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President's Secretary's File  
Subject File  
Rosenman, Samuel: 1933-1940  
Box 163

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

3/27/40

MEMO FOR MISSY

Thank him very much. I  
have been delighted to read this  
and that I want them for my files.

F. D. R.

PEF: SAMUEL I. ROSENMAN  
60 CENTRE STREET  
NEW YORK, N. Y.

March 25, 1940

Miss Marguerite A. LeHand  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Missy:

Would you please put the enclosed documents in the President's basket for a reading? I think you will find them very interesting yourself.

With kindest regards,

Cordially yours,

*Sam*

Encls.

SAMUEL I. ROSENMAN  
80 CENTRE STREET  
NEW YORK, N. Y.

March 25, 1940

Hon. Franklin D. Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

I have come to know fairly well one Jakob Goldschmidt, who in 1933 was one of the leading industrialists of Germany. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Krupp Works, the Thyssen Works, the Reichsbank, the A. E. G., which is the German company of the General Electric Company, the North German Lloyd, the Hamburg-American Line, and a great many other leading industrial corporations. He served on several boards with Dr. Schacht, Thyssen and the other bankers and industrialists of Germany. He holds an honorary degree from Heidelberg. I understand he was one of the richest men in Germany, and was a particular target of the National Socialist Party for years before the accession of Hitler to power.

He had enough foresight to leave Germany in November of 1933. He is now a resident of New York and will become an American citizen next year. Partially through the assistance of Thyssen, I understand, he was enabled to get out of Germany a portion of his art collection and, I imagine, other wealth. He has exhibited some of his pictures at the World's Fair in San Francisco and in New York. He was apparently a very close friend of Thyssen, and knew intimately several of the present leading industrialists and bankers of Nazi Germany.

He has given me translations of several letters which were sent by Thyssen to Hitler, Goering, et al., after Thyssen's flight into Switzerland, copies of which letters were sent by Thyssen to him here in New York. Goldschmidt has written an introduction to these documents. Apparently the present thought is that Thyssen at some time in the near future is to publish these letters, together with the preface written by Goldschmidt.

SAMUEL I. ROSENMAN  
60 CENTRE STREET  
NEW YORK, N. Y.

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I understand that the Crowell-Collier Publications are interested in publishing them and that Mr. William Hillman, who is the European representative of that concern, is going to discuss with Thyssen in a week or so the publication of them. I am informed that Thyssen will follow Goldschmidt's advice rather closely on the question of whether or not they should be published, as well as other matters concerning Thyssen's future activity.

I thought you might be interested in reading not only the letters of Thyssen, but also Goldschmidt's introduction to them, both of which are inclosed.

These letters are very illuminating. They start with August 31, 1939, when Thyssen got his instruction to appear at the Reichstag meeting which was to declare war the next day. One of the most interesting items in the letters is Thyssen's statement that on September 1st, when the Reichstag voted for war, there were approximately one hundred members absent, whose seats were taken by party hacks. I do not know whether you knew this.

My own interest in this whole episode is that Thyssen appears to be the perfect example of what might happen to financial and industrial leaders who seek to block the kind of social progress which should come by orderly, legitimate stages, who fail to read the times correctly, and who in their efforts to thwart measures of social reform find themselves thrown out by forces which they thought they could use for their own benefit.

In other words, Thyssen is a perfect example for some of our own leading industrialists and bankers who would be willing to accept almost anyone who would promise to stop the trend in American government since March 4, 1933, with the confident hope that they would be the ones really benefited. Thyssen is the perfect answer to their

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NEW YORK, N. Y.

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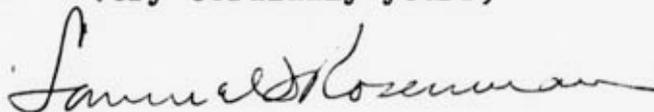
It seems to me most ironical that, as appears from page 11 of the dossier of letters, the decree under which Thyssen's property was confiscated is a decree "concerning the confiscation of Communistic property".

I think that this introduction by Goldschmidt really acknowledges this fact; but it is a little euphemistic, coming from one who was associated with Thyssen for many years and who was befriended by him in time of need.

I know these letters will be very interesting to you.

With kindest regards,

Very cordially yours,



P. S.--From my conversations with Goldschmidt, I am sure that he appreciates the situation fully; that he sees the resemblance between Thyssen and some of our American business magnates; and that he has so expressed himself to bankers and industrialists in this country. He was present at the recent Economics Club Dinner, where Ickes and Weir debated. He tells me that Weir's speech was exactly the same sort of speech that he had heard time and again from comparable persons in Germany before Hitler came to power.

JAKOB GOEBBES

FRITZ THYSSEN authorized me to use the contents of the dossier attached hereto in any way I might deem fit. The dossier consists of telegrams and letters addressed by Thyssen to Hermann Goering and Adolf Hitler at the time of the outbreak of war and during the subsequent two months, September and October of last year. In deciding to submit these letters to a small group of responsible people, I am guided by considerations of a twofold nature: Firstly, these letters contain a number of perfectly new or little known facts which in an interesting way elucidate occurrences and their background in national-socialist Germany. In this respect I want to point particularly to the protest voiced by Thyssen, the Catholic and "Aryan", against the persecution of the Christian Church and of the Jews, to his passionate rejection of an alliance with communist Russia, to his express reference to the extremely anti-Russian program of Kepler, Hitler's trusted economist (in 1939!) and to his statement that hundred members of the German Reichstag had absented themselves from the fateful session of last September, their places and votes being filled by organs of the Party.

Beyond this direct interest, however, the letters seem to be of a much greater significance in general respect, a

significance not only touching upon Germany but also upon the United States. The focal point of this interest is the author of the letters himself; Fritz Thyssen.

Fritz Thyssen may rightfully be considered one of the typical representatives of the German Bourgeoisie and German capitalism. He is heir to one of the largest fortunes of industrialism in Germany. He was conscious of the great responsibility in economic and political respect such position entailed. In relation to this he was heir to the best tradition of German bourgeoisie. His aim was not to elevate himself and his own interests above those of the commonwealth and the State but his primary objective was to serve the nation and the country as best he could. His outstanding patriotism was proven to the whole world by the manly stand he took in 1923 at the time of the French invasion into the Ruhr district. He was well aware of the fact that as an aftermath of the war far reaching changes in the social structure of life within Germany would take place, and he realised in time the strong tensions present in the country with their dangerously revolutionary currents. He was convinced of the fact that a solution of the social problem should in the first place be looked for in the sphere of economics in order to prevent the fluctuating economic situation from increasing the already existing difficulties in the political field. He had an absolutely correct conception of, and perfect willingness to do his part in, the fundamental changes which were to do justice to the well-to-do classes as well as to the poor among the nation. This however is the point where his failure becomes manifest. A failure in which snares not only Fritz Thyssen himself but his entire generation of

the German bourgeoisie. " Just as incapable as that generation was in adapting itself to the new democratic form of government, was the Weimar Government in the question of how to draw the creative forces of the well-to-do and nationalistic classes into the gigantic process of reconstruction of new Germany. The gap between these groups was, on the one hand, the result of the nationalistic point of view that the German Republic had been irreparably discredited from the start by the fact that its first act had to be the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. Fritz Thyssen, on the other hand, and all those of his rank, though fully appreciating a government based upon democratic principles, were adverse to leadership by the social-democratic party with its socialistic ideas and practices. Mindful of the radical events and the resulting measures which had been the inevitable consequence of the overthrow of the government at the close of the World War, in particular the industrialists feared that the Have-nots in Germany, the "mob", would take over the reigns of government and that ultimately the complete overthrow of the existing social and economic order would result. This fear always flared up anew whenever, on account of impending economic crises, the socialist parties gained ground which heavily weighed down upon the ever unstable scale of power within the German Republic. Fritz Thyssen, and with him numerous leaders in German industry were "conservative" and, according to their interpretation, "conservative" meant a form of government based upon authority and tradition, and a social structure built on hierarchy. Fritz

Thyssen, however, along with other leaders of German economy, though willingly recognizing the necessity of structural changes in the social order of the country and even wanting to hasten their course, they were too deeply rooted in the tradition of their antiquated thoughts and conceptions, to find among their own class the man and the idea who would have been capable of finding, by way of evolution, the synthesis, combining old and new forces for the establishment of a better order of things in the future. And just at the decisive moments when there would have been a chance for them to overcome critical periods through some constructive idea, they were ever again paralyzed by the one great fear that finally, with the aid of Russia, Bolshevism would be the victor in the struggle of these opposing trends.

Such was the situation when Hitler made his appearance. In the name his party had adopted, the two leading trends of the present time were combined: Nationalistic and socialistic. He promised -- in his book "The State of the Future" which is based upon the Fuehrer principle -- that he would espouse the two causes to making it one. Fritz Thyssen who for a great many years had been trying to find a solution of the problem was fascinated by this novel association of two most strongly contrasting movements -- in combination with the Fuehrer principle. It was perfectly clear to him that he as one of the "Haves" would have to make great sacrifices also for the new State of Herr Hitler, but he was convinced to have found in Hitler and in his ideas the instrument through

which in an evolutionary way a new and better order could be established in Germany. The gift denied to him and his equals, Hitler seemed to possess: He spoke the language of the masses which the upper social layer no longer knew. Thus it appeared possible to gain through Hitler, the personification of the amorphous masses, access to these very masses and, moreover, to govern those masses through him. This is how the alliance between the representative of the conservatives with the demagogue was concluded. The real Hitler, the nihilistic, revolutionary Hitler, who despised all existing values and ideas, these conservatives neither could, nor wanted to, see. The "outgrowths", which in many respects became apparent already during the development of the national-socialist movement and which manifested themselves primarily in a hostile attitude toward the clergy, in antisemitism, and in a radical socialism, were explained by Hitler again and again as mere propaganda, as the necessary means for attaining the goal of carrying off the power: Sugar for the masses. During discussions in smaller or larger private assemblies, Hitler constantly renewed his most forceful and most binding promises and assurances that after taking over power all these outgrowths of radicalism of a personal nature, or otherwise, would be eliminated. Finally, those conservative politician and economists believed that his solemn promise was firmly grounded upon their alliance with him and that the grouping within the government and the upholding of the Constitution were guaranteed forever. The governing groups, as is known, showed a strong majority of the conservative and middle class parties

at the time.

Fritz Thyssen, an idealist in a class by himself believed also in Hitler's idealism and in the power of his personality. He thought that Hitler would prove to be the man who could master any situation presenting itself, and that he would be able to reunite the self-dissolving forces of the masses in a superior entity. Beyond this, he believed that he and the exponents of wealth and learning represented by him, would have it in their power to rule Hitler in turn. This belief proved to be erroneous. In the alliance between the conservative and the revolutionary, the revolutionary proved to be stronger.

Fritz Thyssen recognized his mistake only when it was too late. It is an easy thing to blame him and to condemn him. Before doing so, however, one should make it plain to oneself that on the same grounds most of the statesmen of the great European nations outside of Germany were to be condemned. All of them thought that through negotiations and conclusion of treaties with Adolf Hitler, they would avoid a horrible end, whereas in fact their policy led to an endless horror.

In a fateful development of events as those before our eyes, it is idle to deliberate on the question of guilt or, moreover, to decide on it. Fritz Thyssen himself is fully aware of his mistakes and false steps. In contrast to the numerous

"opportunists" among the bourgeoisie he started the path of opposition immediately upon Hitler's coming into power, even though he confessed to the world his change of heart only as late as in the latter part of 1939, through his departure from Germany. At that time there was nothing that could induce him to remain in, or to return to, Germany, notwithstanding the fact that by doing so he could have saved his property and his position. For as great a German patriot as he was, it certainly was a hard thing to leave his country just at the moment when war was declared, and to publicly avow his standpoint.

Fritz Thyssen is conscious of his difficult position in facing world opinion. The thought uppermost in his mind today is the strong desire to help freeing his country from Hitler and his clan, and to do his share in bringing about peace and peaceful cooperation among the great nations of Europe and of the world. He believes that the explanations and the significant points he is able to furnish may be helpful in attaining that goal and that they will be of great benefit also to developments in other countries. In such respect his services may be particularly valuable for the United States in my view, as the volume of his positive knowledge and experience and, possibly, still more the lesson taught by his mistakes, may be most fruitful in this country.

New York, March 12, 1940.

*Jacob G. ...*

to which we have to submit. Victory, however, will ultimately always be on the side of the good and not of the evil.

New York, . . . . .

~~Fritz Thyssen~~

Copies of the Thyssen Letter

On August 31st, 1939, the following urgent telegram was sent by me from Badgastein, Germany, to Fieldmarshal Goering:

'Received order from Gauleitung (District Leadership) Essen to keep ready for airplane flight to Berlin stop I cannot comply with this order because of unsatisfactory condition of health stop in my view a kind of armistice ought to be possible to gain time for negotiations I am against the war a war will make Germany dependent also in the matter of raw materials and thereby she will lose her position as a world power.'

Greetings Thyssen.'

MEMORANDUM by FRITZ THYSSEN, Member of the Reichstag, dispatched by messenger to Fieldmarshal Goering on September 20, 1939:

- 1) On August 31, at 9 p.m. I sent the following urgent telegram to Fieldmarshal Goering (see above)
- 2) On September 1st, Mr. Hitler said during the session of the Reichstag: "Anyone who is not with me is a traitor and will be treated as such."
- 3) In this remark I see not only a threat but also an encroachment upon my constitutional rights as a Member of the Reichstag.

4) I am not only entitled but even obliged to speak up, particularly in a case where I feel convinced that Germany is being led into a grave disaster. Mr. Hitler has no right to threaten me when I give expression to my thoughts.

5) Now as before I am against the war. As the war has started meanwhile, Germany ought to try to put an end to it as early as possible, for the longer it lasts, the less favorable will be the peace terms for Germany.

6) It is not Poland that broke the pact with Germany, that pact Mr. Hitler himself formerly repeatedly referred to as a guaranty of peace. In this respect I also refer to Hitler's speech on September 26, 1933.

7) In order to achieve peace, it will be necessary that Germany returns to a status which in every respect conforms to the laws of the Constitution. Where the Constitution of the country is not respected, there in the end will be anarchy. The oath of allegiance taken by the individual is valid only if also the leaders live up to their oaths.

8) In the meeting of the Reichstag on September 1st, approximately 100 members were absent. Their seats were taken by party organs. I see in this fact a mockery of the Constitution against which I raise my voice in protest.

9) I demand that the German public be informed of the fact that in my capacity as Member of the Reichstag I have voted

against the war. Should there be any more members who voted as I did, their votes too are to be made public.

10) On August 31st, shortly before the above mentioned telegram was dispatched, the news were wired to me that a Mr. von Remnitz had suddenly died at Dachau. Mr. von Remnitz was the son-in-law of my sister, the Baroness von Berg, residing at Munich. Mr. von Remnitz had been interned right after the Anschluss of Austria, because of his alleged activities as a Legitimist prior to the Anschluss. Immediately upon his arrest I had written to District Leader Buerckel of Vienna but without even being favored with any reply at all, which is characteristic of conditions in Germany. I demand that I be informed whether Mr. von Remnitz died of natural causes or whether his death was due to other causes. In the latter event I reserve to myself the right of taking further steps.

Only three copies were taken of this Memorandum which are all certified. No other copies exist. The copies are still in my possession at this moment and are in safe keeping.

Letter to Fieldmarshal Goering, dated October 1, 1939.

- - - -

Dear Fieldmarshal General,

I refer to my letter to you of September 22nd, 1939 together with enclosure which was handed over by messenger to Mr. Terboven, District Leader, to be forwarded to you. (with that

explanatory letter the Memorandum of September 20th, 1939 was sent to Mr. Goering).

Thereupon I received from the District Leader the following statement:

1) I declare in the name of the Fieldmarshal that neither a telegram nor a letter came into his hands; it was established, moreover, that the Fieldmarshal's Office did not receive said telegram or letter either.

2) From this fact it appears that the closing sentence in the speech of the Fuehrer could in no way have been aimed at any particular person.

3) In the event of your prompt return, the Fieldmarshal guarantees that no consequences whatsoever of a personal or economic nature will result to you. '

To this I wish to state as follows:

1) It is quite impossible that my urgent telegram of August 31st, from Badgastein, did not arrive. It is to be hoped that in Germany a telegram addressed to the Fieldmarshal will always arrive. Also my letter dated September 22nd must have arrived, for otherwise the District (District) Leader could not have expressed his position as defined above.

2) It may be that my telegram did not arrive in time although it had been dispatched by me immediately upon receipt of the order to

keep ready for the meeting of the Reichstag. If therefore the possibility is to be admitted that the speech of the Reichkanzler was not influenced by it, I was nevertheless entitled to presume that such was the case in view of the situation, the more so, as I was convinced that I had been the only one of all the members of the Reichstag who dared to voice his dissenting opinion.

3) I had never asked you to spare me from personal or economic consequences resulting from my political actions. I do not comprehend how the thought of it could have entered your mind. It is true, I have given my support to the party ever since 1923, first upon the request of General Ludendorff, afterwards I have fully complied, for which there is proof, with all of your wishes, and of those of Mr. Hitler and Mr. Hess, and also of others, but I have never discussed with you or with anyone else any wishes of an economic nature concerning myself. I addressed myself to you only threetimes - much too rarely, I am sorry to say --, namely:

1) when Mr. Weitzel, the Police Chief of Duesseldorf, whom you promoted to the rank of State's Counsel, distributed a more than vulgar pamphlet against the Catholic Church whom I shall always keep faith, and now even more so than ever before. To this no answer from you was forthcoming!

2) when on November 9th, 1938, the Jews were robbed and tortured in the most cowardly and brutal manner, when the Government Chief of Duesseldorf whom you had appointed yourself, was almost killed and driven away. There again was no answer! As a sign of

my protest I resigned at that time my post as State's Counsel; I asked the Russian Minister of Finance to stop paying my salary as State's Counsel. There was no answer! The payments, however, which were made in disregard of my request, are now standing on a blocked account with the Thyssen Bank waiting for disposal.

3) When the greatest of misfortunes happened and Germany was once more plunged into a war, without the opinion of Parliament or of the State's Council even being asked. I declare with all clearness that I am against this policy, and always shall be against it, even at the risk of being branded as a traitor. In view of the fact that in 1923, though unarmed and not protected by armaments worth 90 billions, I called into existence the Passive Resistance on territory occupied by the enemy and in this way (way) saved Rhein and Ruhr, such accusation sounds almost as grotesque as the fact that national socialism suddenly abandoned its teachings and its mysticism for concluding a pact with communism. But even from the viewpoint of a policy purely realistic, this new policy means suicide, for its sole benefactor will be the Nazi arch-enemy of yesterday, though Nazifriend of today: Russia! The same Russia in regard to which Mr. Keppler, the intimate adviser of the Fuehrer, said only a few months ago, on the occasion of a meeting of the Central Committee of the Reichsbank, that it must become German as far as the borders of the Ural.

I can but address the urgent appeal to you and to the Fuehrer to cease pursuing a policy which at best will drive

Germany into the arms of Communism, or otherwise will mean the finis germaniae. Please try to find out under cover the terms by which it would be possible to still prevent a catastrophe. It will be necessary, of course, that Germany returns to constitutional conditions so that contracts and agreements will once more have a meaning.

In closing I wish to express my regret about having to write to you from abroad in order to be able to openly express my opinion. You will understand, however, that it would be sheer idiocy on my part to do otherwise, in view of the examples of 1934 showing how political opponents - to which I too now belong - were treated. That these methods have not changed is proven, deplorably enough, by the case of Mr. von Remnitz who, as stated in the enclosure to my letter of September 22nd, died, true to Dachau methods, allegedly without any visible cause. Novel only is the fact that Mr. von Ribbentrop did not shrink from taking possession of the dead man's property.

Accept the expression of my high esteem

signed Fritz Thyssen, M.d.R.

Obviously with a view to that letter, the following circular letter was sent out to every Bank in Germany but was not allowed to be mentioned in the press.

"By virtue of a letter addressed to me by the Secret State Police, State Police District Berlin, dated October 13th, I give notice to our members for their attention, of the following Decree issued by the State Police District Duesseldorf:

'In compliance with an order given by Fieldmarshal General Goering to Mr. Terboven, District Leader and President in Chief, Commissioner of the Reich's Defence, Defence Unit 4, the total property of Fritz Thyssen, Dr. jur. hon. c., Muelheim-Ruhr, Speldorf, is confiscated by the State Police according to section 1 of the Law concerning the Secret State Police. It is Mr. Terboven, Commissioner of the Reich's Defence, District Leader and President in Chief, appointed Trustee by Fieldmarshal General Goering, who is exclusively authorized to dispose of the property.

'As it was not possible to accurately establish the extent of the property of Fritz Thyssen, Dr. jur. h.c., or of his wife, I request that all banks be instructed by a confidential circular letter to report without delay and within five days to the State Police at Duesseldorf, attention of Mr. Haselbacher, Government Chief Counsel, or his substitute in the Office, all accounts, deposits and

safes carried by them in the names of either Fritz Thyssen, Dr. jur. hon. c., or of his wife, Amelie Thyssen, née zur Helle, born in Muelheim-Rhein on December 9, 1877.

Heil Hitler

The Director of the Economy Group of Private Banking-Central Union of German Banking Firms and Bankers

signed Reinhart  
Director of the Kommerz- and Privatbank Berlin."

Mr. Terboven, Commissioner of the Reich's Defence, District Leader and President in Chief, conferred this Office of Trustee upon Baron Kurt von Schroeder, proprietor of the banking firm of I.H.Stein, Cologne who accepted the appointment.

The crime of which Mr. Fritz Thyssen is accused (it does not appear of which crime Mrs. Thyssen is accused) cannot have been very grave for there is the following note in his files date October 1st, 1939:

"When on September 26, 1939, Mr. A. Voegler, Dortmund, delivered to me District Leader Terboven's written declaration mentioned in the letter to Goering of October 1st, 1939, Mr. Voegler added verbally that on my return I should take along all the certified copies in my possession of my Memorandum dated September 20, 1939, and that they then would be destroyed together with the original.

"This would have meant, in fact, that I would

have sacrificed my political creed in exchange for being granted personal and economic freedom. I refused to do so and, instead, sent the letter of October 1, 1939 to Goering whereupon the confiscation of my entire property was decreed.

"Subsequently a notice appeared in the "Reichsanzeiger" which again was not to be published by the press and which is quoted in the following letter of mine:

Dr. Fritz Thyssen, Member of the Reichstag, Muelheim-Ruhr, Speldorf.

Luzern, December 28, 1939.

Mr. Adolf Hitler, Chancellor of the German Reich,  
Berlin.

Mr. Chancellor of the Reich!

In the German Reichsanzeiger Nr. 293 of December 13, 1939, I read the following notice:

"In view of the Law of May 26, 1933, concerning the confiscation of communistic property (sic) (Legislation of the Reich, Issue 1, page 293), in conjunction with section 1 of the Decree of May 31, 1933 (law No. 39), and the law of July 14, 1933, regarding the seizure of property of individuals hostile to the People and the State (Legislation, Issue 1, p.479), the entire movable property of Dr. Fritz Thyssen, formerly of Muelheim Ruhr, at present abroad, and

also the real estate owned by him, is confiscated in favor of the Prussian State, with the effect that in making this decree publicly known by inserting it in the German Reichsanzeiger and in the Prussian Staatsanzeiger, the property indicated above passes into the ownership of the Prussian State.

No appeal against this decree is legally admissible.

Duesseldorf, December 11, 1939

The Government President, Reeder."

A statement as to the reasons of this measure is lacking. I state herewith that no procedure whatsoever of Court or Administration has been instituted against me. To this day I have never received any communication from the Government of the German Reich; except the one, Dr. A. Voegler by order of the District Leader at Essen handed over to me in which it was said that I should withdraw a political Memorandum I had filed in my capacity of Member of the Reichstag and also should destroy the copy of it, and that thereupon no political or economic consequences would result to me. As pointed out, I declined this "peace offer" on the ground that being a member of the Reichstag my political creed was not for sale. Moreover, I have never been called upon to account in any way for my personal or political attitude. Your Ministry of Propaganda even denied that any action

against me was pending. The confiscation of my property as promulgated in the Reichsanzeiger is an undisguised and brutal violation of law, a measure contrary to the Constitution, to Law, and to Rights. I protest most vigorously against this measure and declare the Reich as well as particularly all persons aiding in this confiscation now or in the future, among them especially Baron von Schroeder, Cologne, the appointed Trustee, as personally responsible to me. The time will come when my rights will irrevocably be restored to me. I specially warn of touching any of my wife's property, or that of my children, the Count and Countess Zichy, or my father's bequest, August Thyssen, to whom, among others, Germany owes in the first place the greatness of her industry.

My conscience is clear. I feel free of any guilt. My sole error was that I believed in you, Adolf Hitler, as the Fuehrer, and in the movement you led; believed with all the ardor of one passionately German. Since 1923 I have indorsed the national-socialistic movement notwithstanding the heavy sacrifices that were required of me; I solicited membership for the movement and fought for it, without ever wanting anything for myself or asking for anything, always filled with the hope that our unfortunate German people would be helped. When the national-socialistic regime came into power, the initial developments seemed to justify my belief, at least as long as Mr. von Papen to whom, after all, you owe your appointment as Chancellor by Mr. von Hindenburg, President of the Reich, was still Vice-Chancellor. It was he

before whom you took a solemn oath in a sacred place - the Church of the Garrison of Potsdam - to uphold the Constitution. Don't forget that your rise was not the result of some great revolutionary deed but was owing to the country's liberal constitution to which you are bound by your oath.

In the course of time however a disastrous change took place. At an early stage already I felt it necessary to voice my protest against the persecution of christianity in taking brutal measures against its priests, and in insulting its churches. I did so for instance when the Police President of Duesseldorf distributed a more than vulgar pamphlet against the Catholic Church. I voiced my protest in a letter to Fieldmarshal Goering, using the strongest language. But without result.

When on November 9th, 1938, the Jews were robbed and tortured in the most cowardly and most brutal manner, and their synagogues destroyed all over Germany, I protested once more. As an outward sign of my protest I resigned my post as Counsel of the State. This too brought no answer.

Now you have concluded a pact with Communism. Your Propaganda Ministry even dares to say that the good Germans who gave you their votes as the professed opponent of Communism are, in essence, identical with the Russians, those bloody revolutionaries who have plunged Russia into such misfortune and whom you yourself called "bloodstained common criminals" ("Mein Kampf", page 750).

When the greatest of all disasters occurred, that is, when Germany was once more plunged into a war, without Parliament or the State Council even being asked their opinion, I declared with all clearness that I most vigorously reject this policy.

Being a member of the Reichstag, it is my duty to express my view and also to stand for it. It is a crime against the German nation if their men and particularly their delegates behind whom you seek protection from world opinion, are no longer allowed to openly speak their minds. I do not submit to such force. I refuse to cover your actions with my name -- even though you declared in the Reichstag Session of September 1st, 1939: "He who is not with me is a traitor and will be treated as such."

I refuse to indorse the policy adopted of late and in particular as regards this war into which the German nation has been plunged so frivolously and for the horrors of which you and your advisers will be held responsible. As to the accusation of being a traitor, I am immune to it in view of my past life. In 1923, unarmed and not paying heed to the dangers threatening my life, I called into existence the Passive Resistance on territory occupied by the enemy, and thus saved the Rhein and the Ruhr. I stood before an enemy Court Martial and openly spoke my mind as a German. Now it is just this adherence to my belief that makes it impossible for me to abandon the true ideals and the original teachings of national socialism which as you pronounced yourself when you were at my house, was to lead back to the monarchy -- leadership by the Germans and

monarchy, in their essence, are identical -- and through social justice to permanent peace within the country. I may remind you that with such object in mind you charged me with erecting at Duesseldorf the Institute of the Guilds though, one year later, you completely relinquished the idea and you even permitted that the Chief of the Institute who had been appointed by me and in agreement with your Mr. Hess, was interned in your notorious concentration camp at Dachau. It was that same Dachau where my nephew had died suddenly. Of his castle, Fuschl near Salzburg, you made a present to Mr. von Ribbentrop who was not ashamed of himself to receive there the Foreign Minister of Italy's King and envoy of Mussolini.

I want to call to your mind also the fact that you surely did not delegate your Mr. Goering when calling in Rome on the Holy Father and at Doorn on the Kaiser, to get them both prepared for your impending alliance with communism. And yet you suddenly entered into this alliance and thus committed an act that nobody would have condemned more strongly than you did in your book "Mein Kampf", older edition, pages 740 - 750. There you said: "Thus in the fact of an alliance with Russia the directions for the start of the next war are already indicated. Its outcome would be the end of Germany!" Or: "The men at present in power in Russia do not ever think of honestly entering into an alliance and even less do they think of adhering to it." Or: "One does not however conclude a contract with a partner whose sole interest is the annihilation of

the other one. "

Your present policy is equal to suicide. Its beneficiary will be the Nazi arch-enemy of yesterday who is the Nazi friend of today -- unless the valiant Finns with their trust in God reverse all prophecies -- namely Bolshevist Russia; the same Russia in respect to which your intimate adviser, Mr. Keppler, Secretary of State in the Foreign Office and outstanding diplomat, said as late as May 1939, on the occasion of a session of the Central Committee of the Reichsbank that she must become German as far as the borders of the Ural. I do hope that these words so openly expressed by that trusted diplomat will not tend to weaken the strong impression your so sincerely meant birthday cable must have made upon your new friend Stalin.

Your new policy, Mr, Hitler, is driving Germany into an abyss and will result in the destruction of the German nation. Turn back as long as this is still possible. Your policy in its final stage will be a "finis germaniae." Think of the oath you have taken at Potsdam. Give back to the Reich a free Parliament, give back to the German nation freedom of conscience, freedom of thought, and freedom of speech. Procure the guarantees necessary for restoring their meaning to right and to law, and for laying the foundation upon which treaties and agreements can be built again and be trusted. Then it will certainly still be possible for Germany, if only further disaster is prevented, and useless bloodshed is stopped, to conclude an honorable peace that will save its unity.

World public opinion presses for an explanation of the reasons that prompted me to leave Germany. I have not spoken as yet. All the documents and writings produced during a struggle of more than 15 years will be kept secret. I do not intend, at a time when my fatherland is struggling so hard, to furnish the enemy with moral weapons. I am, and always shall be, German with all my heart, with all my thoughts and endeavors. I profess proudly and loudly my German nationality and shall continue to do so to my last breath. Just because I am German, I neither want, nor have a right at this moment when my people are in deepest distress, to speak up in public, though this might be the thing to do some day, for the sake of truth. But in my call I want you to hear the voice of the tormented German nation that cries out to you: "Turn back, let freedom, right and humanity rise again in the German Reich."

I shall keep silent, I shall wait to see what you are going to do; making it a condition however, that this letter will not be kept from the German people. I am waiting. Should the German nation however be kept in ignorance of my words, which are the words of a free and upright German, then I shall call upon the conscience of the world and shall let the world pass judgment. I am waiting.

"Heil Germany"

Fritz Thyssen

P.S. I am going to hand this letter over to the German Legation at Berne to forward it to you and, in addition, am sending a copy

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by registered mail to the Chancellery of the Reich at Berlin and another copy to your personal address at Obersalzberg near Berchtesgaden. I am forced to take such measures because it has been officially stated that my letters and telegrams addressed to Fieldmarshal Goering never reached him.

Copies will be received also by:

Fieldmarshal Goering, and Government President Reeder of Duesseldorf who decreed that my property be confiscated. Baron Kurt von Schroeder of Cologne, allegedly the present administrator of my property, will receive copy of the first paragraph of this letter.