

CULTURAL HISTORY OF MODERN WAR

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THE MUNICH CRISIS,
POLITICS AND THE PEOPLE

INTERNATIONAL, TRANSNATIONAL AND
COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES

‘England is pro-Hitler’: German popular opinion during the Czechoslovakian crisis, 1938

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History is about perspective as well as information. To understand Germany’s actions during the Czechoslovakian crisis,¹ we have a great deal of information and perspective from the top but much less from the bottom. The reason for this unevenness is obvious. In a dictatorship, people censor themselves continuously – in every letter they write and in every conversation they have. As a consequence, we are left with anecdotal evidence.² However, with the help of new sources it will be shown that it is possible to combine political and social history to understand this crisis in its multiple dimensions.

The general background is well known: Czechoslovakia was a new state of Central-Eastern Europe that, like the others, was by no means homogeneous. Its largest minority were the 3.5 million Sudeten Germans. While Germany was quiescent, the Sudeten Germans were quiescent. When Hitler came to power, however, everything changed for the worse. On 12 September 1938, a rampage took place in Oberplan, a town in the Bohemian forest. It was the work of supporters of Konrad Henlein, the leader of the Sudeten German party (SdP), overtly an ally of Adolf Hitler.³ Henlein’s supporters had developed a certain routine when it came to rampages. First, the windows of the Czech school and the Czech administrative offices were to be smashed. Then the shops of local Jews were to be attacked. During this particular incident, the targets were Mr Kohn and Mr Schwarz. Schwarz was about to drive his pregnant wife to the maternity ward and had packed his car with baby equipment. The attackers tore up the baby clothes, ensuring that the pieces were scattered all over the market square. Afterwards they slashed the wheels of the car and turned the vehicle upside down.⁴

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Oberplan was just one of several places in the Sudetenland experiencing rampages that day. The violence had been ‘encouraged’ by the broadcast of Hitler’s closing speech at Nuremberg on 12 September 1938. Among other things, the Führer had called the Czechs ‘terrorists and blackmailers’ and his opponents ‘warmongers’.⁵ During the whole Sudeten crisis Hitler’s psychological warfare worked brilliantly on French, British and Czech politicians.⁶ But when it came to his domestic audience in Germany proper, not everything went as smoothly for the Führer as the rampage in Oberplan. For a few weeks in 1938, the master at manipulating emotions was confronted with the raw reactions of his own people.

Before one can begin to understand this battle of emotions, it is important to remember the history of the Sudetenland. For a thousand years Sudeten Germans had been subjects of the Bohemian crown, which subsequently was incorporated into the Habsburg Empire. When the Sudeten Germans became part of the new Czechoslovakia in 1918, they still felt a bond with Austria, and – to a much lesser degree – with Germany itself.⁷ Germans would not have declared any particular kinship with the Sudetenland either. In 1938 grumbling Germans would declare: ‘what do we need the Henlein people for? The first time we heard of their existence was only two years ago.’⁸ The indifference to the Sudetenland becomes apparent in comparison to the great enthusiasm for Austria. When Hitler annexed Austria by force in March 1938, the German public was genuinely ecstatic. In their eyes, the Führer had remedied the failures of the past: Bismarck’s creation of a German Empire in 1870 had excluded Austria-Hungary, and the urge to ‘correct’ this ‘historical mistake’ had surfaced again in the winter of 1918/19. The Entente powers had immediately squashed such hopes,⁹ and this humiliation was never entirely forgotten. When Hitler achieved ‘the miracle’ of creating a greater Germany in March 1938, even his opponents reported that Germany experienced a ‘national high’.¹⁰

Hitler was well aware that similar sentiments did not exist for the Sudeten Germans, but he was determined to create them.¹¹ The cornerstone for his plan was Konrad Henlein and his Sudeten German party (SdP). It had been secretly financed by Germany for years with the aim of subverting Czechoslovakia.¹² A week after the surprisingly easy annexation of Austria, Hitler decided Czechoslovakia would be next. On 20 March, Goebbels wrote in his diary: ‘We studied the map: first we will get the Tschechei [Czechoslovakia]. We will share it with Poland and Hungary. And we will do it ruthlessly at the next opportunity.’¹³ Four

days later Goebbels wrote in a typically sarcastic tone: 'Poor Prague! Not much will be left of it.'¹⁴

To stir up a crisis, Henlein was needed. During a secret meeting on 28 March 1938, Hitler ordered the Sudeten German leader to make completely unacceptable demands to the Czechoslovakian government. Henlein summed up his instructions: 'we must always demand so much that we cannot be satisfied'.¹⁵ The following month, during a speech at Carlsbad, he carried out his brief. He also performed an impressive job in publicising the case of the Sudeten Germans internationally. Though he was an ardent anti-Semite and anti-Bolshevik, he claimed not to be a Nazi.¹⁶ Instead he posed in Britain as a 'reasonable man' fighting for his people's autonomy. In return Henlein was courted by British appeasers and in May 1938 gave – with his simple look and manner – an impressive theatrical performance at the Royal Institute of International Affairs and at informal meetings with British politicians.¹⁷ Part of his main appeal for the appeasers was his anti-Bolshevism. Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union had been allies since 1935 and Henlein warned that Czechoslovakia could easily turn into a Soviet air base.¹⁸ He also had an emotionally touching story to tell the British public – about the suffering of the suppressed Sudeten Germans. It was an emotive trigger Henlein had perfected over the years. It is true that the economic depression in the 1930s hit the Sudeten Germans harder because they worked in the declining glass and textile industries.¹⁹ But to this day there exists a debate whether the Sudeten Germans were actually suppressed by the Czechs.²⁰ In retrospect, it seems an obvious birth defect of Czechoslovakia to incorporate a huge German minority into a newly founded country. But Czechoslovakian politicians believed that coexistence was possible,²¹ and they certainly handled their minority problem better than their eastern neighbours. In contrast to Hungary and Poland which were ruled by military leaders, Czechoslovakia was a democracy in the Western sense. Though it was by no means perfect, this did not affect the further course of events. Whether the suffering of the Sudeten Germans was real or imagined, from the beginning it was used as propaganda.²²

But how effective was this propaganda on the German population? A contemporary report, written in September 1938, came to the conclusion that it was extremely difficult to find out what people actually thought: 'the mood is very bad amongst workers and employees and it is even worse amongst farmers. Mistrust, mistrust, mistrust. You can just figure out what people think by a nodding of the head in agreement or disagreement.'²³ Three sources will help us to get beyond silent affirmation: first,

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the reports by Sopade, the exiled organisation of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD). These reports were written by a network of underground informants in Germany who listened to and recorded the day-to-day conversations of Germans – from factory workers to members of the German middle classes.²⁴ The second source that will be employed has never been used before in this context. It is secret information sent from German Communist Party representatives to the executive committee of the Comintern in Moscow.²⁵

Naturally, both sources have some degree of bias because they come from the left. However, the third source is written by the Nazis themselves: the *Meldungen aus dem Reich*. These were intelligence reports on the domestic situation in Germany, an attempt to compensate for the absence of freedom of expression. They were compiled by the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD) of Reichsführer SS Himmler. The reports started in 1938 and became more detailed over the years.²⁶ All three sources illustrate that, from spring to autumn 1938, the German population experienced a great variety of emotions ranging from anger, black humour, indifference and utter fear to elation. The shifts were connected with several turning points during the crisis: first, when Czechoslovakia partly mobilised in May 1938; second, in August when Viscount Runciman was sent to Czechoslovakia by Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and the crisis dragged on; third, after Hitler's speech at the Nuremberg rally in September 1938; fourth, when Chamberlain came to Germany; fifth, on 26 September when Hitler gave his speech at the Berliner Sportpalast; and last, when the crisis was resolved.

During the whole period, Goebbels' propaganda machine tried its best to control the narrative.²⁷ This worked well at the beginning: '[The Germans] believe the Nazi propaganda that the Sudeten Germans are not allowed to speak German and are starving', reported a frustrated Sopade informer in spring 1938. He tried to convince his interlocutors that 'one can get all the goods in Czechoslovakia and that this kind of suppression does not exist', but he was not believed.²⁸ To ensure that the Sudeten Germans stayed under their control, the Nazis had started to hire an increasing number of them to work in Germany. They were expected to join the Henlein party and if they refused they immediately lost their jobs.²⁹ German workers did not appreciate the cheaper competition,³⁰ but the majority of Germans felt sympathy with the 'suffering Sudetenland'. At this early point, nobody was particularly scared of a war with Czechoslovakia. The average German was told that it would be a painless affair – similar to the Austrian operation. The country was

portrayed as a 'Lilliput state': 'People are ... assured by the Nazis, that taking over Czechoslovakia will be similar to the Austrian operation ... no shots will be fired until the German army is facing Prague ... the press keeps saying that the [German] fire brigade could take over a country like Czechoslovakia.'³¹ This was a very literal case of Lilliputian hallucination since the Czechoslovakian army and its fortifications were actually substantial, something Hitler's generals were aware of.³² Apart from under-estimating the enemy militarily, the German public also did not seem to fear that Western powers would get involved. Even old SPD members doubted that anyone cared about Czechoslovakia: 'Who is going to stop Hitler? The French have one government crisis after another, England is pro-Hitler and Russia will only march if France is marching, which is unlikely. They have let down Spain too with their policy of non-intervention.'³³

In the spring of 1938, the Propaganda Ministry certainly felt it had the narrative under control. On 20 April, Hitler's birthday, Goebbels organised a triumphant gala for the release of Leni Riefenstahl's film *Olympia*. The film raised the spirits among the German population even further. Two limericks were making the rounds: 'Mit Pulver und Blei holen wir die Tschechei' (With powder and lead we will take Czechoslovakia), and 'Im April macht Hitler was er will, im Mai holt er sich die Tschechei' (In April Hitler does what he wants, in May he takes Czechoslovakia). But then perceptions changed. Goebbels got ahead of himself. On 19 May he began a particularly violent press attack against Prague.³⁴ At the same time, the highly nervous Czechoslovakian government received false information from their intelligence service that German troops had been moved to the Czech borders with Bavaria and Saxony. Prague decided on partial mobilisation. The Führer was outraged by this unexpected display of strength: his portrayal of a Lilliput state was suddenly in question. Hitler would later claim that the May crisis triggered his decision for a military intervention. As has been shown above, this was a lie. He had made up his mind as early as March. After the May crisis, he simply decided that the deadline for the attack would be 1 October.³⁵

Once the partial mobilisation started, Sopade reported that Germans at the Czech border with Saxony were in shock. They started to frantically empty their bank accounts and hoarded food.³⁶ Yet not everyone knew immediately what had happened on 20/21 May. Only people who managed to listen to *Fremdsender* (foreign radio stations) were informed and the Nazis did their best to jam these stations. People had to turn up the volume and risk being reported by their neighbours. Still, once

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the news about the Czech mobilisation became common knowledge, an increasing number of Germans started to feel less confident about Lilliput. The May crisis was perceived as a major loss of prestige for the regime. Sopade described it as a 'Schlappe des Faschismus' (a defeat for fascism).³⁷ Heinrich Himmler's SD informants reported disapprovingly:

the smallest endurance test makes bourgeois and intellectual circles doubt (our) government and they influence with their liberal, pacifist thinking the population negatively. ... This is not organized, but they use *Mundpropaganda* [word of mouth propaganda] and are dangerous ... When the Czechs mobilized in May the war psychosis began ... The Sudeten Germans are seen as part of Bohemia (and therefore Habsburg) ... a strong burden on the Reich.³⁸

Ironically, SD reports and Sopade agreed that only two groups in Germany wanted a war with Czechoslovakia now – ardent Nazis and ardent anti-Nazis. The latter hoped, according to Sopade, that this war would eliminate Hitler and his regime once and for all.³⁹

Yet finding out what people really felt remained difficult for Himmler's SD people as well as for the opposition. Sopade stated that the atmosphere differed greatly from summer 1914:

In August 1914, complete strangers discussed the political events on trains and buses. Today people have the feeling that they don't have any influence on events anyway and try to avoid getting harassed. Only within the closest circle of family or friends the subject of war and peace is discussed. The result is complete resignation. People envisage a total war, that will include the front as well as the home.⁴⁰

On 28 May, Goebbels scaled down his aggressive press campaign and blamed his problems on the 'gutless Ribbentrop and the [German] Foreign Office'.⁴¹ But this scaling down did not mean that Hitler had changed his plans. He completely ignored the advice of Ludwig Beck, the Chief of the Army General Staff, that if Britain came to the aid of Czechoslovakia, an ensuing war could not be won.⁴² On 30 May, behind closed doors, Hitler informed his generals that they had to be ready 'to smash' Czechoslovakia by 1 October. Yet it was not just Beck who was worried. Senior officers in the *Wehrmacht* and a few diplomats were opposed to the plan and might even have contemplated a coup. But how strong their opposition really was is still a question of debate.⁴³

There existed another segment of society that had serious doubts and their feelings are better documented: working-class women had every

reason to be dissatisfied with the turn of events. For some time, their husbands, brothers and sons had been sent off to build the *Westwall* (the Siegfried Line) – the German fortifications opposite the French Maginot Line. The accelerated construction of the Westwall had become an ongoing grievance for working-class families. Dramatic scenes were now reported from train stations. At Potsdam railway station, for example, women overran the barrier of SA men and screamed ‘we want our men back!’⁴⁴ Sopade also reported an incident on 29 August, at Hindenburg station, where men were waiting to be transported: ‘The SA was trying to calm down the angry women, assuring them that their men were just needed for building the fortifications not for actual fighting. One woman screamed: “If you want to take away my only child, you have to arrest me, I am not moving”.’⁴⁵ Another incident was reported from Beuthen: 120 workers were about to be sent off, but only 74 turned up at the station and were too drunk to travel.⁴⁶ While the men got drunk, the women got angrier: ‘Several women were trying to prevent their men from leaving, they cursed Hitler and the system and the police did not dare to arrest them.’⁴⁷

Working-class women were not the only ones getting angry. Businessmen were frustrated too. Himmler’s SD reported that ‘the intensification of all efforts for the fortification of the Western borders created criticism in [German] economic circles, because the security of our country had to come before other interests ... Their defeatism culminated in the phrase that the Reich was carrying out “adventure politics”.’⁴⁸

By mid-July, Goebbels had to admit that on the propaganda front things were not going as well as he had hoped. In his diary he noted: ‘Our crusade against Prague is tiring the people a bit. You cannot keep a crisis going for months ... [people] believe war is inevitable, nobody feels good about this. Fatalism is the most dangerous of all.’⁴⁹ Goebbels was a fanatic, but no fool. He even acknowledged mistakes in his own press coverage: ‘we use the weapon of attack too often. It therefore wears off.’⁵⁰ Still, he exploited every opportunity he could get. When the British sent businessman Walter Runciman to Czechoslovakia on 3 August for a ‘fact finding mission’, the simple-minded viscount was photographed giving the Henlein supporters a Nazi salute. German propaganda was happy to use the photo which was a slap in the face of Hitler’s critics. Their fears were confirmed: ‘We were ridiculed ... by the photo of Runciman making the Hitler salute to the Henlein demonstrators.’⁵¹

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Indeed, Runciman was never going to be an 'honest broker'. Behind the scenes he and his politician wife Hilda were charmed, wined and dined by the pro-Henlein nobility in their Czech country houses.⁵² Before Runciman released his report, Hitler ratcheted up the pressure again. At the annual Nuremberg rally he gave his speech about the 'Czech terrorists and blackmailers'. This triggered the aforementioned rampage in Oberplan and the rest of the Sudetenland which resulted in several casualties. Yet, average Germans did not feel like going on a rampage. They were scared.⁵³ A Comintern informant overheard a woman in a shop saying: 'This pig Hitler what has he gotten us into? He wants to drive us into a war!' A Catholic woman stated: 'Hitler has brought nothing but misery upon us.'⁵⁴ The Comintern informants came to the conclusion that 'the majority of the German population was against the war. Workers in the factories, antifascist leaflets and handwritten posters against Hitler's war mongering circulated.'⁵⁵

Of course, there was a large dollop of wishful thinking on the side of the Comintern. But their observations were not stereotypical, they even noticed gender differences. According to Comintern reports, women were more outspoken:

[in September] it was the women who ... discussed their anti-war feelings in shops, factories and on the street ... In one factory, a Nazi had argued that whatever happened one had to follow Hitler. The men had not disagreed with the Nazi, but the women shouted him down.⁵⁶ And in another factory, the workers were told they had to march to a sports field to listen to a Hitler speech. Nobody wanted to go; yet while the men marched on, the women never arrived there, they had just gone home.⁵⁷

While the Comintern was hopeful, the more cautious Sopade singled out two major groups that stood four-square behind Hitler: first, lower- and middle-ranking civil servants, especially those who had not fought in the last war; second, the youth, at least as long as they had not been drafted:⁵⁸ 'Every Hitler youth, every customs officer, every official will tell you that it is the Jews' fault, that they want to provoke a war.'⁵⁹ This belief was also echoed in a secret Nazi report on the internal political situation in Franconia:

In the days when the threat of war was increasing, the nasty disposition of the Jews was made very manifest. The Jews displayed a behavior that was haughty and provocative, emerging from the otherwise customary sneaky reserve and conniving shyness. One could notice that they were waiting for war, which in their calculations was to bring about the destruction of the Reich.⁶⁰

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Ironically, the youngsters who accused Jews of warmongering advocated a war themselves. At an inn, young people were boasting that once they had taken Czechoslovakia, Alsace-Lorraine would be next. Older men told them off: “What do you young guns know about the war? You weren’t even born when we had to go out there. This time it will be even worse. We don’t give a damn about Czechoslovakia and Alsace Lorraine. We want peace and not this heroic crap that can only end in misery”.⁶¹

But this was not a straightforward generational divide, either. Young people who already had been drafted would have sided with the older men at the inn. Morale in the army was low. Sopade lists multiple cases of unrest among soldiers in September. The relationship between soldiers and their superiors was reported to be tense: ‘the drill is unbearable; nothing is done out of free will, everything under pressure. The food has deteriorated and the uniforms are of bad quality.’⁶²

Similar to the aforementioned problems with transporting workers for the fortifications, the draft did not go smoothly either. Again, people turned up in such a drunken state that they could not be transported, others vanished or stated ‘we are not getting beaten up for Hitler’. Sopade came to the conclusion: ‘It might be the case that these stories about deserters are exaggerated, but everyone talks about them.’⁶³ A young soldier wrote to his parents with heavy irony:

when we heard that we would not be allowed to go home by 26 October we were dancing with such delight that we broke several chairs and electric lights. We are in quarters near the Czech border. One thing even the dumbest has worked out by now is that the higher your rank, the further away you are from the front. One of my comrades has already been wounded. He ‘fell’ into a beer bottle and had the good luck to be sent to hospital. Everyone is envious of him because he had been so inventive.⁶⁴

Women who ‘had marched into all the National Socialist Women’s League meetings [NS-Frauensschaft], suddenly had screaming fits when their men were drafted’.⁶⁵ A Sopade informant described the case of a woman who had always demanded a military campaign against ‘the damned Czechs’ and was suddenly deeply depressed. Asked what was wrong, she said that if Hitler had not rushed the issue, he would have obtained the Sudetenland by negotiations. It turned out that the reason for her sudden change of mind was that her husband had been called up and had to leave home within twelve hours.⁶⁶

In the meantime, Chamberlain had decided to fly to Germany and meet Hitler at the Berghof. The German press needed to react to this new

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development. On 15 September, a press briefing took place in Berlin. Journalists were instructed to comment that this was a sensational step and very satisfying for the Führer. However, they were told not to describe Chamberlain as an 'angel of peace'; instead they should argue that without Hitler's tough stance this visit would have not been possible. In general, the commentators should treat Chamberlain politely and welcome the idea that from now on everything would be discussed 'man to man'. At the same time, articles had to appear about the dire situation in the Sudetenland.⁶⁷ Despite these cautious instructions, the German public welcomed the British prime minister enthusiastically during his visits.⁶⁸ When Chamberlain returned for the second meeting, the people of Cologne showered him with flowers and gifts. But the meeting at Bad Godesberg was a failure, and on 23 September news came of the Czech mobilisation. Sopade reported the reactions from the south of Germany:

a man was arrested in an inn in Karlsruhe because he loudly declared that he had been at the front long enough and would not go back again. Another guest alerted the police. However, this snitch had to leave with the police because the other people in the inn – craftsmen and small businessmen – would have certainly harmed him. Three of them volunteered to come along with the arrested man to assure the authorities that the arrested had made completely harmless comments. However, the arrested man, who works in a munitions factory in Karlsruhe, has not been released to this day.⁶⁹

Other reports came to the conclusion: 'Nobody amongst the working classes thinks the territory of the Sudetenland is that important to start a war for it. If a war does start, it will be very unpopular.'⁷⁰ Goebbels' propaganda about the suffering Sudeten Germans had completely lost its effect: 'People say, this is not about the Sudeten Germans. It is about the Czech industries and raw materials.' Others made ironic comments: 'How surprised they [the Sudeten Germans] will be once they are liberated. Like us, when we were liberated from Bolshevism.'⁷¹

Hitler's critics hoped that the Nazis had finally found their match in the British: 'Better a painful break than a never ending brownshirt agony.'⁷² A Sopade informant reported on 25 September: 'people say "now they got Austria, why do they want Czechoslovakia as well? Napoleon wanted too much too and in the end, he was left with nothing".'⁷³ The local authorities, were finding it difficult to keep people under control: 'The leading Nazis circles in Silesia are convinced that the people do not want a war and are trying everything to change their feelings ... People are

now openly criticizing Hitler.⁷⁴ They were also hoarding. ‘People buy everything they can get their hands on: soap, sugar, coffee etc.’⁷⁵

In Duisburg, even a Nazi official who worked for the DAF (*Deutsche Arbeitsfront*) was close to a nervous breakdown:

for the last five years ... we have given up our private life. We little functionaries had to make ourselves unpopular with the people, we are just the mercenaries for the big bosses [Bonzen] ... We have to collect rags while the bosses pocket gold and silver and live in fairytale palaces. Adolf supports this and ... is becoming a megalomaniac. When it does not work out, war is used as an escape route. But we don't want to be the cannon fodder for this deranged bunch.⁷⁶

Despite this tense atmosphere, Goebbels managed a huge supportive audience for Hitler in the Berliner Sportpalast on 26 September. In a passionate speech, Hitler claimed he was making his ‘last territorial demand in Europe’. Again, he lied about the events of May 1938, when Prague had partly mobilised. He portrayed himself as a victim who up to that point had never thought ‘of solving the problem militarily’.⁷⁷ Though he pretended to praise Chamberlain’s peace efforts, he also claimed Beneš was intending to slowly exterminate everything German (‘das Deutschtum langsam auszurotten’). According to Goebbels, the speech was a ‘psychological masterpiece’. The audience certainly seemed to experience a kind of mass orgasm, screaming for several minutes ‘*Führer befehl, wir folgen*’.⁷⁸

The audience was composed of true believers, but outside the Sportpalast people were less gullible and reacted lethargically.⁷⁹ This did not escape Goebbels’ sharp eyes. He had been born and bred in the Catholic Rhineland where feelings were reported as being particularly hostile against a war. Sopade even noted an ‘almost forgotten feeling re-emerging – separatism! This is especially the case amongst the Catholics. A vote on breaking off the Rhineland from Nazi Germany would have received a majority.’⁸⁰ The SD had noticed this too: ‘The political up and down has caused strong pessimism in intellectual circles, they even wanted to flee from border areas in the west. In the Rhineland and in the *Ruhrgebiet* people withdrew their savings.’⁸¹

In other parts of Germany, nihilism seemed to dominate. In late September, discipline broke down in several factories. Since war would come anyway, people became uninhibited. The dread of the concentration camp decreased and workers descended on the pubs to get blind drunk.⁸² In Bavaria the reports of the *Regierungspräsidenten*

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(Government Presidents) speak of a clear anti-war feeling in August and September.⁸³ So do the SD reports which disapproved of the German population: 'Instead of defending law and honor of the nation, a great part of the population wanted peace at any price.'⁸⁴

On 27 September, Hitler ordered a division parade down the Berliner Wilhelmstrasse to demonstrate military strength. But Berliners ignored the display, 'hurrying to the next underground station to avoid having to witness the spectacle. The few hundred people who had assembled on Wilhelmsplatz stood in complete silence. When Hitler then briefly appeared on his balcony at the Chancellery, there were no cheers, and he quickly went back inside.'⁸⁵ This time round Goebbels had not organised a jubilant crowd.⁸⁶ It is highly likely that this was a calculated act by him to send his master a message. A day later, on 28 September, Goebbels went a step further and told Hitler over lunch that the German population did not want a war.⁸⁷ Whether this really had an impact on Hitler is difficult to verify. Hitler's latest biographer, Volker Ullrich, believes that the apathy demonstrated by Berliners on 27 September, combined with the enthusiastic welcome of Chamberlain, did have an impact. Ullrich follows Hitler's interpreter Paul Schmidt who wrote that 'the enthusiasm for Chamberlain carried an "undertone of criticism of Hitler" as the one who led the world to the brink of a major war'.⁸⁸

Hitler was certainly disgusted by the Germans' lack of enthusiasm, reportedly uttering that one could not win a war 'with such people'. But did German popular opinion really change Hitler's decision-making process? It was a factor, but it was most probably only one factor of several. Apart from the lack of enthusiasm among the German population, there existed many tactical reasons (not least the warnings of the military) that made Hitler agree to Mussolini's 'offer' of mediation.⁸⁹ Though Hitler always pretended to be highly dissatisfied with having to sign the Munich Agreement on 30 September, one should not underestimate his good acting skills. Munich handed him the Sudetenland with all its fortifications on a silver platter. Without a shot being fired German soldiers could simply take over these decisive fortifications, which meant that occupying the rest of Czechoslovakia would later be plain sailing.⁹⁰ The Munich Agreement was a brilliant deal for Hitler and he knew it.

Munich also meant that Britain and France handed over Czech territory to Poland and Hungary. To achieve such a criminal act, they had to break five treaties. Not surprisingly, the Czechs were in utter shock. Sopade reported from the Wenzel Square in Prague: 'People cannot believe it. They scream, cry and I will never forget the face of a

worker who shouts: “Those pigs, this is treason!”⁹¹ Another anti-Nazi stated: ‘with impotent anger we realise that the great democracies are giving away their friends to save themselves’.⁹² Although Munich meant emigration, prison or outright death for Hitler’s outspoken critics, the average German was jubilant. Goebbels noted in his diary: ‘Big sigh of relief by everyone that the dangerous crisis is over. We were all walking on a tight rope above the abyss. We are a Great Power again. Now we have to arm, arm, arm! It was a victory in the exercise of pressure, of nerves and of the press!’⁹³

Himmler’s SD reports did not agree with the last point. They came to the conclusion that the propaganda ministry had failed. This verdict was partly due to rivalries between Himmler and Goebbels, but also touched on a deeper point. Though the propaganda had worked well at the beginning of the crisis, it had backfired by September and left people distrustful of the press, according to the SD informant: ‘The belated explanations by our press, had the effect that great parts of the German public trusted the foreign press more and were therefore encouraged in their distrust. These pacifists feeling appeared suddenly during the crisis, but they also disappeared immediately after the Munich agreement.’⁹⁴

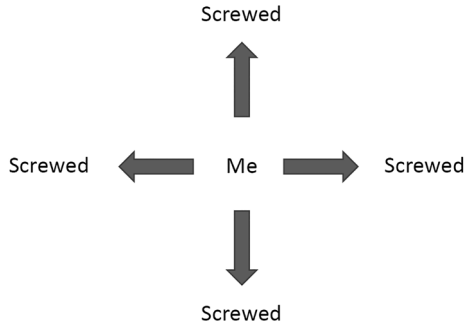
However, Sopade noticed that not all was well again for the regime. Despite the general relief after Munich, the average German did not care much about the acquisition of the Sudetenland:

The people are not interested in acquiring new territory. Only 100% Nazis are enthusiastic. Hitler got the Saar and the people have not been better off, he got Austria and the living standard has not risen. And now each of us gets 100g less of butter with the explanation ‘this is for the Sudeten Germans’. That hardly triggers off enthusiasm.⁹⁵

Some people had other problems than butter. Twelve miles from Munich lies the suburb of Dachau. Since 1933 it had housed a concentration camp. Its intake had considerably increased after the annexation of Austria. The Jewish novelist Friedrich Torberg had friends imprisoned at Dachau. When he read the glowing British newspaper reports that Chamberlain had saved ‘European civilization’ at Munich,⁹⁶ Torberg wrote to a colleague: ‘Please explain to me how European civilization could have been saved in Munich which is only 12 miles from Dachau?’

As a Czech-Austrian product of the Habsburg monarchy, Torberg was living in limbo.⁹⁷ He drew a little diagram into his letter: ‘please do give me a new coordination system my current one is this’ (Figure 8.1).⁹⁸

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8.1 Friedrich Torberg's diagram, 7 October 1938.

Notes

- 1 In Germany, the Czechoslovakian crisis is called *Sudetenkrise* (Sudeten crisis). This term will be employed here.
- 2 In the following, the term *popular* opinion instead of public opinion will be used. As Ian Kershaw has rightly pointed out: 'Public opinion in the sense of opinion publicly held and expressed, was after 1933 almost wholly that of the Nazi regime, or at least of rival sections within the ruling elites ... In distinction to "public opinion" – a term by and large applicable only to societies where there exists a plurality of freely and publicly expressed opinion – it seems sensible to designate ... attitudes and responses – unquantifiable, often unspecific, diffuse, and ill-coordinated ... as "popular opinion".' Ian Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich, Bavaria 1933–1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), p. 4. So far, there exists no scholarly analysis of German popular opinion during the whole Sudeten crisis. Since it is difficult to detect popular opinion in a dictatorship, historians have focused on the political side of the crisis, namely Hitler's decision-making process and the international relations of the time. However, they mention popular opinion at the end of the crisis, that is, from mid-September onwards when German crowds welcomed Chamberlain. Popular opinion during the *whole* crisis (from April to September 1938) has only been analysed for one particular group – the Sudeten Germans themselves. See Volker Zimmermann, *Die Sudetendeutschen im NS-Staat. Politik und Stimmung der Bevölkerung im Reichsgau Sudetenland (1938–1945)* (Essen: Klartext, 1999) and Detlef Brandes, *Die Sudetendeutschen im Krisenjahr 1938* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2008). This essay will try to cover the popular opinion of the Germans during the *whole* crisis.
- 3 The rampage in Oberplan was part of Henlein's 'first September rising'. It took place between 12 and 13 September and was eventually stopped

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- by Czech police. Shortly afterwards Henlein founded the FS (Freiwilliger Selbstschutz) and on 21 September started his 'second September rising'.
- 4 See, for the rampage in Oberplan, Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschland (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands (Sopade) 1934–1940*, vol. 5 (Salzhausen: Verlag Petra Nettelbeck, 1980), p. 1040ff. In the following, the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands in exile will be shortened to 'Sopade'. See also for the treatment of Jews in the Sudetenland, Jörg Osterloh, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung im Reichsgau Sudetenland 1938–1945* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2006).
 - 5 Hitler's speech at the Nuremberg rally, 12 September 1938, in Paul Meier-Benneckenstein (ed.), *Dokumente der Deutschen Politik (DDP)*, vol. 6: *Großdeutschland*, Part 1 (Berlin, 1939), p. 299.
 - 6 See Zara Steiner, *The Triumph of the Dark: European International History 1933–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 583ff.
 - 7 Some contemporary commentators believed that the British might not have researched this properly: 'they don't understand the history and geography ... The fact is that the whole idea of the Sudeten Germans being German is ahistorical. If they belong anywhere it would be Austria.' Quoted in Sopade, vol. 5, 1938, p. 1008. See also Hugh Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe Between the Wars. 1918–1941* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 279.
 - 8 Quoted in a report by Sopade, September 1938, p. 976.
 - 9 See Marie-Luise Recker, *England und der Donauraum 1919–1929. Probleme einer europäischen Nachkriegsordnung* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1976).
 - 10 Heinrich August Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen. Vom 'Dritten Reich' bis zur Wiedervereinigung*, vol. 2 (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2014), p. 54.
 - 11 He started to prepare the German public for the upcoming conflict with Czechoslovakia as early as February 1938: 'we will protect the ten million Germans in the two neighboring states which were until 1866 united with the German people'. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 55.
 - 12 The Nazis had paid for the SdP election campaign in 1935 and kept on financing the party. For a biography of Konrad Henlein, see Ralf Gebel, "*Heim ins Reich!*" *Konrad Henlein und der Reichsgau Sudetenland 1938–1945* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1999).
 - 13 Diary entry 20 March 1938, in Elke Fröhlich (ed.), *Die Tagebücher des Joseph Goebbels*, Part I, vol. 5, p. 222.
 - 14 *Ibid.* Diary entry 24 March 1938, p. 227.
 - 15 Quoted in Steiner, *Triumph of the Dark*, p. 560. Steiner points out that 'such instructions, unknown in London, Paris or Prague, made a mockery out of subsequent Czech efforts to find an acceptable solution to the Sudeten problem'. *Ibid.*
 - 16 Which was technically correct. He joined the NSDAP and the SS after Munich.

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- 17 For the courting of Henlein by the British, see Karina Urbach, *Go-Betweens for Hitler* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 285f. Chamberlain wanted to believe in Henlein because he had no intention of being dragged into a conflict. He wrote to his sister: 'If we can avoid another violent coup in Czechoslovakia, which ought to be feasible, it may be possible for Europe to settle down again, and some day for us to start peace talks again with the Germans.' Quoted in Steiner, *Triumph of the Dark*, p. 557.
- 18 Urbach, *Go-Betweens for Hitler*, p. 256.
- 19 Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power* (London: Allen Lane, 2005), p. 667.
- 20 Heimann points out that unemployment was twice as high in the Sudeten German border regions as in the Czech interior. Mary Heimann, *Czechoslovakia: The State That Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 75. For a different interpretation of the Sudeten German situation, see Eagle Glassheim, 'Genteel Nationalists: Nobles and Fascism in Czechoslovakia', in Karina Urbach (ed.), *European Aristocracies and the Radical Right 1918–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 149ff., and Eagle Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists: The Transformation of the Bohemian Aristocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).
- 21 The founder and first president of Czechoslovakia, Tomáš Masaryk, spent time in the US and was inspired by the American idea of a melting pot.
- 22 See Urbach, *Go-Betweens for Hitler*, p. 285ff.
- 23 Sopade report, September 1938, p. 983f.
- 24 *Sopade* was published between 1933 and 1940. About 100 copies were printed and circulated to SPD party leaders abroad. The names of informants and interlocutors mentioned in the reports were anonymised. The reports are divided by regions and try to cover cities, towns and villages. The quality of the reports differs, but they do give useful insights. The intention behind the reports was to inform the exiled SPD leadership, but also other critics of the regime abroad. Some historians claim that these reports are biased, focusing too much on potential opposition to the regime, and furthermore were used as a propaganda tool. However, reading them in their entirety shows that the majority of these reports were brutally honest and far from glorifying the chances of a regime change. That they were a propaganda tool was an argument already used by the Nazis. Himmler's intelligence service, the SD, was well aware of the Sopade reports. The SD believed that the Deutschland-Berichte of Sopade were very important abroad and that the informants caused unrest at home: 'carrying out whispering campaigns. Former SPD functionaries travel as salesmen ... or go to funerals of former Marxists, join associations ... this intelligence work is done by the former SPD functionaries from abroad and in the factories.' Quoted in Heinz Boberach (ed.), *Meldungen aus dem Reich. Die geheimen Lageberichte des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS 1938–1945*, vol. 2 (Herrsching: Pawlak, 1984), p. 62; in the following

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it is shortened to 'SD reports'. The reports were accumulated by Otto Ohlendorf, who ran a wide network of informants. Their reports included highly critical comments on the regime.

- 25 I would like to thank Jonathan Haslam for making me aware of these Comintern reports. Like the Sopade reports, they were written in German; the English translation is my own. The Comintern reports are less immediate than the Sopade ones and often written as a reply to questions asked by Comintern headquarters. See information from the German Communist Party (KPD) representatives on the executive committee of the Comintern on Germany, 1938, Comintern Archive RGASPI f.495, Op. 292, d.104. These reports are available on the Internet, see Sovdoc.rusarchives.ru/#showunit&id=157500;tab=img (accessed February 2019). In my footnotes, I will include the German original in case this website is taken down. For the importance of the Comintern in the interwar years, see Jonathan Haslam, *The Spectre of War: International Communism and the Origins of World War II* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021).
- 26 They were distributed only to Hitler's inner circle. Whether Hitler actually read them cannot be verified. Another useful administrative source exists for Bavaria only: the reports of the Government Presidents (*Regierungspräsidenten*) regarding popular opinion in Bavaria. The Government Presidents based their reports on monthly bulletins from lower offices, including local police stations. The reports were edited by the Munich Institut für Zeitgeschichte: Martin Broszat, Elke Fröhlich and Falk Wiesemann (eds), *Bayern in der NS-Zeit. Soziale Lage und politisches Verhalten der Bevölkerung um Spiegel vertraulicher Berichte*, vol 1. (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1977); Martin Broszat, Elke Fröhlich and Falk Wiesemann (eds), *Herrschaft und Gesellschaft im Konflikt*, vol. 2 (Munich, 1981). For an English translation and evaluation, see Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich*.
- 27 The media was, of course, state controlled. Goebbels' press strategy was to sell the public a *Kriegsursache* (grounds for war) and journalists were constantly briefed. Only the *Frankfurter Zeitung* received some leeway because it was read abroad. Roland Höhme, 'Die Einschätzung der internationalen Machtverhältnisse durch die Frankfurter Zeitung während der Sudetenkrise', in Franz Knipping and Klaus-Jürgen Müller (eds), *Machtbewußtsein in Deutschland am Vorabend des Zweiten Weltkrieges* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1984). For the Nazi press in general, see Norbert Frei, *Nationalsozialistische Eroberung der Provinzpresse; Gleichschaltung, Selbstanpassung und Resistenz in Bayern* (Stuttgart: Deutscher Verlags-Anstalt, 1980). Also Engelbert Schwarzenbeck, *Nationalsozialistische Pressepolitik und die Sudetenkrise 1938* (Munich: Minerva, 1979). Schwarzenbeck uses Albrecht Blau's influential 1935 publication *Propaganda als Waffe*. Ibid, p. 290f.

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- 28 *Sopade*, pp. 380, 386.
- 29 Most of them were enthusiastic Hitler supporters anyway and – according to the Sopade reports – this enthusiasm got on the nerves of German workers; Sopade reports April/May, p. 369.
- 30 *Sopade*, p. 370.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 380.
- 32 Apart from the fortifications in the Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia owned the Skoda works, one of the largest weapon factories in Europe.
- 33 *Sopade*, p. 380.
- 34 This was done against the advice of the German Foreign Office. See Peter Longerich, *Joseph Goebbels. Biographie* (Munich: Siedler, 2010), p. 377.
- 35 Angela Hermann, ‘Verhandlungen und Aktivitäten des nationalsozialistischen Regimes im Vorfeld von München’, in Jürgen Zarusky und Martin Zückert (eds), *Das Münchner Abkommen von 1938 in europäischer Perspektive* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2013), p. 146.
- 36 *Sopade*, p. 382.
- 37 *Ibid.*, p. 384.
- 38 The report was written retrospectively, at the end of 1938; SD, vol. 2 p. 72.
- 39 ‘They hope for the catastrophe’, *Sopade*, pp. 389, 976.
- 40 *Sopade*, April/May Berlin report, p. 387.
- 41 Quoted in Longerich, *Goebbels*, p. 377.
- 42 Beck would resign in August 1938. Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power, 1933–1939* (London: Penguin, 2012), p. 669.
- 43 See Susanne Meinl, *Nationalsozialisten gegen Hitler. Die nationalrevolutionäre Opposition um Friedrich Wilhelm Heinz* (Berlin, 2000), pp. 268–9. A member of the opposition, Hans Bernd Gisevius, was of the opinion that ‘Chamberlain saved Hitler’. Quoted in Jürgen Zarusky, ‘Der deutsche Widerstand gegen die Nationalsozialisten’, in Zarusky and Zückert (eds), *Das Münchner Abkommen*, p. 232. Richard Evans comments that ‘the fundamental weakness of the conspiracy was that its members, by and large, did not disapprove of Hitler’s basic aim of dismembering Czechoslovakia; they only deplored what they considered his irresponsible haste in doing so while the German economy and the armed forces were still unprepared for the general European war to which they feared it would lead.’ Evans, *Road to War*, p. 670.
- 44 Original Comintern report: ‘Die Kriegsangst ist bei den Frauen besonders stark. Sie haben sehr viel dazu beigetragen, dass die Ablehnung von Hitlers Kriegsabenteuer durch das deutsche Volk in den Septembertagen so eindeutig zum Ausdruck kam. Schon bei der Zwangsverschickung der Festigungsarbeit und während der Massenmobilisierung im September zeigt sich der Friedenwillen der deutschen Frauen ... Arbeiterfrauen erzählen, dass es bei der Abfahrt der Männer zu Befestigungsarbeiten sehr viele Tränen gab. Man sagte zu den Frauen, sie sollten draussen vor der Sperre bleiben und ihren Männern das Herz nicht so schwer machen. Die Frauen waren ganz empört,

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- wie man ihre Männer behandelt habe. Ein Ton hätte geherrscht, als ob man es mit Verbrechern zu tun hätte ... Auf dem Potsdamer Bahnhof durchbrachen Frauen die Absperrungen der SA Posten. Frauen sagten zu SA Männern, wir wollen unsere Männer wieder zurück! Comintern Archive RGASPI f.495, Op. 292, d.104; see Sovdoc.rusarchives.ru/#showunit&id=157500;tab=img (accessed 24 July 2019).
- 45 The other women calmed her down in the end and the SA promised her financial support. *Sopade*, p. 933.
- 46 Sopade report from 3 September, p. 932.
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 SD reports, vol. 2, p. 72.
- 49 Quoted in Longerich, *Goebbels*, p. 378.
- 50 *Ibid.* For the zigzag course of the press, see Longerich, *Goebbels*, p. 380.
- 51 Sopade report, p. 944. From the very beginning they had been of the opinion that the Runciman mission was a sign the democracies had developed 'weak knees'. *Sopade*, p. 917.
- 52 See Urbach, *Go-Betweens for Hitler*, p. 288.
- 53 *Sopade*, p. 913.
- 54 Original Comintern report: 'In einem Geschäft standen einige Frauen zusammen. "Dieses Schwein (gemeint war Hitler) sagte die eine Frau – wo hat er uns denn nun hingebraht. Das also will er, dieser Halunke, in den Krieg will er uns treiben." Eine andere wieder, deren Sohn mit den Truppen abmarschiert war, sagte: "Jetzt sehe ich meinen Jungen wahrscheinlich nicht mehr. Es ist furchtbar, was die Banditen mit uns vorhaben." ... Fünf Frauen hatten sich in einem Laden zufällig getroffen und unterhalten sich darüber, dass vielleicht morgen die ganze Strasse schon ein Trümmerhaufen sei und dass sie mit ihren Kindern unter den Trümmern begraben liegen. "Und wer ist schuld? Fragte eine katholische Frau, Mit Hitler ... ist das ganze Unglück über Deutschland gekommen." In drastischen Worten tat sie ihrer Ansicht kund, dass das Hitlerregime verschwinden müssen, damit Deutschland frei werde.' Comintern Archive RGASPI f.495, Op. 292, d.104. See Sovdoc.rusarchives.ru/#showunit&id=157500;tab=img (accessed 24 July 2019).
- 55 *Ibid.*
- 56 Original Comintern report: 'Aus einem Caram-Betrieb wird berichtet, dass in den kritischen Tagen viel Diskussionen geführt wurden. Ein Nazi vertrat den Standpunkt, was auch immer kommen möge, man müsse Hitler folgen. Als die Frauen merkten, dass die Männer der betreffenden Abteilungen nicht zu widersprechen wagten, fingen sie an, sehr laut zu schimpfen. Und alle zusammen haben nicht eher Ruhe gegeben, bis der Nazi schwieg.' Comintern Archive RGASPI f.495, Op. 292, d.104. See Sovdoc.rusarchives.ru/#showunit&id=157500;tab=img (accessed 24 July 2019).
- 57 Original Comintern report: 'In einem anderen Großbetrieb sollte nach Arbeitsschluss gemeinsam zum Sportplatz marschiert werden, um die

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- Hitler-Rede anzuhören. Da sich viele drücken wollten, lies der Unternehmer die Fabrikstore schließen. Die Belegschaft musste im Hof antreten, Männer und Frauen (letztere sind die Mehrzahl) getrennt. Nachdem man eine Weile marschiert war, löste sich der Frauenzug plötzlich wie auf Kommando auf, und die Frauen gingen nach Hause während die Männer weitermarschierten.' Comintern Archive RGASPI f.495, Op. 292, d.104. See Sovdoc. rusarchives.ru/#showunit&id=157500;tab=img (accessed 24 July 2019).
- 58 *Sopade*, p. 914.
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 926.
- 60 Otto Dov Kulka and Eberhard Jäckel, *The Jews in the Secret Nazi Reports on Popular Opinion in Germany, 1933–1945* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), p. 332.
- 61 25 September, *Sopade*, p. 929.
- 62 *Sopade*, p. 932.
- 63 *Ibid.*, p. 919.
- 64 *Ibid.*, p. 929.
- 65 *Ibid.*, p. 919.
- 66 *Ibid.*, p. 924.
- 67 Hellmuth Auerbach, 'Volksstimmung und veröffentlichte Meinung in Deutschland zwischen März und November 1938', in Knipping and Müller (eds), *Machtbewußtsein in Deutschland*, p. 283.
- 68 Some made predictions by comparing Chamberlain's talks in Berchtesgaden and Godesberg with the meeting of Austrian Chancellor Schuschnigg and Hitler in Berchtesgaden shortly before the annexation of Austria. *Sopade*, p. 921. Hitler's translator, Paul O. Schmidt, famously described the conversations of the two men in his autobiography: *Statist auf diplomatischer Bühne 1923–1945: Erlebnisse des Chefdolmetschers im Auswärtigen Amt mit den Staatsmännern Europas* (Hamburg: CEP Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 2005 [1949]).
- 69 *Sopade* report 26 September 1938, p. 923.
- 70 *Sopade* report from the Ruhrgebiet, p. 916.
- 71 *Sopade*, p. 917.
- 72 *Ibid.*, p. 976.
- 73 *Sopade*, p. 927. 'The reunion with Austria did not improve anything and if we get the Slovaks as well now, it will not be better either. They are not worth a war.' *Ibid.*, pp. 927–8.
- 74 *Sopade*, p. 930.
- 75 *Ibid.*, p. 936.
- 76 *Ibid.*, p. 971.
- 77 Speech by Hitler in the Berliner Sportpalast, 26 September 1938, in Meier-Benneckenstein (ed.), *Dokumente der Deutschen Politik (DDP)*, vol. 6, p. 342.
- 78 See, for example, Kershaw, *Hitler, 1936–1945: Nemesis* (London: Penguin, 2001), p. 117.

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- 79 A Sopade informant talked to a middle-class woman who had never been critical of Hitler before. She had listened to the radio broadcast and said: 'Have you heard him screaming again last night? I am not supporting him.' *Sopade*, p. 976.
- 80 *Sopade*, p. 972.
- 81 SD report, vol. 2, p. 73.
- 82 *Sopade*, p. 978.
- 83 *Bayern in der NS-Zeit*, vol. 1, p. 121.
- 84 SD reports, vol. 2 p. 151.
- 85 This contemporary report by journalist William J. Shirer is quoted in all studies of the crisis. See, for example, Evans, *The Third Reich in Power*, p. 677 or Volker Ullrich, *Hitler* (London: The Bodley Head, 2016), p. 741.
- 86 Longerich, *Goebbels*, p. 385; *Sopade*, p. 978.
- 87 Quoted in Longerich, *Goebbels*, p. 385.
- 88 Ullrich, *Hitler*, p. 745.
- 89 In fact, the 'offer' had been arranged by Göring. From the beginning, Göring had been against the timing of the war, though not the war itself. See Evans, *The Third Reich*, pp. 668ff.
- 90 Urbach, *Go-Betweens for Hitler*, p. 287.
- 91 Reports from Wenzelsplatz, Prague, *Sopade*, p. 1032.
- 92 *Sopade*, p. 944. Dedicated socialists said 'what use does it have? ... The whole world is scared of Hitler.' *Ibid.* The SD reported similar despair from the Catholic exiled paper *Der deutsche Weg*, in SD, vol. 2, p. 35.
- 93 Quoted in Longerich, *Goebbels*, p. 385.
- 94 SD reports, p. 151. The SD again warned that people were now increasingly listening to *Fremdsender* (foreign radio stations).
- 95 *Sopade*, p. 1065.
- 96 As quoted in *The Observer*, 2 October 1938.
- 97 At the time, Thomas Mann, Germany's Nobel Prize winner, also owned a Czechoslovakian passport. See Zarusky, 'Der deutsche Widerstand gegen den Nationalsozialismus und das Münchner Abkommen', p. 219.
- 98 Friedrich Torberg to Schlamm, 7 October 1938, in Friedrich Torberg, *Eine tolle, tolle Zeit. Briefe und Dokumente aus den Jahren der Flucht 1938 to 1941* (Munich: Langen Müller, 1989), p. 30.