

Hitler Note and Paris Communique

The text of Chancellor Hitler's letter to Premier Daladier of France, as transmitted by The Associated Press, and THE NEW YORK TIMES translation of the text of the French communiqué regarding this letter follow:

Chancellor's Letter

My dear Minister President:

I understand the misgiving to which you give expression.

I, too, have never overlooked the grave responsibilities which are imposed upon those who are in charge of the fate of nations.

As an old front fighter, I, like yourself, know the horrors of war. Guided by this attitude and experience, I have tried honestly to remove all matters that might cause conflict between our two peoples.

I have quite frankly given one assurance to the French people, namely, that the return of the Saar would constitute the precondition for this.

After its return I immediately and solemnly pronounced my renunciation of any further claims that might concern France. The German people approved of this, my attitude.

As you could judge for yourself during your last visit here, the German people, in the knowledge of its own behavior held and

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Chancellor Hitler's Letter to Premier Daladier

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holds no ill feelings, much less hatred, for its one-time brave opponent.

On the contrary, the pacification of our western frontier led to an increasing sympathy. Certainly as far as the German people are concerned a sympathy which, on many occasions, showed itself in a really demonstrative way.

The construction of the western fortifications, which swallowed and still swallows many millions (of marks) at the same time constituted for Germany a document of acceptance and fixation of the final frontiers of the Reich.

In doing so, the German people have renounced two provinces which once belonged to the German Reich, later were conquered again at the cost of much blood, and finally were defended with even more blood.

I believed that by this renunciation and this attitude every conceivable source of conflict between our two peoples that might lead to a repetition of the tragedy of 1914-1918 had been done away with.

This voluntary limitation of the German claims to life in the West can, however, not be interpreted as an acceptance of all other phases of the Versailles dictate.

I have really tried, year after year, to achieve the revision of at least the most impossible and unbearable provisions of this dictate by way of negotiation. This was impossible.

That the revision had to come was known and clear to a greater number of sensible men among all nations. Whatever one may say against my method, whatever one believes one should criticize about it, it must not be overlooked or denied that it became possible for me, without new bloodshed, not only to find solutions satisfactory in many cases to Germany, but by the method of my procedure I relieved the statesmen of other nations of the obligation, frequently impossible for them, of having to defend this revision before their own peoples.

For, Your Excellency will have to admit one thing to me: The revision had to come. The Versailles dictate was unbearable. No Frenchman with honor—and yourself included, Herr Daladier—

would have acted differently from myself in a similar position.

In this sense I have then tried to remove from the world the most irrational provisions of the Versailles dictate.

I have made an offer to the Polish Government that shocked the German people. Nobody but myself could even dare to go before the public with such an offer. It could therefore be made only once.

I am deeply convinced that if, especially, England at that time had, instead of starting a wild campaign against Germany in the press and instead of launching rumors of a German mobilization, somehow talked the Poles into being reasonable, Europe today and for twenty-five years could enjoy a condition of deepest peace.

As things were, however, Polish public opinion was excited by a lie about German aggression. Clear decisions that the situation called for were made difficult for the Polish Government. Above all, the government's ability to see the limitations of realistic possibilities was impaired by the guarantee promise that followed.

The Polish Government declined the proposals. Polish public opinion, convinced that England and France would now fight for Poland, began to make demands that one might possibly stigmatize as laughable insanity were they not so tremendously dangerous. At that point an unbearable terror, a physical and economic persecution of the Germans although they numbered more than

a million and a half, began in the regions ceded by the Reich.

I do not want here to speak of the atrocities that occurred. Suffice it to say that Danzig, too, was made increasingly conscious through continuous aggressive acts by Polish officials of the fact that apparently it was irretrievably delivered over to the highdandedness of a power foreign to the national character of the city and its population.

May I now take the liberty of putting the question to you, Herr Daladier: How would you act as a Frenchman if, through some unhappy issue of a brave struggle, one of your provinces were severed by a corridor occupied by a foreign power. And if a big city—let us say, Marseille—were hindered from belonging to France and if Frenchmen living in this area were persecuted, beaten and maltreated, yes, murdered, in a bestial manner?

You are a Frenchman, Herr Daladier, and I therefore know how you would act. I am German, Herr Daladier. Do not doubt my sense of honor nor my consciousness of duty to act exactly like you. If, then, you had the misfortune that is ours, would you then, Herr Daladier, have any understanding that Germany was without cause to insist that the corridor through France remained, that the robbed territory must not be restored, and that the return of Marseille to France be forbidden?

Certainly I cannot imagine, Herr Daladier, that Germany would fight against you for this reason. For, I and all of us, have

renounced Alsace-Lorraine in order to avoid further bloodshed. Much less would we shed blood in order to maintain an injustice that must needs be as unbearable for you as it would be immaterial to us. I feel exactly as you do what you write in your letters, Herr Daladier.

Possibly we, as old front fighters, can best understand each other in a number of fields. I ask you, however, do understand this also: That it is impossible for a nation of honor to renounce the claim of almost two million human beings and to see them maltreated at its own borders. I have therefore set up a clear demand to Poland. Danzig and the Corridor must return to Germany. The Macedonian conditions on our Eastern frontier must be removed.

I see no way of persuading Poland, which feels herself as unassailable, now that she enjoys the protection of her guarantees, to accept a peaceful solution. I should, however, despair of an honorable future for my people if we were not determined under such circumstances to solve the problem in one way or another.

If our two countries on that account should be destined to meet again on the field of battle, there would nevertheless be a difference in the motives. I, Herr Daladier, shall be leading my people in a fight to rectify a wrong, whereas the others will be fighting to preserve that wrong.

That is the more tragic since many important men, also among your own people, have recognized the insanity of the solutions then found [meaning at Versailles] as also the impossibility of maintaining it lastingly. I am perfectly clear about the serious consequences that such a conflict will entail. I believe, however, that the Poles would have to bear the greatest burden, for regardless of who wins in a war about this question, the Polish State of today will be lost in any way you calculate.

That our two peoples should now enter a new, bloody war of destruction is painful not only for you but also for me, Herr Daladier. As already observed, I see no possibility for us on our part to exert influence in the direction of reasonableness upon Poland for correcting a situation that is unbearable for the German people and the German Reich.

ADOLF HITLER.

The French Statement

On Aug. 25, at 5:30 P. M. [Ambassador] Robert Coulondre was summoned and received by Fuehrer Chancellor Hitler. The head of the German Government asked our Ambassador to transmit a declaration to the President of the French Council [Premier Daladier].

The declaration of Herr Hitler let it be known that he could no longer tolerate the situation existing in Poland and that he deplored that German and French blood might be spilled following measures that he might be compelled to take to settle this situation.

M. Daladier, informed by M. Coulondre of this declaration, at once had the message transmitted to Herr Hitler, in which he [M. Daladier] recalled the profound attachment of France to peace, as well as her fidelity to her publicly contracted engagements with other nations. He recalled also that no Frenchman had done more than himself to

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establish cordial relations and sincere collaboration between the German and French peoples for the maintenance of peace in Europe.

M. Daladier took it upon himself to guarantee the disposition that would be shown by Poland in favor of mutual recourse to methods of free conciliation. He affirmed that no humane man could understand that war should break out without a new direct effort at a pacific arrangement

having been made between Germany and Poland. He declared that he was ready to do everything possible in favor of such an effort.

Ambassador Coulondre was again received at the end of the afternoon of Aug. 26 by Chancellor Hitler, who declared that he could not accept the proposal that M. Daladier had suggested. This oral reply was confirmed today [Sunday] by a written communication, which was handed to the Premier by Herr Brauer, Chargé d'Affaires at the German Embassy in Paris.

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