

How to Smash Hitler

“WE shall do everything in our power to crush Hitler and his Nazi forces.”

Very well, then, Mr. Roosevelt, let's get started. As head of the State you are undoubtedly in possession of facts which lead you to your conclusion. We citizens of your State presume only to counsel with you as to the best method of achieving the end you deem desirable.

To overcome an opponent it is common sense to ascertain the source and extent of his power, to search out his weakness.

Now, Herr Hitler came into power in Germany in 1933 when the people of that country were impoverished and degraded; people in that condition are always willing to take a chance on the plausible promises made by a demagogue. Like other leaders, he told them that he would provide food and joy, bread and games, works projects and free band concerts. As you know, Mr. President, other people have avidly accepted such promises, have voted themselves into the hands of leaders who demand more power in order to bring about the millenium, sight unseen.

It was the German people who gave Herr Hitler the power which he has used to their own hurt, to the hurt of world peace. Maybe they are disillusioned and would like to get rid of him; reports to that effect sometimes appear in our newspapers. We ought to find out, in a very definite and bold way, whether or not he has lost the support of his people, for without that support he is a dead mackerel.

Germany cannot be a happy place to live in. No country at war, on rations, hounded by police, burdened with taxation, given over to concentration camps and adding up a growing list of casualties is a place human beings like to live in. If the German people support Hitler now it can not be because of his broken promises to them, but because his enemies—including the United States—offer them no avenue of escape. Maybe they support him because they fear the consequences of a defeat by his enemies more than they fear him. They have felt the lash of revenge. They know what it means to be indicted, judged and punished by a victorious enemy.

So, if we want to crush Hitler by attacking his power, we must do more than promise his people a better life if they drop him and his wicked schemes. We must give them positive evidence of our intent to treat them as human beings.

We must give them a chance to escape from Hitler and Hitlerism—now.

Let us send to Portugal a mighty armada of troopships well laden with provisions, and protected by our best ships of war. Let us make known to these dupes of Hitler—including his soldiers—that free passage to America will be provided for them, and no strings attached.

Let us explain to these poor fellows that while in Germany there are about 360 people to the square mile our land is occupied by only a ninth of that average, and that most of our people live in the cities. Let us offer every German farmer about five acres of our millions and millions of unused acres. A small family can get a living out of five acres; perhaps a meagre one, but better than anything a war-torn and tax-ridden country can provide.

Of course, we shall have to get rid of the monopoly privileges which keep idle our soil and hold down our production. Why not? We are, as you said, in a great national emergency. Things are bad and looking worse. A major operation is justified now, if it ever was. The monopolists are neither super-human nor particularly desirable. If breaking their graft is essential to the crushing of Hitler, why hesitate?

If you make the suggested offer to the Germans, and show them that you are ready to make good now, without waiting for peace terms, they will probably risk their necks to escape their crazy master. He will go mad indeed when he reads the daily desertion reports. He will be crushed by the weight of the debris of his maniacal temple. And you will have done the whole job with hardly any expense to your people, possibly without firing a shot.

Remember, Mr. President, that this country was built up by the offspring of men and women who ran away from tyranny. Give the present Germans the same chance that our free country gave their forefathers in 1848 and they too will embrace the opportunity. Indeed, Hitler will have to free Germany to keep it populated.

Of course, if the Germans don't accept your offer, maybe the only thing left to do is to shoot it out with them. But why start shooting—which will cost us untold billions of dollars, will involve us in a form of Hitlerization at home, will maim or destroy thousands of our best lads—before you have tried the scheme of crushing Hitler by undermining his support?