to accomplish this task by securing, according to plan, the cover of the left flank in the course of the breakthrough.

**This massive operation, which already decided the further course of the war, led, as planned, to the annihilation of the main mass of the French Army as well as of the entire British Expeditionary Force, and already added luster to the German leadership.**

Besides the two leaders of the Army Groups and their **Chiefs of Staff, Lieutenant General von Sodenstern and Lieutenant General von Salmuth**, the following leaders of the Army are deserving of the highest of distinctions:

**Colonel General von Kluge** as leader of the Fourth Army;  
**Colonel General List** as leader of the Twelfth Army;  
**Colonel General von Reichenau** as leader of the Sixth Army;  
**General von Kuchler** as leader of the Eighteenth Army;  
**General Busch** as leader of the Sixteenth Army; and the  
**Generals von Kleist, Guderian, Hoth, and Hoepfner**  
as leaders of the tank and motorized troops.

Large additional numbers of generals and officers who distinguished themselves in these operations are known to you already, my Deputies, because of the high distinctions granted them.

The further conduct of the operation in the general direction of the Aisne and the Seine was not intended to conquer Paris primarily, but rather to create, or better secure, a basis for a breakthrough to the Swiss border. This massive offensive action, thanks to the outstanding leadership of all grades, also went according to plan.

A change of personnel in the High Command of the French Army, which had meanwhile taken place, was to revive its resistance and to bring about a change, much desired by the Allies, in the fortunes of the battle so unhappily begun.

Indeed it was possible to get the German armies and their offensive actions going, at several locations, only after overcoming the strongest of resistance.

Here, not only the courage, but also the training of the German soldier had the opportunity to hold its own to a high degree. Inspired by the zeal of countless officers and non-commissioned officers, as well as of individual men of valor, the infantry itself, time and time again, was compelled onward even in the most difficult of situations.

Paris fell! The breaking of the enemy's resistance at the Aisne opened the way to a breakthrough to the Swiss border. In one gigantic envelopment the armies stormed to the back of the Maginot Line. Now abandoning its reserve, the Army Group Leeb went on the offensive in two locations west of Saarbrücken and Neubreisach. Under orders from Generals von Witzleben and Dollmann, they achieved the breakthrough. And thus it was possible not only to surround the gigantic front of the French resistance, but to dissolve it into little particles and to force it to the well-known capitulation.

These operations were crowned by the now generally beginning advance of the German armies. At their head moved the incomparable Panzer and motor divisions of the Army with the goal of driving a left flank down the Rhone in the direction of Marseilles, and a right flank across the Loire in the direction of Bordeaux and the Spanish border. This was to destroy the dissolving remains of the French Army, or rather to occupy French territory. I will report in detail at a later point on the intervention of our allies in this war.

**When Marshal Petain offered France's laying down of arms, he was not laying down a weapon he still held. Rather he merely put an end to a situation completely untenable in the eyes of every soldier. Only the bloody dilettantism of a Mr. Churchill either fails to comprehend as much or lies about it in spite of better knowledge.**

In the second, third, and last phase of this war, the following Army leaders distinguished themselves as did the earlier mentioned generals: **Colonel General von Witzleben**; the **Generals von Weichs, Dollmann, Strauss**. The valiant divisions and standards of the Waffen SS also fought within the framework of these armies.

When I express my gratitude and that of the German Volk to the aforementioned generals, in their capacity as leaders of the Army and Army Groups, this applies at the same time to all other officers, all of whom it is not possible to mention by name, and especially to all the nameless workers of the General Staff.

In this battle, my Deputies, the rank and file of Germany has proved itself to be what it has always been: the best infantry in the world! And with it all other branches of the Army compete: artillery and pioneers, and, above all, the young units of our tanks and motorized troops. The German Panzer weapon, through this war, has made its entry into world history. The men of the Waffen SS share in the glory. Yet the communications units, the construction units of the pioneers, the railroad construction men, etc., are also worthy, in accordance with their performance, of the highest praise we have to offer.

In the wake of the armies followed the commandos of the Todt Organization, of the Reich Labor Service, and of the NSKK, and these also helped to repair roads, bridges, as well as to restore order to traffic.

Within the framework of the Army, this time there also fought parts of the Flak artillery of our Luftwaffe. At the foremost front, they helped to break the enemy's power of resistance and

attack. A detailed account of their effectiveness can be rendered only at a later date.

### **The Luftwaffe itself:**

At dawn on the morning of May 10, thousands of fighter planes and dive bombers, under the cover of fighters and destroyers, descended on enemy airfields. Within a few days uncontested air superiority was assured. And not for one minute in the further course of the battle was it allowed to slip.

Only where temporarily no German airplanes were sighted, could enemy fighters and bombers make short appearances. Besides this, their activities were restricted to night action. **The Field Marshal [Goering]** had the Luftwaffe under his orders during this mission in the war.

### **Its tasks were:**

1. to destroy the enemy air forces, i.e. to remove these from the skies;
2. to support directly or indirectly the fighting troops by uninterrupted attacks;
3. to destroy the enemy's means of command and movement;
4. to wear down and break the enemy's morale and will to resist;
5. to land parachute troops as advance units.

The manner of their deployment in the operation in general, as well as their adjustment to the tactical demands of the moment, was exceptional. Without the valor of the Army, the successes attained should never have been possible.

Equally true is it that, without the heroic mission of the Luftwaffe, the valor of the Army should have been for naught. Both Army and Luftwaffe are deserving of the greatest glory! The deployment of the Luftwaffe in the West took place under the personal command of **Field Marshal Goering**. His Chief of Staff: **Major General Jeschonnek**.

Both aerial fleets stood under orders of **General der Flieger Sperrle** and **General der Flieger Kesselring**. The Aviation Corps subordinate to them stood under orders of **Generals der Flieger Grauert and Keller, Lieutenant General Loerzer, and Lieutenant General Ritter von Greim**, as well as of **Major General Freiherr von Richthofen**. Both Flak Corps stood under orders of Flak Artillery **General Weise and Major General Dessloch**. The Ninth Aerial Division under **Major General Coeler** deserves special mention. The Commander of the Parachute Troops, **General der Flieger Student**, was severely wounded. The further conduct of the battle in the air in Norway was orchestrated by **General der Flieger Stumpff**.

While millions of German soldiers of the Army, Luftwaffe, and Waffen SS took part in these battles, others could not be spared at home as they were needed for the buildup of the local reserve formations. Many of the most capable officers - as bitter as this was for them - were forced to conduct and oversee the training of those soldiers who, as reserve units, or perhaps in new formations, were to go to the front only later. Despite my sympathy for the inner sentiments of those who felt at a disadvantage, **the greater common interest, as a matter of principle, was decisive. Party and State, Army, Navy, Luftwaffe, and SS sent every man to the front whom they were able to spare somehow. Yet, without securing a Replacement Army, a reserve air force, reserve SS formations, as well as Party and**

**State in general, the war at the front could not have been waged.**

As the organizers of the Replacement Army at home and of the armament and supplies for the Luftwaffe, the following have attained special merit: **Artillery General Fromm and General der Flieger Udet.**

I cannot conclude the enumeration of all these meritorious generals and admirals without paying tribute to those who are my closest co-workers in the Staff of the High Command of the Wehrmacht:

**Colonel General Keitel** as Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht, and **Major General Jodl** as his Chief of Staff. They have made the greatest of contributions to the realization of my plans and ideas throughout long months of many cares and much work.

An appreciation of the accomplishments of our Navy and its leaders will only be possible, to a full extent, at the end of the war.

**When I now conclude these purely military reflections on events, truth compels me to state the historic fact that none of this would have been possible without the disposition of the home front-or without, at its fore, the foundation, the work, and the activities of the National Socialist Party.**

**Already in 1919, in the age of great decline, it proclaimed its program for the establishment of a German People's Army and has stood up for it throughout the decades with a zealous determination. Without its activities, the conditions necessary for both the re-emergence of the German Reich and the creation of a German Wehrmacht would not have existed. Above all, it lent the struggle its ideological (weltanschaulich) world view foundation. To the senseless sacrifice of life of our democratic opponents in the interests of their plutocracies, it opposes the defense of a Volksgemeinschaft. Its activities have resulted in a solidarity between front and homeland, which regrettably did not exist in the World War.**

**Volksgemeinschaft** = the community of the German Volk

From its ranks, therefore, I should like to name the men, who along with countless others, attained great merit in securing the opportunity to celebrate victory in a new Germany: Party comrade **Reich Minister Hess**, himself an old soldier of the World War, has been one of the most loyal fighters for the erection of the present state and its Wehrmacht ever since the early days of the foundation of the Movement.

Party comrade **Chief of Staff of the SA Lutze** has organized the mass of millions of SA men, in the sense of supporting the state to the utmost, and has secured its pre- and post-military training.

**Party comrade Himmler** has organized the entire security of our Reich as well as the units of the Waffen SS.

**Party comrade Hierl** has been the founder and leader of the Reich Labor Service.

**Party comrade Ley** is the guarantor of the behavior of the German worker.

**Party comrade and Reich Minister Major General Todt** is the organizer of the production of armament and ammunition and has gained eternal merit as a master builder in the construction of our massive, strategic [!] road network as well as of the fortified front in the West.

**Party comrade Minister Goebbels** is the leader of a propaganda apparatus whose refinement is best ascertained [only] in comparison with that of the World War.

Among the numerous organizations of the home front, there remain to be mentioned the organization of the **Kriegswinterhilfswerk**, and of the **NS Volkswohlfahrt** under the leadership of **Party comrade Hilgenfeldt**, as well as the German Red Cross, and moreover the Reich Air Defense Association under the leadership of **Flak Artillery General von Schroeder**.

**Kriegswinterhilfswerk** = Krieg means war. The Winterhilfswerk (WHW, English: Winter Relief—literally "winter help work") was an annual drive by the Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt (the National Socialist People's Welfare Organization) to help finance charitable work. Its slogan was "None shall starve nor freeze". It ran from 1933-1945 during the months of October through March, and was designed to provide food, clothing, coal, and other items to less fortunate Germans during the inclement months. Its goals and efforts were expanded and intensified during the war as a true demonstration of solidarity of the German people on the home front/

**NS Volkswohlfahrt** = The Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt (NSV), meaning "National Socialist People's Welfare" was a social welfare organization during the Third Reich. The NSV was established in 1933, shortly after the NSDAP took power in Germany. Its seat was in Berlin. The structure of the NSV was based on the NSDAP Party model, with local, county (Kreis) and group administrations. During World War II, the NSV took over more and more governmental responsibilities, especially in the fields of child and youth care / support.

I cannot conclude this tribute without thanking the one man who, for years, has engaged himself in loyal, untiring, self-devouring work to realize my foreign policy directives. The name of **Party comrade von Ribbentrop as Reich Foreign Minister** shall remain tied for all eternity to the political rise of the German nation.

My Deputies!

**I have determined, as Fuehrer and Supreme Commander of the German Wehrmacht, to honor the most meritorious generals before the one forum which in truth represents the entire German Volk.** I must place at their forefront a man to whom I have difficulty in expressing sufficient gratitude for the services which tie his name to the Movement, to the State, and, above all, to the German Luftwaffe.

**Since the days of the foundation of the SA, Party Comrade Goering has been bound up in the development and rise of the Movement. Since we came to power, his capacity for work and willingness to take responsibility have accomplished deeds in numerous fields for the German Volk and the German Reich which cannot be excluded from the history of our Volk and Reich.**

**Since the rebuilding of the German Wehrmacht, he has become the creator of the**

**German Luftwaffe. It is granted to only a few mortals to create in the course of their lives a military instrument practically from nothing and to transform it into the mightiest weapon of its kind in the world. Above all, he has lent it his spirit.**

**Field Marshal Goering as creator of the German Luftwaffe, and as an individual man, has made the greatest contribution to the rebuilding of the German Wehrmacht. As the leader of the German Luftwaffe he has, in the course of the war up to date, created the prerequisites for victory. His merits are unequalled! I name him Reichsmarschall of the Greater German Reich and award him the Grand Cross of the Iron Cross.**

[**SNIP:** This section has been omitted in the audio version, with no disrespect intended to these German heroes, but for the sake of flow, moving on to more essential information of greater interest to the average reader]

**For services rendered to the victory of German weaponry in the struggle for the freedom and future of our Greater German Reich,**

**I hereby promote:**

The Commander in Chief of the Army, Colonel General von Brauchitsch, to the rank of Field Marshal;

Colonel General von Rundstedt, Commander in Chief of Army Group A, to the rank of Field Marshal;

Colonel General Ritter von Leeb, Commander in Chief of Army Group C, to the rank of Field Marshal;

Colonel General von Bock, Commander in Chief of Army Group B, to the rank of Field Marshal;

Colonel General List, Commander in Chief of the Twelfth Army, to the rank of Field Marshal;

Colonel General von Kluge, Commander in Chief of the Fourth Army, to the rank of Field Marshal;

Colonel General von Witzleben, Commander in Chief of the First Army, to the rank of Field Marshal;

Colonel General von Reichenau, Commander in Chief of the Sixth Army, to the rank of Field Marshal.

**I promote:**

General Halder, Chief of the General Staff of the Army, to the rank of Colonel General;

General Dollmann, Commander in Chief of the Seventh Army, to the rank of Colonel General;

General Freiherr von Weichs, Commander in Chief of the Second Army, to the rank of Colonel General;

General von Kuchler, Commander in Chief of the Eighteenth Army, to the rank of Colonel General;

General Busch, Commander in Chief of the Sixteenth Army, to the rank of Colonel General;

General Strauss, Commander in Chief of the Ninth Army, to the rank of Colonel General;

General von Falkenhorst, Military Commander in Norway, to the rank of Colonel General;

General von Kleist, Commanding General of the Twenty-Second Army Corps, to the rank of Colonel General;

General Ritter von Schobert, Commanding General of the Seventh Army Corps, to the rank of Colonel General;

General Guderian, Commanding General of the Nineteenth Army Corps, to the rank of Colonel General;

General Hoth, Commanding General of the Fifteenth Army Corps, to the rank of Colonel General;

General Haase, Commanding General of the Third Army Corps, to the rank of Colonel General;

General Hoepfner, Commanding General of the Sixteenth Army Corps, to the rank of Colonel General;

General Fromm, Chief of Military Armament and Commander in Chief of the Replacement Army, to the rank of Colonel General.

### **In consideration of unequalled services rendered**

#### **I promote:**

Lieutenant General Dietl, Commanding General of the Mountain Corps in Norway, to the rank of Infantry General. As the first officer with the German Wehrmacht, I award him the Oak Leaves of the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross.

### **Pending a later recognition of all the leaders and officers of the Reich Navy,**

#### **I promote:**

Admiral Carls, the Commanding Admiral of the Naval Station Baltic Sea and Commander in Chief of the Naval Troops East, to the rank of Admiral General.

**In appreciation of the unequalled accomplishments of the German Luftwaffe,**

**I promote:**

Colonel General Milch to the rank of Field Marshal;

General der Flieger Sperrle to the rank of Field Marshal;

General der Flieger Kesselring to the rank of Field Marshal.

**I promote:**

General der Flieger Stumpff to the rank of Colonel General;

General der Flieger Grauert to the rank of Colonel General;

General der Flieger Keller to the rank of Colonel General;

General of the Flak Artillery Weise to the rank of Colonel General;

General der Flieger Udet to the rank of Colonel General.

**Furthermore,**

**I promote to the rank of General der Flieger:**

Lieutenant General Geissler;

Major General Jeschonnek;

Lieutenant General Loerzer;

Lieutenant General Ritter von Greim;

and Major General Freiherr von Richthofen.

In my High Command of the Wehrmacht I promote:

Colonel General Keitel to the rank of Field Marshal;

Major General Jodl to the rank of Artillery General.

**In announcing these promotions on the occasion of the most successful campaign in our history, before this forum and so before the entire nation, I thereby honor the entire Wehrmacht of the National Socialist Greater German Reich.**

[END SNIP: Audio narration resumes here]

**I cannot conclude my reflections on this battle without thinking of our ally here.**

**Ever since there has been a National Socialist regime, its foreign policy has embraced two goals:**

- 1. bringing about a true understanding and friendship with Italy and,**
- 2. bringing about the same relationship with England.**

My Party Comrades, you know that I was as driven by these conceptions twenty years ago as I was later. I have dealt with and defended these ideas as a journalist and in my speeches countless times, as long as I myself was a mere opposition leader in the democratic republic.

**I immediately undertook, as soon as the German Volk entrusted me with its leadership, to realize these oldest goals of National Socialist foreign policy in practical terms. It still saddens me today that, in spite of all my endeavors, I have not succeeded in obtaining this friendship with England which, I believe, should have been a blessing for both peoples; and especially because I was not able to do so despite my persistent, sincere efforts.** However, I am all the more happy that at least the first point in this program of my foreign policy was in fact realized.

**This I owe, above all, to the genius who today stands at the head of the Italian people.** For it was possible only owing to his epoch-making activities for the **two intellectually related revolutions to find each other, to finally seal in jointly-shed blood the alliance which is destined to procure a new life for Europe.** That I myself have the honor to be a friend of this man gladdens me all the more, in view of the unique story of his life, which bears evidence of as many similarities to my own as our two revolutions do to each other, and, beyond this, as does the history of the unification and rise of our two nations.

**Ever since the resurrection of the German Volk, we have heard many voices of understanding from Italy. On the foundation of this mutual understanding grew a living community of interests. And finally this was set down in treaties. And when, last year, contrary to my expressed will and desire, this war was forced on the German Reich, a consultation on the further conduct of our two states involved Mussolini and myself. The benefit derived for the Reich from the behavior of Italy was extraordinary. Not only economically did we profit from the situation and the stance of Italy, but also militarily.**

**From the beginning, Italy tied down strong forces of our enemies and curtailed above all their freedom of strategic disposition. And when the Duce determined that the time had come to take a stand with the weapon in his fist against the unbearable and persistent violation of Italy, damage done in particular by French and British transgression, and the King issued the declaration of war, then this was done with complete freedom of decision. All the greater must our gratitude be.**

**The intercession of Italy has sped up and assisted in opening France's eyes to the utter hopelessness of continued resistance.**

And ever since, our ally has fought on the peaks and ridges of the Alps and now on the vast

plains encompassed in his sphere of interest. Especially his present air attacks and battles at sea are being led with the spirit peculiar to the Fascist Revolution. Here they elicit the spirit which binds National Socialism to Fascist Italy. Italy's pain is Germany's pain, as we have experienced in recent days in view of the death of Balbo. Its joy is our joy.

**And our cooperation in the political and military fields is a complete one. It will erase the injustice done the German and Italian peoples throughout the centuries. For, at the end of everything, stands the shared victory!**

And when I now turn to speak of the future, my Deputies, I do so not to boast or brag. This I **can well leave up to others who are in greater need of it, as for example Mr. Churchill.** What I want to do is to paint a picture of the present situation, bare of exaggeration, as it is and as I see it.

**1. The course of events in the ten months of war now lying behind us has proved my assessments correct and those of our adversaries incorrect:**

When the British so-called statesmen assure us that their country emerges strengthened from every defeat and failure, then it surely is no arrogance when I inform them that we emerge at least equally strengthened from our successes.

**On September 1 of the year now past, I already explained to you that, come what may, neither the force of weapons nor time shall force Germany to the ground. The Reich today stands stronger militarily than ever before.**

We have seen the losses, individually surely heavy, though as a total relatively low, which the German Wehrmacht has suffered in battle within the past three months. **When you consider that, within this time, we erected a front which reaches from the North Cape to the Spanish border, then our losses are extraordinarily low,** especially when compared with those of the World War.

**The cause lies - besides with the, on an average, excellent leadership-with the outstanding tactical training of the individual soldier and of the units, as well as with the cooperation among the branches of the service.**

**Another cause is to be found with the quality and efficiency of the new weaponry.**

**A third cause lies with the conscious refusal to pursue what is called prestige. I myself have, on principle, labored to avoid any attack or operation which was not necessary in the context of the actual annihilation of the adversary, but was instead to be carried out for the sake of what was regarded as prestige.**

In spite of all of this, naturally, we had anticipated far higher losses in many instances. **The manpower saved will benefit us in the further pursuit of the struggle for freedom forced upon us.** At present, many of our divisions in France are being withdrawn and reassigned to their bases at home. Many men are able to take leaves of absence. Weaponry and equipment are being either repaired or replaced by new material. **All in all, the Wehrmacht today is stronger than ever before.**

**2. Weaponry:** The loss of weaponry in Norway, especially in the campaigns against Holland, Belgium, and France, is void of any significance. It stands in no relation to production. Army and Luftwaffe possess at this moment-as I am speaking to you-equipment more complete and stronger than before we intervened in the West.

**3. Ammunition:** Provisions for ammunition were so well executed, the stocks are so vast, that in many areas production must now be curtailed or rerouted since the existing depots and warehouses, even given the greatest of efforts, in part are no longer capable of absorbing further deliveries. As in Poland, the consumption of ammunition was unexpectedly low. It stands in no relation to the stockpiles. The total reserves of the Army and the Luftwaffe are higher at present, for all categories of weapons, than before the attack in the West.

**4. Raw materials essential to the war effort:** Thanks to the Four-Year Plan, Germany was prepared for the greatest of strains in an exemplary fashion. No armed forces in the world, other than Germany's Wehrmacht, have so benefited from a shift away from imported raw materials essential to the war effort to such as can be found within the country.

Thanks to the work of the Reichsmarschall, this transformation of the German economy into a war economy characterized by self-sufficiency was already achieved in peacetime. [!] We possess reserves of the two most important raw materials, coal and iron, in what I may well term an unlimited quantity. Fuel supplies are more than enough for consumption. The capacities of our production are increasing and, within a short time, they will suffice - even should imports cease-to satisfy demand completely.

Our advance metal collections have so increased our metal reserves that we can face a war of no matter what duration. We shall reign supreme no matter what happens. Added to this are the enormous possibilities that come from a yet immeasurable loot and including the development of the territories we have occupied. Germany and Italy possess, within the confines of the area they regulate and control, an economic potential of about 200 million people, of whom only 130 million are soldiers, with seventy million free to be employed exclusively in different economic activities.

[Editor's note – I found the above statement astonishing and perplexing, but it is in fact what he said. On further reflection, however, Germany and Italy at this point did, for all intents and purposes, control almost all of western Europe. The 130 Million soldiers must therefore have referred to, not only regular forces, but reservists, and all those who had some military training, and would have to also have included females. His vision, or presumption, it seems, would be that these would also fight with Germany and Italy to defend all of continental Europe.]

I informed you on September 1, my Deputies, that for the further conduct of the war I had ordered the initial implementation of **a new Five-Year Plan**. I can now assure you that all measures to this end have been taken. Come what may, I now no longer regard time as a threatening factor, not even in a general sense. This time, the measures taken in a timely fashion have also secured foodstuffs for a war of no matter how long a duration.

**5. The attitude of the German Volk:** Thanks to National Socialist education, the German Volk has not approached this war with the superficiality of a "hurrah" patriotism, but with the zealous determination of a race which knows the fate awaiting it should it

suffer defeat. The endeavors to subvert this unity, launched by the propaganda of our enemies, are as stupid as they are ineffective. Ten months of war have rendered this zealotry all the more profound. And, in general, it is a great misfortune that the world's opinion is not formed by men who see things as they are, but by men who see them as they want them to be!

[NOTE approx. 60 seconds of inaudible, damaged content removed but the text is in the paragraph which follows, and is included in the English audio narration]

In the last days, I have seen through and studied countless documents from the Allied Headquarters. Among other things, these contain reports on the atmosphere in Germany, or memoranda on the disposition and inner attitude of the German Volk. The authors of these reports were, in part, also diplomats. Reading through these reports, one cannot help wondering whether their authors were blind, stupid, or simply vile scoundrels. I will admit without further ado that, naturally, here in Germany also there have been, and perhaps still are today, certain individuals who have watched the Third Reich's conquests with a feeling akin to regret. Incurable reactionaries or blind nihilists may well be saddened in their hearts that things came out not as they had willed them. But their numbers are ridiculously small and their significance is smaller yet.

Regrettably, this scum of the nation appears to have been chosen by the outside world as a measuring stick by which to assess the German Volk. And from this, the sick minds of failed statesmen derive the last points of orientation to cling to for new hope. As needed, the British warlords designate a "General Hunger" or an "imminent revolution" as their new allies. There is no nonsense that these people would not dish up for their own nation in order to cling to their positions for yet a few more weeks.

The German Volk has proved, above all, its inner attitude through its sons who are fighting on the battlefield. Within weeks they have beaten Germany's strongest military adversary and have destroyed him. Their spirit was and remains the spirit of the German homeland!

**6. The surrounding world:** In the eyes of English politicians, their last hopes, besides those resting with the loyal and allied nations, lie with a series of propped-up heads of state without thrones; statesmen without subjects; and generals without armies; as well as on renewed complications they believe they can conjure up thanks to their well-proven deftness in such matters. **A true Ahasuerus amongst these hopes is the belief in a possible new estrangement to separate Germany and Russia.**

**Ahasuerus** = a reference to the King of Persia in the Talmudic Book of Esther and reflects the king's ever-changing positions. Initially, he is a benevolent leader entertaining the populace with banquets and festivities. Quickly he is persuaded by Haman to support a genocidal massacre. And then, just as quickly,, Esther turns him into an ally of the Jews, determined to execute vengeance on Haman and his collaborators.

**German-Russian relations have been established for good.**

The reason for this was that **England and France, with the support of certain smaller states, incessantly attributed to Germany ambitions to conquer terrain which lay**

**completely outside the sphere of German interests. Suddenly it was said, that Germany was eyeing the occupation of the Ukraine; then again it sought to invade Finland; at another time it was claimed that Romania was threatened; then finally even Turkey was endangered.**

**Given these circumstances, I held it to be proper to undertake, above all, with Russia, a sober delineation of interests, to once and for all clarify what Germany believes it must regard as its sphere of interest in securing its future, and what in turn Russia holds to be vital to its existence.**

**Based on this clear delineation of mutual spheres of interest, the Russo- German relationship was revised. It is childish to hope that in the course of this revision tensions might arise anew between Germany and Russia.**

**Germany has not stepped outside its sphere of interest, and neither has Russia. England is deceived in its hope of bringing about a new European crisis to relieve its own situation, insofar as the relationship of Germany to Russia is concerned. Though the British statesmen are chronically slow in their comprehension of almost everything, they will surely come to understand this in the course of time.**

**I fancy I (have) correctly forecast the future development of this war in my speech of October 6. I assure you, my Deputies, that not for a moment could I doubt victory. And, unless one feels the need to see signs and guarantees for the final victory exclusively in defeats, then I believe that the course of events up to this point has proved me right. As I was certain of this course of events, I offered my hand to France and England at the time for an understanding. You still recall the answer that I received. My arguments against the nonsense of pursuing this war, on the certainty of gaining nothing, even under the most favorable of circumstances, and of losing much, were mocked and scoffed at, or passed over.**

**I promptly assured you then that I feared, because of my peace proposal, to be decried as a cockerel who no longer wants to fight because he is no longer able to fight. And this is exactly what happened. I now believe that France - less the guilty statesmen than the people-thinks differently about this October 6 today. What nameless misery has befallen this great country and people since then. I shall not even mention the toll of suffering the war has placed on the soldier. For above this stands the suffering caused by the recklessness of those who drove millions of people from their homes without proper cause, who were compelled by the thought that this might somehow hamper the German war effort. This premise defied comprehension: this evacuation was mostly to the detriment of the Allied war effort and, moreover, it was the most cruel experience for the unfortunate afflicted. The injury the gentlemen Churchill and Reynaud have done millions of people, through their advice and commands-this they can neither justify in this world nor in the next.**

**All of this - as I said - need not have happened. For peace was all I asked of France and England in October. But the gentlemen war profiteers wanted a continuation of this war at all cost. They have it now.**

**I myself am too much a soldier not to comprehend the tragedy of such a development.**

**Still all I hear from London are cries - not the cries of the masses, but of the politicians - that this war must now, all the more, be pursued. I do not know if these politicians have an inkling of just how this war is in fact to be pursued. They declare that they will continue this war, and should England fall, then they will do so from Canada. I do not believe this means that the English people will all emigrate to Canada, but rather that the gentlemen war profiteers will all retreat to Canada by themselves. I fear the people will have to remain behind in England. And, assuredly, they will see the war with different eyes in London than their so-called leaders in Canada.**

**Believe me, my Deputies, I feel an inner disgust at this type of unscrupulous parliamentarian annihilators of peoples and states. It is almost painful to me to have been chosen by Providence to give a shove to what these men have brought to the point of falling.**

**It was not my ambition to wage wars, but to build up a new social state of the highest culture. And every year of war takes me away from my work. And the cause of this robbery is those ludicrous zeroes whom one could at best call nature's political run of the mill, insofar as their corrupted vileness does not brand them as something out of the ordinary.**

**Mr. Churchill has repeated the declaration that he wants war. About six weeks ago now, he launched this war in an arena in which he apparently believes he is quite strong: namely, in the air war against the civilian population, albeit beneath the deceptive slogan of a so-called war against military objectives. Ever since Freiburg, these objectives have turned out to be open cities, markets, villages, residential housing, hospitals, schools, kindergartens, and whatever else happens to be hit.**

**Up to now I have given little by way of response. This is not intended to signal, however, that this is the only response possible or that it shall remain this way!**

**I am fully aware that with our response, which one day will come, will also come the nameless suffering and misfortune of many men. Naturally, this does not apply to Mr. Churchill himself since by then he will surely be secure in Canada, where the money and the children of the most distinguished of war profiteers have already been brought. But there will be great tragedy for millions of other men!**

**And Mr. Churchill should make an exception and place trust in me when as a prophet I now proclaim: A great world empire will be destroyed. A world empire which I never had the ambition to destroy or as much as harm. Alas, I am fully aware that the continuation of this war will end only in the complete shattering of one of the two warring parties. Mr. Churchill may believe this to be Germany. I know it to be England!**

**In this hour I feel compelled, standing before my conscience, to direct yet another appeal to reason in England. I believe I can do this as I am not asking for something as the vanquished, but rather, as the victor! I am speaking in the name of reason! I see no compelling reason which could force the continuation of this war!**

**I regret the sacrifices it will demand. I would like to spare my Volk. I know the hearts of millions of men and boys aglow at the thought of finally being allowed to wage battle**

**against an enemy who has, without reasonable cause, declared war on us a second time!**

**But I also know of the women and mothers at home whose hearts, despite their willingness to sacrifice to the last, hang onto this last with all their might.**

**Mr. Churchill may well belittle my declaration again, crying that it was nothing other than a symptom of my fear, or my doubts of the final victory.**

**Still I will have an easy conscience in view of things to come!**

Deputies, Men of the German Reichstag!

**In reflecting on the ten months lying behind us, all of us will surely feel overcome by the grace of Providence which allowed us to accomplish so great a task. It has blessed our resolves and stood by us on many a difficult path. I myself am touched in recognition of the calling it imparted to me to restore freedom and honor to my Volk!**

**The disgrace we suffered for twenty-two years and which had its beginnings in the Forest of Compiègne was erased forever at the very same site!**

**Today I have named the men who, before history, enabled me to accomplish this great task. They have done their best, dedicating their talents and their industry to the German Volk.**

I now wish to conclude in mentioning all those nameless men who have no less done their duty. Millions of them have risked life and liberty and, as brave German officers and soldiers, have been ready at every hour to make the last sacrifice a man can make.

Today many of them rest in the same graves in which their fathers have rested since the Great War. They bear evidence to silent heroism. They stand as a symbol for all those hundreds of thousands of musketeers, anti-tank gunners and tank gunners, pioneers and artillerymen, soldiers of the Navy and the Luftwaffe, men of the Waffen SS, and **all those other fighters who stood for the German Wehrmacht in the struggle for the freedom and future of our Volk and for the eternal greatness of the National Socialist Greater German Reich.**

**Deutschland-Sieg Heil!**