

Hitler Prepares Triumphal Entry

. . . Ex-House Painter

Happy That Paris Need Not Be Destroyed by Siege



Hitler, waiting for news of the capture of Paris, congratulates a soldier-journalist. With him are General von Reichenau (second from left), who planned the blitzkrieg, and General Bodenschatz, aide to Hermann Goering.

The man who once peddled cleaning fluids on the crooked back streets of Vienna, today was preparing to march as conqueror into Paris beneath the arch built to commemorate the triumphs of Napoleon Bonaparte.

With characteristic insolence, the former house painter has declared that he is "relieved and gratified" that the beauties of the French capital will not be marred by his own guns, Stukas and tanks.

For the record, Reichsfuehrer Adolf Hitler contemplates this world-shaking step with calm and poise. "The Fuehrer takes the conquest of Paris merely as part of his program, fully expected in due course," his personal press chief, Otto Dietrich, said in Berlin yesterday. But those who know Hitler know better. His entries into Vienna, Prague and Warsaw are already forgotten in the greater dream ahead.

Terrible Paths

No man in our age, possibly no man in all history, will have risen to great heights along more terrible paths than Hitler when he enters Paris. Beginning with his dreaming, hysterical youth, when the vision of a Greater Germany was already keeping him awake of nights, Hitler has pursued this vision with a relentlessness and drive that has driven his friends to mad idolatry and his enemies to madder hatred.

Yet Hitler, mad or not, has always been a man of system, a lesson that the world has been slow in learning. Those who saw him enter Prague and Warsaw already see the picture as Hitler enters Paris. No matter what gate he enters, he will inevitably make his way down the Champs Elysee. The grey columns that made possible his coming will line the streets. There may even be paunchy Brown Shirts and trim SS men to help keep order. Guns will bristle from housetops, from protecting tanks. And Hitler's face will be tight with suppressed emotion.

Behind shuttered windows in the dark of despair, Parisians will listen to the tramp of boots below. No windows are ever open when Hitler enters an enemy street. He does not like even roses to be thrown at him.

Berlin Celebrates

Meanwhile, with the entry of the first troops into Paris today, Berlin has flung itself into celebration. The Reichsfuehrer has ordered church bells to ring for a quarter of an hour. Flags are to be flown for three days. Along the Wilhelmstrasse, in front of the great stone edifice that Hitler built as his Chancellory two long years ago, crowds have gathered to cheer at empty windows. On the Kurfuerstendamm, on the Unter den Linden, the Berliners are shouting and singing, imbued with the kind of spirit that entranced the world on November 11, 1918.

Dietrich told correspondents yesterday that, despite the fall of Paris, the Reichsfuehrer has not yet begun to think of peace terms. "He has made repeated efforts for peace," he said. "Now the issue is joined."

There can be no doubt these words accurately reflect Hitler's feelings. He is the kind of man who always presses hardest when the opposition falters. Once he had forced Schuschnigg, former Austrian premier, into concession, he followed by forcing him into prison and taking over his country. Once the Czechs talked compromise to Hitler's representative, Konrad Heinlein, the fate of Czechoslovakia was doomed.

Those who know Hitler insist that gallantry is a trait foreign to him. He has struck the hard blow, the enemy is wounded; now he will follow, with all his forces, for the kill.

No Secret Boast

He has said things like this, many times, in "Mein Kampf." He has said that France, "degenerate and three-quarters Negro," must be stricken from the European field of power. He said a hundred times in the crises which preceded the beginning of the war that he would let loose Germany's "unimaginable might" to the total destruction of all who opposed him.

Now he is making good his promise. It is too bad that, despite his solicitation for Paris the city, for Paris the center of world art, the eyes of the former picture postcard painter will not rest on the pictures in the Louvre. They were removed long ago.

—V. H. B.



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