The British government's reception of, and reaction to, information from intra-German opposition to Hitler and other sources, 1938-1939.

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Britain and German opponents of Hitler, 1930-1939.

ABSTRACT

From 1938 to the outbreak of war in 1939, German opponents of Hitler made numerous contacts with the British government. While the information sent came from a variety of sources, most of the reports landed on the desk of Sir Robert Vansittart, the former Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office. His "internal-exile" to the position of Chief Diplomatic Advisor, as well as his personality conflicts with his successor, Sir Alexander Cadogan, and Lord Halifax, led to inefficient use of the information received from Germany. German warnings of Hitler's plans and ambitions, when listened to at all, were awkwardly and ineffectively incorporated into British foreign policy.

RESUME

De 1938 à la déclaration de la guerre en 1939, des Allemands opposés à Hitler établirent des contacts avec le gouvernment britannique. Bien que ces renseignements provenaient de sources variées, la moitié des rapports étaient envoyés à Sir Robert Vansittart, le Chef-de-Cabinet [Permanent Under-Secretary] du Foreign Office. Trois raisons expliquent l'utilisation des informations allemandes: dans un premier temps, sa démotion au poste de Conseillé Diplomatique en Chef, ensuite ses différents avec son successeur, Sir Alexander Cadogan, et ceux d'avec Lord Halifax, son ancien patron. Les avertissements allemandes au sujet des projets futurs de Hitler, le fois qu'ils étaient pris en consideration, étaient mal intégrés aux politiques extérieures britanniques.

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Introduction

This thesis proposes to explore contacts made between the British government and German opponents to Hitler, from 1938 to the start of war in 1939. The topic at first seems quite specific, but conclusions, reached after examining these contacts and the nature of the British responses, by necessity are also conclusions which affect the debate on "Appeasement" policy as a whole. My interest in this topic came from first reading of the plans drawn up in the German army for a coup in the event of the outbreak of a reckless war in September, 1938. The "what might have been" has often been given the benefit of the doubt to become "what could have been"; i.e. the suggestion that a very real opportunity to avoid the war, and all its horrible consequences, had been squandered by blind, uncomprehending British statesmen. (This judgement has certainly been rendered in one of the most recent works on the subject, by Patricia Meehan, of which more will be said below.) For many, the debate on whether or not Appeasement was the best possible course of action open to the British has already been settled; Donald Cameron Watt tried to make sure of this with his How War Came. But the role of the German opposition was not really considered in reaching this judgement.

With the increasing amount of historiographic attention devoted to the resisters of the 20 July plot, the roots of the movement before the war (when the word "movement" might

perhaps be an overstatement) became a focus of interest. This, in turn, has led to the reopening of the Appeasement debate, taking into account information given to the British government from German opponents of the Nazi regime (both Klemens von Klemperer and Patricia Meehan published substantial books on this topic in 1992).

The historiography of this topic combines that of several others. First, with regard to German resistance to the Nazi government, works by Hans Rothfels, Gerhard Ritter and Peter Hoffmann represent the first major, successful attempts by German historians to place the field in its proper historical context. They do not, unlike Hans Bernd Gisevius or T.P. Conwell-Evans, seek to place blame for the failures of the movement on anyone. They are also a response to the histories of the Third Reich by Sir Lewis Namier, Sir John Wheeler-Bennett, and Sir Robert Vansittart. These British gentlemen truly opened the debate; they wrote what are essentially the victors' recollections of the past war, and its causes, and in the course of finding all Germans unequivocally guilty, they painted German resistance as entirely petty. John Wheeler-Bennett carries this to an extreme by lying about his contacts with Adam von Trott zu Solz, the idealistic and passionate young man whose efforts to defeat the evil which plagued his country led him to the

gallows.1 However, the German historians already mentioned challenge and diffuse the most scathing of criticisms well enough.

The topic, naturally, was pregnant with opportunity for graduate students. Two PhD theses are Henry Malone's biography of Adam von Trott zu Solz, and Carolsue Holland's work on contacts of the German resistance with foreign governments. Malone's biography is excellent. It places to rest, or ought to, the debate which arose after the war between David Astor, a friend of Trott's, and, among others, Christopher Sykes, who wrote an earlier, and patronising, biography of Trott, on his commitment to opposing the Nazi regime. Holland's thesis, on the other hand, was not very useful for the time frame of this study. It is superficial, often inaccurate, and incomplete. However, Holland performed one service for which I am grateful. She made extensive use of the actual case transcripts of Weizsäcker's Nuremberg trial (the USMT "ministries trial") which were deposited at Washington. The trials have been published in a greatly edited fourteen volume set, and the individual testimonies of witnesses such as Albrecht von Kessel, Theo Kordt and Erich Kordt do not appear. To the extent that I referred to Holland's thesis, it was mainly to points which she dug up from these files in Washington, and which did not

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1 Peter Hoffmann lists the contributions to the debate on Trott in "The Question of Western Allied Co-operation with the German Anti-Nazi Conspiracy", The Historical Journal 34, 2 (1991), p. 443, fn. 38.

appear in the published record of the trial. Katherine Sams produced an interesting and effective M.A. thesis on Adam von Trott zu Solz. Focusing on his activities in summer of 1939, her thesis is a good complement to Malone's.

The two more recent works by Klemens von Klemperer and Patricia Meehan were of great use to me for much of the same reason as Holland's thesis: Public Record Office microfilms of Foreign Office General Correspondence files (FO 371) and Private Papers (FO 800) were not available to me. Thus, as well, most of my references to these two works are to draw upon their citations of some of these files. Aside from this, though, both works have some strong and week points. Von Klemperer's book deals with the 'Search for Allies Abroad' from 1938-1945. Accordingly, his coverage of the two years prior to the outbreak of war is not as thorough as it could be. Furthermore, he makes many observations without adequate proof, and draws the occasionally odd parallel (describing, for instance, Ernst von Weizsäcker as Germany's version of Sir Nevile Henderson). Patricia Meehan's work is very well documented. She makes excellent and thorough use of the Public Record Office in building her argument. However, it is her argument's structure with which I have a problem. While impressively researched, Ms. Meehan's entire presentation of her facts is based upon a judgement of almost criminal negligence against the British government. Rather than exploring the facts and drawing conclusions from them, she presumes her conclusions, and

tailors her presentation to that presumption. Ms. Meehan, while listing some of the reports to Vansittart (the Head of the Foreign Office until 1938, and thereafter the Chief Diplomatic Advisor to the Government) sent by his "private detective agency" (the words of Vansittart's successor, and critic, Sir Alexander Cadogan) of Group-Captain (retired) Christie and T. Conwell-Evans, lists only those whose forecast turned out to be correct. She does not include reports, faithfully listed by Conwell-Evans after the war in his book None So Blind, which predicted events and actions by the Nazi regime which never occurred. In acoustic terms, Meehan has a case of selective hearing, drawing only the good predictions from the noise of all covert reports to Britain (many fantastically wrong) of the time. Should Britain have mobilised its fleet in response to the (wrong) report that Poland was to be invaded in the spring/summer of 1938? If it had, what would the response have been in Germany to this seemingly unprovoked act? Furthermore, could Britain have afforded to play a game of "chicken" with Hitler, when in fact the level of Britain's armaments precluded a conclusion to threats? While Meehan is not a historian (she is a retired journalist), she has attempted to write a history book; instead, she wrote out a debate which she was intent on winning. It is almost in the style of Wheeler-Bennett, but in the opposite direction.

In seeking to understand the thoughts of the British government at the time, the diaries of Oliver Harvey and Sir

Alexander Cadogan were essential. Unlike the unspecific, and self-indulging, memoirs of men such as Gladwyn Jebb, R.A. Butler, and Lord Halifax, the two diaries poignantly capture the essence of one of the central issues: Vansittart's place in the Foreign Office. The diaries are well supplemented by two biographies of Vansittart, by Ian Colvin and Norman Rose. Another work by Colvin, who was a journalist at the time and often near the centre of several important contacts between the British government and German oppositionists, contributes as well to understanding how Chamberlain's Cabinet functioned. Many other memoirs and biographies of both Germans and Britons were consulted, with some (such as Hans Bernd Gisevius's) contributing more than others (Hjalmar Schacht's) to the exploration of this topic.

It seems true that the further away we move from the war, the fewer prejudices and inherent convictions inhibit the younger generations of historians. Over fifty years have passed since the events of 1938 and 1939 led to war, but when Gerhard Ritter, and then Peter Hoffmann, wrote their accounts of the resistance to Hitler, the debate on whether the resistors were traitors or patriots was far from over. But as time progresses, fewer people maintain that they were traitors. In the same light, as time progresses, fewer people believe--or ought to believe--that Chamberlain's policy was criminally blind. I say "ought" because the opinion that the British acted within the bounds of reason for their time is one of the conclusions of this

thesis. This is not an exoneration; proof exists that Foreign Office personnel let their growing anti-German and anti-Vansittart biases affect their competence to some extent. However, it is equally apparent that they were not as bumbling as Meehan concludes.

The question "What if...?" is never spurious to serious academic discourse. As much as the historian has a responsibility to describe what happened, he inevitably passes judgment. Otherwise, all history texts would merely be chronological outlines of events. And while it is the historian's duty to remain as detached as he can in his presentation of his research, his opinions always come through. This should not be feared, for so long as the historian lets his exploration of facts lead to the conclusion of his opinion, he is not being negligent. On the other hand, historians who approach their topics with their conclusions already formed inevitably tailor the presentation of facts to support their convictions. The tendency to the latter, in recent years, is what this thesis attempts to correct.

The purpose of this thesis is two-fold. First, it seeks to provide as complete a listing as possible of all the contacts between German opponents to Hitler and the British government in 1938 and 1939. These include contacts made by individuals who later became more involved in the actual plots to rid Germany of Hitler. Also chronicled are

reports which reached Vansittart from his 'private detective agency'--from Christie and Conwell-Evans. Most of the early information received by Vansittart came from Christie and Conwell-Evans, and his use of their reports set the ground for how he would also use the increasing amounts of information coming from German resisters. And although, for the most part, their informants were not part of the anti-Hitler conspiracy, they have been included for the following reason: information from resisters such as Goerdeler, on the one hand, and Christie and Conwell-Evans, on the other, were directed almost exclusively towards Sir Robert Vansittart. But Vansittart made no distinction between the two sources in the application of his private intelligence service; both sources' information and prescriptions were passed along together to the rest of HMG.1 Thus, assessing the reaction of the British government to information from resisters who communicated with Vansittart is also the story of the reaction to Vansittart's memoranda and reports within the Foreign Office.

The listing of all the contacts is bulky, cumbersome, and narrative in nature, but the need for this has become apparent after viewing the deficiencies in other published works. To comment on a painting, one first ought to look at it in its entirety. Thus, the first two chapters will examine, respectively, the contacts made from the beginning of 1938 to the conclusion of the Munich Conference at the end of September of that same year, and then from Munich to

the outbreak of war, in September 1939. The year 1938 was chosen for the beginning of this thesis because the actual threat of war caused the resistance to focus and crystallize, as it had not before then, on attempts to reach the British government.

The resistance contacts with Britain are treated as the most important ones because Britain then had centre stage as leader of the Western nations. The resisters consequently directed most of their efforts toward the British. Finally, because after 1 September, 1939, resistance to Hitler entered into a new stage, and contact with Britain was collaboration with the enemy, the outbreak of war was chosen as the end point.

The third chapter will complete the second major aim of this thesis: to examine whether, with respect to German resisters' contacts made with Britain, the Second World War, as Patricia Meehan asserts, was indeed unnecessary. To do this, it will examine what evidence exists of the British government's response to the individual contacts, and draw conclusions from them.

The choice of a chronological framework for the examination of the contacts made by the German opponents of Hitler was made in order to avoid the historical pitfalls of hindsight. By examining both what information was passed along, and, where possible, the responses of the British government to it, the drama more naturally unfolds. In

choosing to follow a chronological framework, the main hindrance (which will cause unavoidable frustration to the reader) is that there will be overlap; the analysis of chapter three will take the reader back over the events described in chapters one and two. This is unfortunate, but necessary.

The difficulty in understanding how people outside a dictatorship perceive opponents within a dictatorship was captured well by Mr. Magee, the Defence Counsel for Ernst von Weizsäcker, in his opening remarks to the Nuremberg Tribunal, in 1948. It is a fitting way to begin this study.

> [R]esistance under dictatorship is not easy to understand, especially by persons who have not lived in a dictatorship [...We] who have grown up in the life and thought of a democracy at first believe that to bring about the fall of a dictatorship, you but need to speak your opposition. We at first believe that opposition should take the form of emigration or abstaining from all political activity. Persons who do not emigrate or [...] withdraw into a purely private life--which, incidentally, is non-existent in a dictatorship--seem compromised to us [...] 2

Chapter I: Contacts, from 1938 to Munich

The vast majority of unofficial information the British government received from Germany was directed to Sir Robert Vansittart. After serving as the Permanent Under Secretary (the top civil servant) of the Foreign Office, Vansittart was replaced by Sir Alexander Cadogan on 1 January 1938. Vansittart was strong-minded and did not wish to accept an out of the way diplomatic posting, away from the centre of power. To avoid a public rupture, a new position was created for Vansittart, that of Chief Diplomatic Advisor. In effect, however, his influence in the Foreign Office was greatly diminished.

Vansittart's most productive source of information was Group Captain (retired) Malcolm Grahame Christie. The two met when Vansittart was head of the American Department of the Foreign Office and Christie was the Air Attache in Washington, in the early twenties. Christie was next posted to Berlin as Air Attache from 1927 until 1930, when ill-health forced him to retire from government service. Christie then embarked upon a business career with Otto CokeOven Ltd., Leeds, which took him frequently into the Continent, where he maintained numerous friendships with colleagues in Germany, including Göring and the Inspector General of the Luftwaffe Erhard Milch.3 Christie and Vansittart maintained a close friendship throughout this time, and so it seemed only natural that Christie would pass

along any information he had concerning Germany to Vansittart. Most of information Christie received from his German friends was faithfully reproduced after the war by T.P. Conwell-Evans, a professor of history who was Secretary of the Anglo-German Fellowship, and who also translated for Lothian and Lloyd George on their visits to Hitler.4 Conwell-Evans formed the other half of Vansittart's detective agency, though the volume of information he supplied never approached Christie's output.

Much information was also sent to Vansittart from Karl Goerdeler. This former Mayor of Leipzig resigned in protest against Nazi policies. The incident he chose to resign over was the removal of a statue of Felix Mendelssohn, against his will, when he was out of town. Goerdeler became one of the most active oppositionists against the Nazi government.

Goerdeler's first role as a contact between the opponents of the Nazi Regime and the British came about as a result of his association with Robert Bosch, who headed a large electrical firm. After his resignation as Mayor of Leipzig, Goerdeler became an advisor for Robert Bosch. The anti-Nazi industrialist provided Goerdeler with a cover under which he could travel abroad. The original idea of maintaining contacts abroad outside of official channels came from Dr. Schacht. Interestingly, Göring also knew of Goerdeler's opinions, but allowed him to travel abroad anyway. 5

On January 14, Christie reported from Austria that there were rumours of an upcoming putsch tc occur in Austria, with the aim of effecting an Anschluss. He stated that it seemed as though the "Radicals" in the German Nazi Party were the most intent on "putting it over," despite, at most, a fifty percent approval rate for Anschluss in Austria. The only parts in Austria where a legitimate majority in favour of an Anschluss could be expected were in the regions bordering Germany.6 This report notes factionalism within the Party structure. Specifically, it describes the struggle as between Moderates and Radicals, with Hitler uncommitted; this perception of decision-making in Germany was reinforced through later reports.

Christie next wrote, on 3 February, about Goebbels's orders for the priority for spreading propaganda in the foreign press and the means to accomplish it. There were three ways in which this could be accomplished: (1) German capital investments in the Press of various foreign countries; (2) funds paid out with fair regularity to foreign editors and journalists; (3) emergency funds. The first category cost the German government roughly fifteen million marks per year. The second was supervised by the Organisation of Germans Abroad, and made payments, amounting to sixty million marks per year, through the Press Attaches of German Embassies and Legations. The third category was supervised directly by the Propaganda Ministry and paid out through Cultural Attaches for short term press coverage or

commentary (the amount reserved for this purpose was not mentioned).7

On 4 and 6 February, Christie reported to Vansittart the details of the Blomberg-Fritsch affair as related to him by a "high German official".8 Blomberg was disliked by the rest of the high command because he had failed to keep out Nazi influences out of the army. Symptomatic of this was Blomberg's failure to prevent the betrayal to the Gestapo of contacts between German and Russian generals. Thus, Christie related, the marriage of Blomberg to a woman with a questionable past was seized upon by the generals to oust the unpopular Blomberg. Faced with demands for his resignation, Blomberg fled to Italy with his bride for a vacation. In the meanwhile, the Nazi Party Radicals (Goebbels, Ribbentrop and Himmler) were angered by this display of boldness from the generals and sought to curb their audacity. Himmler planned to arrest a number of high ranking officers and accuse them of subversive activities, but the generals got wind of this plan in time to send troops to occupy the Prussian Ministry (Christie does not mention which)--a warning to Himmler. Enraged, Himmler turned to Hitler and stated that the generals were plotting against closer German collaboration with Mussolini, whereupon Hitler fired both Blomberg and Fritsch. However, Fritsch refused to leave his post, and on 30 January he forbade the army from participating in Nazi Party celebrations set for that day. It seemed a revolt was about

to occur, but Hitler summoned Fritsch to him, and got him to step down.(Christie was not informed of the homosexuality charges until his report of 10 March). Hitler then consolidated his position by abolishing the Reich War Ministry on 4 February.9

Christie went on to say that the Radicals in the party--Goebbels, Ribbentrop, and Himmler--had gained Hitler's support in the pursuit of an aggressive policy of provocation in foreign affairs in which the army would become a tool.10

On 10 March, Christie reported to Vansittart on German plans for foreign policy, as related by Ribbentrop's agent in Paris, Otto Abetz, to "his most intimate friends." The aim of the Nazi foreign policy would be the separation of Britain from France. Further: "Wir Deutsche sind die Anerben des Britischen Reiches", although the colonial question was not yet a priority. More important for the British, though, was Ribbentrop's observation that "Germany has got Italy well harnessed to its cart and only two events might cause Mussolini to try to break away: either bankruptcy and its internal consequences, or the conviction that Great Britain and France possess both greater combatant power than Germany and the will to use the same in a showdown."11 Furthermore, Christie reported that Hitler wanted to hasten the completion of the inevitable Anschluss, and that the charges against Fritsch were for homosexuality.12

Christie's March report to Vansittart also dealt with the question of Czechoslovakia in some detail. Göring, in a lecture on 8 February delivered to a select audience of senior officers of the army and air force and of "high officials in the War Industries Department", stated that Germany needed to conquer Czechoslovakia in order to sustain the economic drive to autarchy. Göring had recommended "einen baldigen Blitzkrieg" on Prague, and that it should occur during the spring or summer. "The Göring lecture was received with much applause by the Air Officers and economic experts, less heartily by the army staff," Christie wrote. The date of the attack was to be either spring or summer of that year--"the sooner the better." According to Christie's sources, Germany was receiving only one third of its monthly quota for iron and steel, and the line of defence facing France would not be completed until 1940.13

Soon after the 12 March Anschluss, while Goerdeler was in Britain to deliver a series of lectures, he transmitted to R.A. Butler (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign office) a summary of events to date. The main reason for the timing of the Anschluss, according to this report, was Hitler's desire to stave off the embarrassment of a court of honour revealing the complicity of the regime in the Fritsch-Blomberg affairs. Goerdeler believed that if the underhandedness of the regime in concocting the charges against Fritsch had been exposed, then there would be a real threat of an overthrow of the regime. Thus, the Supreme

Court of the Armed Forces was postponed until after the hastily decided upon Anschluss. After this victory, Hitler's position was stronger. Though Fritsch was exonerated, there was no possibility that an overthrow could occur.14

Later during Goerdeler's stay, he told the British Commissioner of International Chambers of Commerce that an overthrow of the regime was narrowly averted by the Anschluss, but that the army was "still ready to act given a suitable opportunity." In order to bolster the credibility of his cause, Goerdeler also dropped the name of von Brauchitsch as a leader of the conspiracy. Word of this indiscretion got back to the Gestapo in Germany, and the General was sufficiently outraged as to protest his innocence directly to Hitler, hoping to get Goerdeler in trouble while doing so. It seems that Schacht was able to intervene, however, by drawing from his British friends a letter stating that they had misunderstood Goerdeler. Schacht, interestingly, believed that Göring was somehow trying to protect Goerdeler throughout the Gestapo investigation of the incident.15

On 3 April, 1938, Goerdeler was supposed to meet Churchill by the arrangement of Bruening. But Goerdeler did not show up, as he had been warned by Reinhold Schairer (who had been warned, in turn, by Vansittart) that Mr. Anderson, at whose home the meeting was to occur, worked for the British Secret Service.16 However, Goerdeler did manage to

have a meeting with Vansittart. They had an unfortunate clash--Vansittart did not see much difference between Goerdeler's and Hitler's claims on the Sudetenland (peaceful versus warlike means in achieving the aim not having registered as a 'difference' in Vansittart's mind)--though even Jan Masaryk, the Czech Minister in London, later agreed with Goerdeler. Vansittart said Goerdeler was talking treason.17 Vansittart sent a report of this encounter to Halifax, who then passed it along to Chamberlain. Halifax commented that, although "Van[sittart] had a long interview yesterday with the usual highly-placed and patriotic German", the report of which he forwarded because "Van begged me to do so," the information warning against dangerous German adventures in Czechoslovakia was not important enough to "deflect us from any conclusions that we may reach on the main issues."18

On 2 May, Christie wrote to Vansittart to describe, again, the Nazis as being split into two factions. The first, consisting of Göring, Goebbels, and Himmler, wanted an invasion of Czechoslovakia before Hitler's 4 May meeting with Mussolini; "Britain will be glad to be able to say: there, it's done; we must accept facts.' France [...] will mobilise up to the Maginot Line but not cross the German frontier."19 The second group consisted of Ribbentrop, Auswartiges Amt, and the General Staff: they, on the other hand, felt an invasion was too risky at present. 20

The May crisis of 1938 was perhaps facilitated by the wild flow of rumours throughout the capitals of Europe. When Czechoslovakia accused Germany of massing troops for an attack, Britain and France immediately issued stern warnings. While Germany protested, probably honestly as far as timing was concerned, that no such aggression was planned, the European press trumpeted victory for the democracies, writing that Hitler had been forced to back down.

After the Czech scare of 21 May, Capt. Wiedemann, Hitler's aide-de-camp, sent word to Christie, who reported to Vansittart, that political actions by foreign governments were having an important effect on Hitler's decision-making, and that the successful application of more pressure could lead away from war. Wiedemann told Christie:

> It is the agreed opinion of various highly placed observers that any forthcoming political setbacks to the Nazi system or to the Fuehrer himself, would have the greatest influence and would accelerate the crisis which, since May 21st, would no longer appear to be avoidable.21

The crisis of leadership, which Wiedemann referred to, was hoped by "the Army"22 to push Hitler into a corner from which there would be no escape.23

On June 1, Christie reported to Vansittart that the German troops had not been withdrawn from the Czech border, and that the Auswartiges Amt had given false assurances to Britain's ambassador to Germany, Sir Nevile Henderson, on this point.24 A few days later, on 6 June, Christie also wrote of the effects of the 21 May Czech scare;25 he

reported that the crisis had enraged Hitler. He felt his authority in the eyes of the world and the German public had been weakened. Christie went on to report that the army High Command and Ribbentrop were trying edge Hitler on towards a rapprochement with Russia. They attempted to facilitate this ideological leap by stating that Bolshevism was rapidly becoming a kind of Russian Fascism.26

One week later, on 12 June, Christie sent in another report, dealing with rearmament. When Keitel had informed Hitler of difficulties in procuring resources for maintaining rearmament production, Hitler gave orders that the army was to have priority over all other projects. The transport system (which caused problems for the German army during the Anschluss) was to be free of deficiencies by 1 October, and the fortifications along the West Wall were to be completed by 1 November. All German resources, it seemed, were geared towards equipping the army.27

On 2 July, Christie reported that Göring's plans for an attack on Czechoslovakia in the spring-summer 1938 had now been changed, after a meeting with Hitler, for the autumn. In preparation for this, an S.S. General, Krebs, was to prepare to stir up riots from the beginning of August in the Sudetenland to provide the pretext for the invasion.28

Christie's next report to Vansittart, on 5 July, elaborated upon why the autumn was deemed to be a good time for the attack: (1) the relative superiority of the Luftwaffe over the British and French air forces would soon

end; (2) Spain could likely entangle and distract Britain and France; and (3) Germany could not wait long before Britain and France's influence over Hungary became too strong to counter.29 A few days later, Christie reported a telephone conversation with a friend in Germany who said that Chamberlain's 3 July speech at Kettering--on the horrors of war and the experience of 1914-18--served to convince the German government that Britain would delay long enough in reaching any decision in a crisis to ensure a German victory over the Czechoslovak armies.30

On 14 July, Christie reported that leaves of absence for members of the German "Combatant Forces" from 1 August onwards had been cancelled. He continued with a personal warning to Vansittart that Nazism was worse than Bolshevism, and this should be reflected in the priorities of the British government. The British should not be overconfident in consequence of the "success" of 21 May, and should not assume that a "gentlemen's agreement" would be honoured by Hitler longer than it was to his advantage.31

In mid- to late-July, Conwell-Evans started to get warnings from "well-placed Germans in the Foreign Office" of the upcoming dangers. He wrote that they shared to some extent the 'expansionist' aims of Hitler, but were worried about his recklessness in achieving his goals. Hitler was definitely planning to make war on Czechoslovakia in a few weeks time, and the British government should openly warn Germany, while at the same time "promote a solution of the

Minority question within the existing boundaries of Czechoslovakia."32

On 27 July, Christie reported that the moderates (the army, Neurath, and Ribbentrop) were well aware of the lack of reserves, foodstuffs and raw materials required for a long war. In response to King George VI's visit to Paris of 22 July, a morose Hitler, who had been on the verge of siding with the radicals but was still non-committal, declared that no action was to be taken until the major part of fortified lines in western Germany had been completed, and until Britain had been "coaxed out of supporting France in the event of an invasion of Czechoslovakia." Christie also reported that a "sham drive" designed to convince Britain of Germany's peaceful intentions was to begin with the visits to Lord Halifax of Capt. Wiedemann and Germany's ambassador to Britain, Herbert von Dircksen (formerly the ambassador to the Soviet Union).33

On August 6-7, 1938, Goerdeler sent the first of a series of memoranda to the British government through A.P. Young, a manager with a Rugby industrial concern who had met Goerdeler in 1937, who after the war named the messages the "X" Documents. This first report carried with it Goerdeler's urging for a firm stand on the part of the British. The German public, Goerdeler wrote, was in no mood for an unnecessary war. Goerdeler also included a brief outline of major personalities in the Nazi regime: Himmler was the only one who could influence a mad Hitler, while

Göring had lost favour for pushing for negotiation after the 21 May scare. Hitler was, further, planning dispose of all opposing generals within the next twelve months.34

On 7 August, Vansittart submitted a memorandum to the Foreign Secretary based on his intelligence reports from Conwell-Evans and Christie. He attempted to use them to draw a parallel to the British position in 1914, when, he argued, a clearer declaration of British intentions would have prevented war. Germany was hell-bent on getting its way by any means necessary and "only the strongest and clearest action on our part can prevent the catastrophe." Vansittart concluded his argument by stating: "If we leave Berlin under any further illusion where we shall stand in a European war, there will be a European war."35

On 10 August, Christie reported to Vansittart that the German military had begun to mobilise. "The Party leaders are at the moment quite sure that Great Britain will not move beyond verbal protests."36 Two days later, Christie supplemented his report with a letter received from "a German friend" in a neutral country. It stated that Germany had decided to attack Czechoslovakia after the close of the Nuremberg Party conference on 12 September. Furthermore, in addition to the 800 000 men currently under training in the German army, an additional 500 000 reservists and 500 000 Labour Service men were also to be called up from 15 August onwards for an indefinite length. Also, "Berlin is satisfied with the calm that prevails in Paris. [...] if

France remains passive, Berlin reckons that Great Britain and Russia will do likewise."37

On 17 August, the British Military Attache in Berlin, Col. Mason-Macfarlane transmitted to London information he had received from Capt. (ret.) Viktor von Koerber. War against Czechoslovakia in September had been decided upon by Hitler, with the full support of Göring, Himmler, Ribbentrop, Keitel, and Raeder. Neurath, Schacht, Brauchitsch and Weizsäcker were apparently devoid of any influence on decision-making. Koerber had learned, from friends in the army, that Germany was not capable of waging a major war for more than six weeks to two months. Further, the only way war could be avoided was through the overthrow of the regime. In most cases, relations between the army and the Party were marked by outward collaboration and inward hostility. However, the army was not yet ready for revolution; unless something "drastic occurred before the end of September, the army would march at Hitler's behest and nothing could avert calamity." Mason Macfarlane's own opinion of Koerber's information was that:

> I think it quite possible that his statements regarding the German government's intention to make war this autumn may be worthy of credence [...] That underground opposition to the Party exists; that this opposition has latterly grown; and that, as von Koerber says, it is better organized than we think, is quite possibly the case. But any bungling of an attempt to interfere from without with Germany's domestic politics during Hitler's lifetime would most assuredly lead to exactly what we all wish to avoid. 38

In mid August, Ewald von Kleist-Schmenzin met with Ian Colvin, European Correspondent of the News Chronicle.

Colvin later wrote that, during their meeting in a Berlin cafe, Kleist had told him the reasons for his forthcoming visit to London. "Bring me certain proof that England will fight if Czechoslovakia is attacked and I will make an end of this regime," were the words with which General Beck had allegedly despatched Kleist.39 On 18 August, 1938, Kleist arrived in London, at the instigation of Beck and under the auspices of Canaris, and bearing an introduction to Lord Lloyd written by Colvin. Kleist's purpose was to seek assurances that the British government did indeed intend to challenge Hitler, and to impress upon influential Britishers advice from the resisters in Germany: the British government should declare loudly its intention to resist any further aggression from Hitler.40

Kleist called first on Vansittart, who reported their meeting to the Prime Minister.41 Early into the conversation, Kleist made clear to Vansittart that war would become a certainty unless the British stopped it. Germany, Kleist said, did not believe the British claims of 24 March that they would stand by Czechoslovakia. On the contrary, the German government believed that neither Britain nor France had any intention of intervening. Kleist then spoke of the opposition of every single German general--even Reichenau--to a war. Kleist expressed surprise that Vansittart did not know already the planned date of German aggression--he assumed that it had already been given by other sources. When it became clear that neither Vansittart

nor Chamberlain knew of such a date, Kleist told him: "After the 27th September it will be too late." Furthermore, the British should hasten to make their intentions clear by the time of the Nuremberg Party Congress. Despite Vansittart's protestations that British policy had already been spelled out, Kleist told him that a still more explicit statement was needed.42

Kleist also saw Lord Lloyd, who reported to Halifax that Hitler intended to move on Czechoslovakia in the latter half of September:

> a German of considerable importance [...] came over here to warn me as to the gravity of the situation [...Kleist told Lloyd that] Today the German army was united and unanimously hostile to Hitler [...] If England and France today made a firm stand over Czechoslovakia they would strengthen [...] a general opposition to Hitler and his policy.43

Churchill was the third person whom Kleist saw, on 19 August. Their conversation revolved on much of the same ground as those with Vansittart and Lloyd. However, Kleist also expressed to Churchill that if some form of encouragement were given to the generals, they might refuse to march at Hitler's order. Churchill endeavoured to provide the encouragement needed by way of a letter to Kleist. In it, he stated: "It is difficult for the democracies in advance and in cold blood to make precise declarations, but the spectacle of an armed attack by Germany upon a small neighbour and the bloody fighting that will follow will rouse the whole British Empire and compel the gravest decisions." 44 He went on to quote from

Chamberlain's speech of 24 March as proof of Britain's intent not to take advantage of a destabilised Germany.45

On 21 August, the British Military Attache's report of 17 August was confirmed and supplemented: the German General Staff, it was now reported, was worried about the seeming passiveness of the British government. Germany's plans to attack assumed that the British and French would not intervene. Henderson added that he was sure that Koerber's "pronouncements are clearly biased and largely propaganda. There is, however, nothing illogical in the above information and in view of many other pointers it would be wise not to take it other than seriously." 46 The Military Attache had a row with Ambassador Henderson on this point, and ended up rephrasing Koerber's warning so that it suggested, on 24 August, that Hitler was the potential victim of the Radicals of the party.47

On 24 August, Conwell-Evans went to Berlin to confirm Christie's previous reports. On 29 August, he reported to Horace Wilson, the Chief Industrial Advisor to the British government and a close confidant of Chamberlain, and Vansittart that Germany was going to war. However: "If a firm declaration on our part is now accompanied by a good offer of home rule, German opposition to a risky war will become too strong for Hitler to disregard." He further believed that if Britain mobilized the Fleet in the North Sea, Hitler would hesitate. "The Nazis were quite unable to understand any warnings couched in the usual Parliamentary

language of Ministers; clear words must be accompanied by action." He gave his information to Halifax on 31 August.48

Also on 29 August, Christie's sources confirmed (from Otto Abetz's entourage in Paris) what Conwell-Evans was reporting. According to Abetz: "Had there only been a real government crisis in France, we should have been in Prague by now." And while the exact moment for action was still unknown to him, "Hitler will put forward grandiose propositions for world peace, pacts, etc." The rough time period was known, however: After the Nuremberg conference, but by mid-October.49 Vansittart again sent these reports from Christie to the Foreign Secretary. These showed that the German public had no desire at all for another war, and that a bold statement from Britain might force Hitler to forestall it.50

On 2 September, Lieutenant Colonel (retired) Hans Boehm-Tettelbach met with Julian Piggott (a former British Representative to the Inter-Allied Rhineland High Commission)51, Vansittart, and the some members of the Press Department of the Foreign Office. This was a follow up visit to Kleist's, and it was made at Halder's suggestion. Unfortunately for Boehm-Tettelbach, he made little if any impression on anyone.52

On 5 September, Susy Simonis--a cousin of the Kordts--arrived in Britain to deliver a message to Theo Kordt from Erich Kordt and Weizsäcker, who had decided that a direct

approach to the British government was necessary. The next day, Theo Kordt talked for two hours with Horace Wilson. Kordt informed Wilson that opposition to Hitler did exist, and was growing. It was convinced that Hitler was leading Germany to war, and believed the only way to avoid this was by being completely frank with British statesmen in the hope of better equipping them to deal with Hitler. "I [Kordt] told him [Wilson] that things were moving towards a decision one way or the other. If Great Britain wanted to help in achieving a reasonable solution of the Czechoslovak question [...] she must act quickly."53

As a result of this meeting with Wilson, Theo Kordt was taken to meet Cadogan, Halifax, and Chamberlain at Number 10 Downing Street on 7 September.54 In the course of the discussion, Kordt told them the exact details of Hitler's resolve to go to war and the dictator's confidence that he would not have to face intervention from Britain or France over Czechoslovakia. Kordt also told them, as he told Wilson the day before, of the existence of an opposition to Hitler's course towards war. "Should [...] Hitler persist in his bellicose policy, I am in a position to assure you that the political and military circles I am speaking for will 'take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them.'"55

Also in early September, Carl Burckhardt, the Swiss historian who was the League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig, was busy on behalf of the opponents to the Nazi

regime. On 31 August, Burckhardt had a disturbing conversation with the Gauletier of Danzig. Forster spoke "openly of the forthcoming German attack on Czechoslovakia, in the course of which he said Prague would be laid in ruins in a few hours by successive attacks by 1, 500 bombing planes." Burckhardt went to Berlin to tell this to Weizsäcker, who was not surprised: "[T]hose are exactly the ideas of the Fuehrer."56 Weizsäcker told Burckhardt of attempts made by Beck, Admiral Horthy, and Weizsäcker himself to speak plainly to Hitler about the fallacy of his plans. Beck had resigned, Horthy walked out after being screamed at, and Weizsäcker was not listened to. Thus, Weizsäcker asked Burckhardt to get a message to the British of what was happening. Burckhardt immediately drove 900 kilometres directly to Berne, awakened Sir George Warner, the British Minister at Berne, and got him to send a telegram to Lord Halifax the next morning. Burckhardt followed this up with a phone call to R.A. Butler to reiterate Weizsäcker's views. Still unsure that the full weight of the situation was being accurately reported to London, Burckhardt went to the British representative to the League of Nations, Skrine Stevenson, and asked him to send a letter to London containing every detail of information, which Stevenson did.57 Weizsäcker had "come to the conclusion that the only method of bringing Hitler to see the truth would be a personal letter from the Prime Minister showing that if an attack were made by Germany on

Czechoslovakia, a war would start in which Great Britain would inevitably be on the opposite side to Germany." Weizsäcker also inquired as to the possibility of a visit by General Ironside (but definitely NOT Chamberlain) to Hitler.58

On 11 September, Goerdeler sent another "X" document to the British government through Young. Hitler was bent on an aggressive policy towards Czechoslovakia because he still believed that Britain and France were bluffing when they professed support. Goerdeler also described the growing dissent in some quarters of the General Staff. The conclusions that Goerdeler had reached were that: (a) Hitler was still determined to go to war; (b) the decisive moment for the British to act was now; (c) the issue of Czechoslovakia would be determined from 11 to 21 September; (d) the British reaction should be "All or Nothing".59 In the event of a "Nothing", Britain should, wrote Goerdeler, carry out the policy quickly, despite the irreparable loss of prestige which the Empire would suffer. If it chose "All", then Parliament should be immediately summoned and Chamberlain should make a firm and open pronouncement to Germany and the world.60 These two events would have a momentous impact on Hitler, and cause him to think twice about Britain's resolve. However, despite his urging for a firm stand, Goerdeler stated that all outstanding questions could also be settled by negotiation with the German government. (In effect, what happened.) This document was

passed to Vansittart on 13 September, and Anthony Eden (who had no official standing at the time, but was still considered a man of influence) and Horace Wilson on 14 September.

Also on 11 September, however, Christie reported on Hitler's intentions as given by Capt. Wiedemann. According to Wiedemann, Hitler had stated: "We must over-run Czechoslovakia as soon as possible, and it must be done with such speed that we are in Prague on the fifth day. Next year it is France's turn; the year after, we have to settle Britain and then my world Empire will be completed."61 Wiedemann also reported to Christie the planned dates for the upcoming attack--mustering of the forces to be used in the attack was to occur on 15 September, and the actual march into Czechoslovakia would follow in the days from the 24th to the 26th September. At a conference of the commanding generals at the end of August, Hitler had, according to Wiedemann, said: "I personally guarantee that in the event of a conflict between us and Czechoslovakia, England and France will not attack, because such an attack will have been made impossible for them by means of 'provocations' from the Czech side. I have arranged for these 'provocations'."62

On 13 September 1938, Henderson dined with several German Foreign Office officials, but without Ribbentrop: Some of them "talked a lot of treason" and Weizsäcker was "blackly pessimistic". They tried to convince Henderson of

the necessity of delivering a clear warning. When Henderson asked if anything further could be done to accomplish this, Weizsäcker morosely replied that nothing in the warning should be omitted.63

Also on 13 September, Albrecht von Kessel, the counsellor who was personal assistant to Weizsäcker, met the Second Secretary of the British Embassy in Berlin. His purpose in doing so was to attempt to counter Henderson's opinion that Hitler did not want war.64

Also on that day, Theo Kordt met with Vansittart. He was seeking a genuine gesture of strength from the British against Hitler. Kordt, at Weizsäcker's initiative, again requested that Ironside, who was "1 meter, 92 centimeters tall and who looked like a strictly military man"65, be sent to Germany to carry a message. Kordt also sent Weizsäcker's advice that the British fleet be mobilized.66

On 14 September, Conwell-Evans submitted a report to Vansittart concerning his recent trip to Germany. From 6 to 9 September, Conwell-Evans had met with German Foreign Office officials who were confused by the British government's actions. They had informed the British government, they said, many times that Hitler was going to attack Czechoslovakia--why had Henderson conveyed no warning to the German government since his arrival at Nuremberg? At the behest of his German Foreign Office friends, Conwell-Evans called on Henderson on 7 September. "It took me an hour and a half to convince him that Hitler had taken the

decision to invade Czechoslovakia in a fortnight or so. He approved my returning at once to give Halifax what news I had gathered. But he kept insisting that we should bring pressure to bear on the Czechs to give way and deprecated our employing too firm a tone towards the Germans."67 As well, Conwell-Evans was able to report that Germany did not have more than two months' supplies of petrol stocked up, and that the fortifications in the west were far from complete, some parts consisting practically of nothing but barbed wire. At the end of his trip, Conwell-Evans was also told by his friends of Henderson's meeting with Weizsäcker: Henderson told the Secretary of State that he, Henderson, informed the British Cabinet that Hitler had not decided on war, that he did not belong to the war party.68

That same day, 14 September, Hassell, Germany's former ambassador to Rome, met Henderson for dinner, in Berlin. He attempted, at the urging of Weizsäcker, to convince the British ambassador that a warning ought to be sent to the British about German aims.69

When Goerdeler, on 15 September, learned of the trip by Wilson and Chamberlain to Berchtesgaden, he wrote to Young warning against any further concessions to Hitler. To make sure his point was understood, Goerdeler wrote to Young again the next day, giving the same warning.70

On 19 September, Vansittart and Theo Kordt met again. Kordt tried to get Vansittart to commit the British government to put pressure on the Italian government, which

wanted no war until 1942 at the earliest.71 This had some effect, for on 21 September, Lord Perth, Britain's ambassador in Rome, tried to apply pressure on Attolico, Italy's ambassador in Berlin.72

On 21 September Goerdeler sent Young a letter showing his despair at the way events were shaping up:

> When I wrote last time, I was convinced there would be mixed with reasonable concessions also the necessary demand for a strong guarantee of lasting peace. That has not been done [...] Concessions alone will never satisfy dictators; on the contrary they will make them ever more hungry. You will see this in the next time [...] It is not my task to think for the British Empire."73

This letter was passed along to Vansittart, who also received from Theo Kordt, on the 27th of September, German plans for the evacuation of the Sudetenland by Czechoslovakia (a "preliminary draft" for the plan submitted to Attolico by Weizsaeker and Göring on 28 September).74

On the eve of the Munich Conference, Goerdeler placed a phone call to the British Foreign Office from Switzerland to tell them that Hitler had backed himself up against a wall, and that they should not give an inch to him. "See that you keep the responsibility for any use of force on [Hitler's] shoulders."75 Furthermore, the British should really take advantage of the fact that Hitler was in a difficult position and demand more concessions from Germany than just a peaceful solution to the Sudeten question; "carrying on with full blast" with propaganda on Britain and France's willingness to use force might be enough to push Hitler into accepting a conference on collective guarantees and

limitations of armaments.76

On 29 September, 1938, Christie passed along a report from a friend of his in the German Press. It stated how Goebbels had instructed his press, on the night of the 27th, to publish the fact that the German army was to be mobilized the next day. However, when news of the mobilisation of the British Fleet came in around midnight that same evening, Goebbels suddenly called together the press to cancel his instructions. This was indicative, it seemed to Christie's informant, of the effect which the mobilization of the British Fleet had on the Nazi leadership. They did not, until then, believe that the British might indeed mean business after all.77 As Conwell-Evans was told a fortnight later, the mobilisation of the Fleet was the second of two incidents which convinced Hitler to stay the invasion orders. Earlier that same day, the 27th of September, a march past of army units along the Wilhelmstrasse was met with complete silence from the crowds of Berlin, who thought the troops were going off the war. William Shirer captured the moment well in his diary:

> I went out to the corner of the Linden where the column was turning down the Wilhelmstrasse, expecting to see a tremendous demonstration. I pictured the scenes I had read of in 1914 when the cheering throngs on this same street tossed flowers at the marching soldiers, and the girls ran up and kissed them. [...] But [the Berliners] ducked into the subways, refused to look on, and the handful that did stood at the curb in utter silence [...] I went down to have a look [at Hitler in the Reichschancellery ...] Hitler looked grim, then angry, and soon went inside, leaving his troops to parade by unreviewed. What I've seen tonight almost rekindles a little faith in the German people. They are dead set against war.78

Chapter II: Contacts, from Munich to War

Soon after Munich, Goerdeler sent a report through Dr. Schairer on the situation in Germany. A bad precedent had been set, and any further yielding on the part of the West would make the conspiracy that much less likely to succeed. Vansittart also received a letter from "a German friend in close touch with the Officer Corps" which outlined the difficulties of resistance in post-Munich Germany. "No senior officer feels that he can criticise Hitler's foreign policy because he can no longer prove that he is steering a dangerous course."79

On 7 October, Conwell-Evans reported: "The Nazi leaders now feel that the threat of immediate war has disappeared." The only weapons available to the Western states--open intervention and war--were believed to be rendered impossible by the "recent obvious revival of a pacifist outlook." Furthermore, the German government believed that the loose ties within the British Empire would make a strong British response unlikely. Ribbentrop was reported to have said: "Last Friday, September 30, Mr. Chamberlain signed the death warrant of the British Empire [...] We Germans will inherit the British Empire [...] piece by piece, merely by coaxing with persuasive words." 80

The next day, 8 October, Theo Kordt met with Vansittart and Conwell-Evans to discuss the post Munich situation. Kordt explained that one way to exploit the peaceful desires

of the German people while bypassing Hitler and Goebbels was to make a "positive plan for European recovery", to include the participation of the United States and the Soviet Union.81 Kordt carried on the discussion the following day with Sir Horace Wilson, but to no great conclusion.82

On 15 October, Vansittart received a lengthy report from Young of a meeting with Goerdeler in Switzerland. To impress the recipient of this information, Young was instructed to state that Goerdeler was speaking "on the authority of the German Generals."83 He started off by stating that the British had to make some sort of stand against Hitler by the end of 1938. Otherwise, Goerdeler would "leap on the bridge and try to influence the course to be taken" by joining the regime as an official and sabotaging the process from within.84

Hitler was now bent on total European domination, and Goerdeler outlined the four steps of his conquest plan: (1) more intense activity in Spain; (2) a determined effort to help Italy conquer the North African sea-board west of Libya, so that Gibraltar would be in complete isolation; (3) Mussolini would stir up troubles in Palestine and in the neighbouring Arab states, forcing Britain to commit more resources; and (4) Japan would attack and overrun Hong Kong, and then turn its attention to New Zealand and Australia.85 Goerdeler's prescription for combatting this trend was the calling of a world conference for peace, to ask the dictators what precisely their grievances were. And since

between "gentlemen and gangsters collaboration is simply impossible", the conference "must be done in full sight of the peoples--published notes, radio, press, parliaments." This way, if the dictators raised their demands, there would be no question as to who the true aggressors were.86 Goerdeler's memorandum was an emotional appeal to avoid a war of nerves in which, he believed, every land would succumb to internal revolution, and the dominance of the white races would be in mortal danger.87

Goerdeler contacted Young again soon thereafter, urgently requesting that he come to Switzerland. Young's business concerns rendered him unable, but he sent Schairer to meet with Goerdeler instead, on 6-7 November. The record of their meeting was sent back to Young, who passed it along to Frank Ashton-Gwatkin, the Economic Counsellor of the Foreign Office, on 10 November. Goerdeler turned to describing the financial problems of the Reich: "X [Goerdeler] is in possession of all the facts proving that the internal debt has recently increased by 14,000 million marks. The total internal debt of Germany, as estimated by X, has now reached the figure of 45,000 million marks."88 With regard to Italy, Goerdeler reported that "[Mussolini] was in a critical mood during the [Munich] crisis. He saw the danger. He was moving towards reason, but the great success of the Munich bluff had increased the power of the extremists in Italy."89 In addition, Goerdeler was also convinced that the shaky financial foundations of both

Germany and Italy would collapse by April 1939, and for that reason it was imperative that the Western powers act before desperation hit the dictators.90

In early December, Eugen Diesel (son of the famous engineer), warned Conwell-Evans of experiments being made in Germany with rockets. These were to be launched against Britain from the Dutch and Flemish coasts. Also, Norway had been added to Hitler's list of countries to be conquered.91

On 4 December, A.P. Young, at the behest of Ashton-Gwatkin, went to Zurich to meet with Goerdeler. He submitted his report of their conversations on 6 December which contained Goerdeler's "9 Points."92 He described how, in the Balkans, Hitler would not be as successful as he had been to date; that Italy's army was in a sad state; that Switzerland would be Hitler's first objective,93 but that Holland and Belgium were also in trouble; that military plans were being drawn up for action against the Ukraine,94 to be mobilized at the same time as against the Swiss and the Dutch. In short, according to Goerdeler, Hitler believed now that anything was possible for him.

On 19 December, with the aftermath of Munich still heavy upon their minds, Theo and Erich Kordt met with Vansittart and Conwell-Evans at the latter's home in London. The brothers were thinking of resigning, but both Vansittart and Conwell-Evans implored them not to. At Erich Kordt's request, too, Vansittart arranged for British visas to be issued to certain Germans who were in danger. After this

meeting, Erich Kordt left for a cruise to South America to re-think things and recuperate from the strain of the previous few months.95

Finally, also in December 1938, Vansittart asked Conwell-Evans and Christie to prepare summaries of their information to date, which they did (Conwell-Evans on 26 December, Christie on 4 January).96

On 6 January, Christie, relying again on information from his German sources, reported to Vansittart that Hitler wanted to attack Russia in the spring. He was persuaded to wait, Christie wrote, by the arguments of the General Staff: if two pincers, one from the Baltic towards Leningrad, and the other via Rumania towards Kiev, were to succeed, Germany would have to either have the cooperation, or obedience, of Poland. Therefore, Poland was to be given the choice to go along, or it would be attacked. Hitler also reiterated an earlier order that if the British Fleet were again mobilized, the army would have to be ready to over-run Holland in eighteen hours. And also with regard to Britain, Christie reported that talks had been begun with Japan to explore the possibilities of a combined submarine blockade of Britain in an emergency.97

On 15 January 1939, Vansittart directed a report called "Memorandum based on most trustworthy information received before January 15th, 1939" to Orme Sargent, Assistant-(later Deputy-) Under Secretary of State in the Foreign

Office. The report was from Goerdeler, who sent it to Schairer, who in turn dictated it to Young.98 It described the economic situation in Germany as perilous, but also reported that Hitler had finally been impressed by the severity of the problems. Hitler's military plans to attack the Ukraine were a cover for an offensive against Switzerland and Holland. These two countries would be occupied, but not integrated into the Reich; they would thus provide security that the Western powers would address Germany's "life problems"--namely, colonies, loans, raw materials, and world markets. At the same time, France, being menaced on so many sides, would collapse internally.99

On 26 January, 1939, Lieutenant-Colonel Gerhard Helmut Detloff Graf von Schwerin met with the British Assistant Military Attache in Berlin, Major Kenneth Strong. The German officer began by stating that another crisis was certain to occur, and he hoped that the British would be more firm in response to Hitler this time. Nazi Germany's aims were, simply, "world domination."100

From the end of January through to early February, both Christie and Conwell-Evans reported that Hitler's attention had shifted westwards to France. On 25 January, Christie reported that Hitler believed that, with Italy's assistance, Germany could "force the hand of France, separate her from England by internal disruption from within and pressure from without, and attach her as a new 'Fascist' State to the Axis."101 On 28 January, Conwell-Evans confirmed Christie's

report, and added: "One of the ideas is to make of France a 'greater Czechoslovakia,' that is, a country which is to be disrupted internally"--afterwards would come the isolation of Britain from it.102 Christie then informed Vansittart, on 1 February, that German technical troops had indeed been introduced into the Italian army.103

In January 1939, a Foreign Office memorandum was written called "Possible German Intentions", based on reports from Goerdeler, Young, Christie, and Conwell-Evans. It stated that, before the Munich Conference of 30 September, Hitler had made plans to back down from his demands. Christie, too, made reference to the aborted putsch of the Germany army:

> The German people, as distinct from the regime, are a factor on which the British government must continue to rely, but more effectively than was done during the crisis of September. It was then felt that a firmer stand, while still effective in avoiding war, would have placed Hitler in a position where he might have lost the confidence of the German people, and would have permitted action to be taken against him.104

The memorandum's basic message was that Britain should not be fooled into thinking that the worst was over. It also predicted the steps by which Czechoslovakia would be destroyed.105

On 7 February, Christie reported that the Nazi Party officials were very optimistic about the moral collapse of the French. The Germans were also counting on the British not intervening with much energy. If both occurred, they believed, an agreement with the USSR would be possible by the end of the year. "At all events a German-Russian Treaty

is to be concluded, and abuse of Russia has recently been much more subdued in the German Press."106

On 20 February, Conwell-Evans made his last trip into Germany. He met with some of his informants of the Auswartiges Amt in a Berlin suburb, and was told that Hitler had made a decision two or three days earlier to finish off Czechoslovakia soon. The pretext for the invasion was to be bogus revolts by Slovakians, to whose assistance the Wehrmacht would come. With regard to Britain, Conwell-Evans was informed that both Hitler and Ribbentrop were hostile towards the British, and had no desire to enter into any attempts at negotiation. Hitler had also declared his task as to stave off starvation of the German people.107 This he would accomplish in one of two ways--the development of export trade on a larger scale, or territorial expansion. Hitler's plans for the Ukraine and Holland, so prominent just a month earlier, had been temporarily shelved. Hitler's quick changes of focus had also caused some strain in the General Staff, which was being asked constantly to come up with new plans for new targets, only to have them ignored. Conwell-Evans learned from Dr. Schmidt, Hitler's interpreter, that "the impression of British weakness dies hard." Conwell-Evans also lunched with Ribbentrop, Werner Lorenz (second in rank to Himmler in the S.S.), and Walther Hewel (the liaison official between Ribbentrop and Hitler), during which Ribbentrop "raised his voice at certain moments to an embarrassing degree [...] warning not to be interested

in future in such a matter [as Czechoslovakia] if we [Britain] wished to avoid trouble."108 Conwell-Evans also gained the impression that Roosevelt was "a thorn in the flesh. He was abused by Ribbentrop as the mouthpiece of Judah."109 Finally, and this was important for prospects of opposition to the regime, Conwell-Evans noted that traditional Foreign Office civil servants were being replaced by Nazis, and that thousands of Himmler's S.S. Black Guards officers had been added to the army. Those who remained in the Foreign Office worked under increasing strain and suspicion.110

On 24 February, Christie wrote of the German search for a suitable pretext for invading Czechoslovakia. Also included in this report to Vansittart was a copy of a speech given to senior officers and officials of the War Ministry by Ribbentrop on February 16 or 17 (Christie wasn't sure which). Ribbentrop expanded on the theme of separating France from the Western democracies. He also admitted that the Fuehrer was temporarily foiled by British policy success in Yugoslavia (the fall of the Stoyadinavich) and Hungary (the fall of Imredy). And while Ribbentrop was uneasy about the upcoming visit of Col. Beck to London, "the Fuehrer has no intention of permitting himself to be slowly checkmated by these manoeuvres of British diplomacy."111 Ribbentrop also told his audience of the demands placed by Hitler on the Czechoslovak foreign minister Chwalkowsky: (1) the handing over of all the gold stocks of the State Bank to the

Reichsbank for safe-keeping; (2) the State Bank must underwrite a loan of half a million milliards gold Marks to the German government, to be guaranteed by the Czechoslovak government; (3) the reduction of Czech forces further than has been done, and the right of the German government to occupy fortresses on Czechoslovak territory. Chwalkowsky replied that the proposals were unacceptable, but that he would return with counterproposals. If these were not satisfactory to Hitler, Ribbentrop said, a short ultimatum would follow. The entire speech, as taken down by General von Kluge, was sent in Christie's report to Vansittart.112

In February 1939, Kessel, acting on Weizsäcker's instructions, sent a message to the British government through the Austrian Banker Erwin Schoeller asking for someone like Ironside to be sent to deal with Hitler. 113

On 12 March, Christie reported that the German army planned to occupy Prague between 12 and 19 March. His information came from an official in the German War Ministry. This time, according to Christie's informant, both the army General Staff and the Nazi government were in agreement that there would be no involvement by Britain. Indeed, recent trade negotiations between Britain and Germany--by a delegate of the Federation of British Industries--was being regarded as weakness. The successful invasion of Czechoslovakia was also hoped to demonstrate to Mussolini once and for all that Hitler was worthy of his confidence.114

On 16 March, Young met with Goerdeler in London. The record of their meeting, "The next Practical Steps", was sent to Vansittart. Goerdeler, Young reported, placed more faith on foreign intervention and pressure than on an internal uprising of some kind. "To free the world from its present paralysis the spell of Hitler must be broken by the weight of stronger forces [...] If the dictators tip the scales in favour of the use of force then the Powers in the peace front should hit them at their weakest point, the Mediterranean. Once the Axis is broken the German people will quickly rid themselves of their tyrant."115 Specifically, he prescribed non-recognition of the conquest of Czechoslovakia; a recall of the British ambassador; a recall of British trade representatives and industrialists and the organisation of a Conference of the Democracies, if simply to expose Hitler's evil before the world and the German public.116 Goerdeler also believed that the repercussions of the invasion of Czechoslovakia in Germany might be the death knell to the Nazis.117

On 26 March, Theo Kordt reported to Vansittart of German designs on Poland. Vansittart then informed Kordt that, as a result of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Britain had decided to issue a guarantee to Poland in the near future. This caused Kordt some concern: If Hitler did not believe in the guarantees, Germany would again seek its own solution with the Polish. And with the guarantee, the Poles would become obstinate and Germany would plunge Europe into

war.118 Kordt also told Vansittart of Hitler's plans to attack Poland, without hesitation, should Poland not accede to Hitler's plans.119

On 29-30 March, Ian Colvin conveyed a message from Ewald von Kleist (at the behest of Beck and Oster) to the British government. Colvin spoke first with Cadogan, and then Halifax and Chamberlain. He told them of Kleist's information that Germany definitely intended to resolve the Danzig and Polish Corridor questions by attacking Poland in September.120

In mid-March 1939, Goerdeler met with Schairer, Schacht and Gisevius in Ouchy, in Switzerland. Schairer reported on the meeting to British government [see footnote 2, below] upon his return to London a few weeks later. A major concern of Goerdeler's was that the British must believe that the Danzig conflict would begin in the autumn at the latest. 121 Goerdeler then outlined steps which the British and French could follow to show their displeasure with Hitler: not sending congratulations on his fiftieth birthday, trying to organise a boycott on raw materials coming from the United States and South America to Germany to prove to German business leaders the seriousness of the predicament into which Hitler was leading them.122 Goerdeler then went on to outline a four-point programme:

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2 None of Klemperer, Young, Gisevius, Holland, Schacht, or Ritter mention who Schairer passed along his information to. (Meehan does not even mention the episode). If past practice may be taken as precedent, it is likely the report was sent to either Vansittart or R.A. Butler.

(1) the question of the Polish Corridor should be resolved by a peaceful compromise between Germany and Poland, and Germany should be given colonial lands overseas; (2) Czechoslovakia with the frontiers agreed to at Munich should be restored and guaranteed internationally; (3) an offer of German military help would be extended to Britain and France to restore fully the economic position of the West in the Far East; (4) Germany should receive a loan of six milliards in gold for the protection of her currency without interest with a two per cent repayment obligation.123

During Schacht's stay in Switzerland, he also met with Montagu Norman, of the Bank of England, in Basle. According to Gisevius, the purpose of the discussion was "to describe to [Norman] the psychological atmosphere in Germany after Prague and to persuade him that the British government should now undertake the necessary clarifications."124

On 4 April, Christie reported on Hitler's foreign policy plans. His informant ("an absolutely trustworthy source") reported to Christie on 28 March of the contents of a speech made by Hitler to senior army officers shortly before the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Germany had "two deadly enemies--England and Soviet Russia." England was deemed the most dangerous; whatever transpired in the East, the "reckoning with England could not be postponed much longer and would probably be taken during this year 1939." The creation of a German World Empire was Hitler's sole aim. Much of the remainder of Hitler's speech served notice of

the tactics by which he would accomplish his goal. "It was lucky that certain English politicians believed that [Hitler] would be shortsighted enough to try to force a settlement with Russia first and that England would be spared to play the part of a happy onlooker. On the contrary [...] Germany's road to Asia lay through London."125 Christie's source also provided much information after a long conversation with Wilhelm Keppler, State Secretary for special duties in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who stated: "The Fuehrer never said that he did not intend to conquer a great deal more than was taken from Germany twenty years ago."126

In May, Goerdeler was received in London by Churchill, and told the latter about the nature of opposition in Germany. He did not, oddly, offer prescriptive advice or make demands on British policy in the event of a German revolution.127 On the 6th, however, he did give a warning of the Nazi-Soviet talks.128 He gave news that "the German Generals had received a new and unexpected offer [likely the terms of the Non-Aggression Pact] from the Soviet Union which might entirely change the situation."129

On 18 May, R.A. Butler informed Theo Kordt that Britain was entering into negotiations with the Soviets. It was at this time that Kordt told Butler of Weizsäcker's role in the opposition.130 Kordt flew directly to Berlin to report to Weizsäcker the information Butler had told him.131

Also on 18 May, Christie reported to Vansittart that Germany was planning to mobilise against Poland any time from the middle of June to August. Furthermore, "some disgruntled Czech personage taking his revenge for Munich" (General Sirovy) passed along to him the actual terms of negotiation between Germany and the USSR: "(1) Poland to be divided up between Russia and Germany; (2) Russia to take Bessarabia from Rumania with German aid; (3) Russia to dominate the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus with German aid; (4) Germany undertakes to give Russia military support in an invasion of British India."132 Proof of the improving relations existed in recent visits by Russian officers to German armament factories.133

By 23 May, Christie was able to report to Vansittart that much of the credit for the German-Russian rapprochement was to be given to the German Charge d'Affaires in Moscow, von Tippelskirch. His good relations with individual Russians, including Stalin, were what accounted for the lack of anti-German commentary in a speech that Stalin delivered on Communist Party Day in March. Hitler had also gone out of his way to woo the General Staff: General von Hammerstein-Equord was even asked if he would take over the ambassadorship in Moscow should the need arise. In addition to the overtures to Russia, the German press was ordered in early May to adopt a moderate tone towards Stalin and the USSR.134

In the last week of May, Helmuth von Moltke, who was studying for his Bar exams in London (and hence not very involved with the resisters at this point), met with his friend Lionel Curtis to warn him of the possible repercussions of Britain's blank cheque to Poland with regard to Danzig.135

During the first week of June, Adam von Trott zu Solz travelled to Britain; his cover was provided by Hewel, who commissioned Trott to sound out general opinions in Britain.136 Trott's true purpose was to meet, via his connections with the Astors', many prominent figures of British public life at the Astor home, Cliveden. Trott had been a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, where he met David Astor. He had just finished a tour around the world, and returned to Germany after Munich. Like Moltke, Trott represented the younger group of German opponents to Nazism who were sometimes frustrated by the attitudes and opinions of elder resisters. Trott's connections with the Astor family, as well as the remarkable impression he made on most people he met, allowed him to be taken with much more seriousness than was usually accorded a man of his age.

Among the guests at Cliveden was Lord Halifax, and Trott spent much time discussing the situation in Germany with him. Trott urged him to unequivocally state, in public, Britain's intention to stand by Poland. Trott's other goals were to gage British reaction to possible German negotiations over Poland and Czechoslovakia; to warn the

British that the Soviets and Nazis had entered into talks; and to tell of the existence of active opposition to Hitler in Germany.137 Trott endeavoured to convince the British of the seriousness of the opposition and its ability to actually carry out a putsch. What was needed now was time, and for this reason Trott asked that a political alternative to war be put forward by the British next time a crisis occurred (to win time for the opposition). While he was listened to, and while he did make a decent impression, Halifax was not inclined to take Trott's prescriptions to heart. On 7 June, Trott was taken to see Chamberlain, with whom he discussed many of the same points.138

Also in June 1939, Carl Burckhardt passed along to the British League of Nations representative in Basle--Makin--a message from Weizsäcker: The best way to proceed with Germany was to just barely keep negotiations open--"un silence menacant." Otherwise Ribbentrop would be able to argue that the British were wavering and would not march. Burckhardt himself was unable to convince Ribbentrop that the British would indeed march for Poland. 139

On 14 June, Lieutenant-Colonel von Schwerin visited London in both an official and unofficial capacity. Officially, he was to report to the General Staff on the mood in Britain towards Germany and the possibility of war, unofficially, he acted as an envoy for Lieutenant-Colonel Oster. He saw a variety of people during his stay, including MPs and officers from all branches of the British

armed forces. Through David Astor, Schwerin arranged to see Robert Laycock--the only friend Astor had in the War Office--who then referred Schwerin to Brigadier General Hotblack, in charge of German Intelligence. Hotblack, who did not understand the motivation and cause of Schwerin's comments any more than the rest of the British government, thought it was "bloody cheek" of Schwerin to engage in treasonous talk. However, Hotblack did accept Schwerin's report that Hitler apparently expressed no confidence in his senior general officers, and rarely consulted them.140

On 15 June, Theo and Erich Kordt told Vansittart that they were worried about the carte-blanche guarantee given to Poland and the subsequent attitude of the Polish government. If Hitler didn't believe the British, this attitude was going to lead to war. They also told Vansittart that Britain really needed to pick up the pace of its negotiations with the Soviets, that everything depended on this; the German negotiations were moving along well. Weizsäcker was against the Kordt's decision to issue a warning to the British government; he believed that the encirclement of Germany would precipitate war, not prevent it. The Kordt's had also held this view, but had then come to believe that a political agreement between Hitler and Stalin would be the greater threat to the maintenance of peace.141 The Kordt's held consistently to this view from here onwards, though they were never able to convince Weizsäcker. Vansittart reassured the Kordts that the

British would get to Stalin first. But the brothers also informed him that, although there was some friction between Mussolini and Hitler, the two were moving towards an alliance quickly. Vansittart agreed that Britain should make every effort to force a split between the two dictators. The Kordts were reassured, and Erich passed along Vansittart's reassurances about the British-Soviet negotiation to Weizsäcker, Canaris, Oster and Beck upon his return to Berlin.142

Also in mid-June, at the instigation of Canaris and Oster,143 Boehm-Tettelbach made a second trip trying to get assurances that Britain would indeed stand by Poland and not waver as she had at Munich. He made more of an impression on this trip than on his previous one; the Permanent Under-Secretary at the War Office, Sir James Grigg, on whom Boehm-Tettelbach called first, was so intrigued by the German's questions that he organised a meeting of influential personages. Grigg, Lionel Curtis, the historian E.H. Carr, David Astor, and Bruening, among others, met in Buckinghamshire to discuss the necessity of helping the conspirators to draw up a constitution as an alternative to the Nazi regime. Smaller groups met again to discuss peace aims, though nothing consequential emerged.144

On 27 June, Christie reported to Vansittart that war with Poland had been postponed until September: in the meanwhile, Germany would begin the war of nerves.145 In preparation for the war, all reservists called up since May

were not to be released, no leave would be granted after 1 August, and the combatant forces were to be on a full war basis from August 27 onwards.

On 8 July, Schwerin, still in London, met with Admiral Godfrey, Director of Naval Intelligence and Gladwyn Jebb. He told them: "Take Winston Churchill into the Cabinet. Churchill is the only Englishman that Hitler fears."146 Further, Schwerin insisted to the Admiral that Britain should impress upon Hitler its determination to go to war. Godfrey then arranged for a meeting between Schwerin and Major-General Marshall-Cornwall, Director of Military Intelligence. [see footnote 3, below] During the course of a long discussion, the DMI reported what Schwerin suggested as actions to be taken by Britain:

> (a) Carry out a naval demonstration. When Germany announced she was going to send a cruiser to Danzig we should have replied by ordering a squadron.
> (b) Take Churchill into the Cabinet. Churchill is the only Englishman Hitler is afraid of. He does not take the PM and Lord Halifax seriously, but he places Churchill in the same category as Roosevelt. The mere fact of giving him a leading ministerial post would convince Hitler that we really mean to stand up to him.
> (c) Send our Air Striking Force over to France and station it there. This would produce an enormous effect on Germany.147

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3 Meehan (208) claims that Godfrey's "opposite number Major-General Marshall-Cornwall, Director of Military Intelligence" was his guest at the Schwerin meeting. However, Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Pownall was Director of Military Operations and Intelligence at this time; Marshall-Cornwall was Deputy C.I.G.S. (Anti-Aircraft Defence). (confirmed by both Pownall's diaries and Who's Who of 1939) Thus, there is some confusion as to whether Meehan got the name correct or the position correct as to who Schwerin met. Pownall, though, does not mention such a meeting in his diaries.

Also in July, Fabian von Schlabrendorff met with Lord Lloyd to inform him that German negotiations in Moscow were close to completion.148 "The signing of a treaty between Hitler and Stalin could be expected at any moment."149 The response from the Foreign Office was that, as British talks with the Soviets were also progressing, the unlikely meeting of the minds between Hitler and Stalin need not be feared. Schlabrendorff then went to see Churchill, who asked him if the opposition could guarantee action against Hitler, and Schlabrendorff said he could not.150

On 5 August, Theo Kordt, who was temporarily in charge of the German Embassy (Ambassador Dircksen had been recalled to Berlin), met again with Vansittart. Vansittart reiterated his optimism, and stated that the British had every intention of backing up Poland this time: an attack on Poland would mean war with Britain. Kordt also asked if it were possible for the British to develop closer ties with the Italians. Count Ciano, Mussolini's son-in-law and foreign minister, was against tying Rome's foreign policy to Berlin. Kordt asked Vansittart whether it would be possible for the British government to somehow support Ciano. Mussolini's reluctance to get dragged into a war had been noted, and it was the hope of the opponents of Hitler that a wedge could be driven between the two dictators.151 Kordt also passed along to Vansittart the gist of the Hitler-Ciano talks in Salzburg: the Pact of Steel was under some strain. Britain ought to try to inspire an anti-war statement to be

made by Mussolini. Kordt also passed along to Vansittart, who later passed it along to Halifax in a memorandum dated 12 August, that the probable date of a German action against Poland would be between 25 and 28 August.152 Furthermore, Theo Kordt warned Vansittart of the impending German-Soviet non-Aggression rapprochement.153

On 14 August, Burckhardt had an unusual interview with Hitler, which had been preceded by an odd interview with Forster, the Gauletier of Danzig. Hitler's mood, Burckhardt reported, swung from "hysterical laughter [to] screaming [to] calm."154 The Fuehrer spoke of wanting to live in peace with Britain, and told Burckhardt that he would speak to an Englishman directly, but "language is too big an obstacle [...] I [Hitler] understand a little English, I stumble over a few words of French [....] An Englishman who could talk German? They tell me General Ironside talks it fluently [...] If we want to avoid catastrophes the matter is rather urgent." Burckhardt passed this along to Weizsäcker, who in turn (on 18 August) asked Henderson to send for Ironside.155

On 16 August, Christie reported that Göring had become convinced that war with England, France and the USSR would be suicidal; he was basing this opinion on the report of State Secretary Wohltat (Ministry of Trade) who had just visited London. Hitler, Christie related, allowed himself to be convinced that a better position needed to be achieved before Poland could be annihilated. Thus, it was of grave

importance to prevent a Soviet-British military alliance. According to Christie, the German plan was now to isolate Russia from the West, and by the spring of 1940, Poland would be isolated enough to be absorbed without going to war with the Western democracies.156

On 18 August, Theo Kordt met with Gladwyn Jebb. Kordt told him that Britain must continue to pursue negotiations with the USSR [see above, p. 55]. This was the only chance for peace, and not a large one at that, as German negotiations with the Soviets were progressing steadily. Further, Britain had to realise that a revision of the Polish Corridor was inevitable.157

On 22 August, Count Ulrich von Schwerin-Schwanenfeld, at the instigation of Weizsäcker, contacted the British Consul-General in Danzig, asking that the British government send a letter to Hitler to open negotiations in order to prevent a war.158

Three days later, Louis P. Lochner, Bureau Chief of the Associated Press in Berlin, was given a copy of Hitler's speech of 22 August by Hermann Maass, who in turn had obtained it from Canaris. The speech was given to Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes, a Counsellor at the British embassy in Berlin, who gave it to Ivone Kirkpatrick, the First Secretary at the embassy.159

Also on 25 August, Goerdeler was in Stockholm, asking for Chamberlain to make a broadcast to the German public from a British battleship in the North Sea. Cadogan thought

that Goerdeler was perhaps off his mental balance.160

On 26 August, after the Non-Aggression Pact was announced, Theo Kordt, at Weizsäcker's behest, asked Vansittart to leak out Hitler's offer to help guard the British Empire. If Mussolini heard of it, it would surely help drive a deeper wedge between the two dictators.161

Also on 26 August, Christie made his final report before the outbreak of war, including a description of German operational plans against Poland. "The German Land [sic] forces are divided into four Armies. The first army will push forward towards Cracow [...] after reaching Cracow the army will form a so-called Carpathian group [...] The second army plans to advance from the area Breslau-Liegnitz against Lodz [...] the third German army shall press forward against Posnan [...] the fourth Germany army, advancing south from East Prussia, will endeavour to bring about a decisive blow in the flank and the rear of the Polish armies which will be fighting north, west, and south of Warsaw."162

Also on 30 August, Goerdeler was in Stockholm to talk to the British Military Attache there, Col. Reginald Sutton-Pratt, whom he directed to send a telegram to London.163

On 31 August, against the German Foreign Office's orders, Theo Kordt gave the 16 point proposals to Poland (which were not given to Britain) to Vansittart. But this made no difference; as Vansittart was copying them, Germany announced them over the radio and stated that Poland had not met them.164

Chapter III: The British Responses

The responses of the British government to the contacts made by German opponents to Hitler are more difficult to chronicle than the contacts themselves. Much of this has to do with the fact that the majority of contacts were made to Vansittart. His appointment, on 1 January, 1938, to the post of Chief Diplomatic Advisor by Eden was an alternative to firing him. Eden and Chamberlain agreed that it would not be wise to let the removal of Vansittart be taken as a symbol of a change in British policy.165 Unfortunately, the "promotion" camouflaged the truth too well--until the end, German opponents did not fully understand why the British government wasn't accepting advice from its Chief Diplomatic Advisor.

Indicative of how Vansittart's increasingly untenable position in the Foreign Office would affect his effectiveness as a voice for the resisters is an anecdote related by Colvin. Vansittart usually submitted his reports for Halifax and Cadogan in red morocco boxes. One day he fixed the reports so that they would have to be taken apart from their bindings to be read. When they were returned to him, Vansittart saw that they had not been touched.166 The man who was the main conduit for German contacts with the British government was often completely ignored.

In early 1938, before the Anschluss, the British government, as told through Cadogan's diaries, did know that

something was afoot. They were disinclined to act on it, according to Cadogan, because there was not much they believed they could do. As early as 15 February, Cadogan was becoming increasingly annoyed about calls for action. "Personally, I almost wish Germany would swallow Austria and get it over. She is probably going to do so anyhow--anyhow we can't stop her. What's all this fuss about?"167 This comment from the highest civil servant in the Foreign Office indicates a dearth of sympathy concerning "internal" German issues.

Cadogan's, Halifax's, and Chamberlain's opinions of Vansittart had already begun to sour by this time. Vansittart did not take his "retirement" from action well, and his deeds rubbed many abrasively. On 16 February, Cadogan wrote that "Van[sittart], as far as I can make out, wants to talk big, but then--? He is an idiot with an idée fixe--a very simple one. He's all facade and nothing else. Nothing constructive: with all his big talk he's got no idea at all. And that is what we are suffering from."168 A few weeks later, on 1 March, Cadogan captured the futility of Vansittart's attempts to influence the Foreign Secretary: "I never see [Vansittart] nowadays. He is annoying H[alifax] by firing minutes at him."169

While Austria was considered a lost cause by Cadogan, reports were filtering in of the German attitude towards Czechoslovakia. Gladwyn Jebb, at the time responsible for organising secret and other unofficial reports for Cadogan,

recalled in his memoirs: "Before March 1938, all reports had agreed that Hitler intended to bring the Czech crisis to a head before the end of September."170 Vansittart's role as disseminator of unofficial information also is on record. Cadogan spoke of Vansittart's "private detective agency" and noted, on 8 March, that "...[Conwell-Evans] has it that Göring has urged Rib[bentrop] to be forthcoming here, and he (C-E) is meeting Rib in Brussels and travelling with him to London."171 Vansittart's informants, and Vansittart's self-appointed role of information gatherer, were well known to the rest of the Foreign Office.172

Goerdeler's post-Anschluss report, transmitted to R.A. Butler by Schairer, was circulated in the Foreign Office (see p. 16, above). In the Central Department, Ivo Mallet, Assistant Private Secretary to the Secretary of State, did not think much of it: "This is the first I have heard of a trial of Fritsch [...] All this sounds rather far-fetched [...] we have no evidence to support the suggestion that the Army [as Goerdeler asserted] are finding Hitler intolerable."173 Patricia Meehan derides this attitude as being negative and uninformed, but it is entirely understandable taken in its context. No corroborating evidence existed yet (Henderson's report from Berlin corroborating part of Goerdeler's claims did not arrive in the Foreign Office until the 26th)174, and the army had acquiesced to every step of Hitler's road to power from the shooting of von Bredow and von Schleicher in 1934 to this

point. While Mallet's comments were sceptical, they were not unreasonable.

With regard to courses of action open after the Anschluss, the Foreign Office was well aware that Czechoslovakia was Hitler's probable next target. The reasons for not supplying a guarantee were not based on ignorance. On 16 March, Cadogan "came down against a guarantee to Cz[echoslovakia]. I shall be called 'cowardly' but after days and nights of thinking, I have come to the conclusion that is the least bad. We must not precipitate a conflict now--we shall be smashed. It may no be better later, but anything may happen [...] I suppose Van[sittart] will be wild."175 The Permanent Under Secretary of the Foreign Office seemed to have quite a realpolitik view on the situation, and this stance was reinforced as late as 30 August by Chamberlain and Halifax in Cabinet (see below).

On 2 April, Cadogan wrote:

> Van[sittart] has been away all this week, but it doesn't make much difference if he's here. He sends in minutes to [Halifax] snarling at some of Nevile H[enderson]'s telegrams which H[alifax] hands gloomily to me. I keep them for 2 or 3 days, then take them back to H[alifax] and say 'I'm very stupid: I can't remember what you told me to do about this.' He looks unutterably sad, and says 'I think perhaps we might burn it now!'176

The personal reactions of Cadogan and Halifax to Vansittart were taking a serious toll on his ability to make good use of the information he received. Although Vansittart's appointment to Chief Diplomatic Advisor removed him from the centre of decision-making in the Foreign Office, he still,

by virtue of his seniority and the minutes he wrote, maintained some influence. However, as time wore on, he was being tolerated less and less. On 9 April, Cadogan continued: "Van[sittart] is being tiresome--developing the technique of writing minutes on every paper he can lay his hands on [...] why will Van be such an ass?"177

The information which Vansittart passed along at this junction--of his meeting with Goerdeler in early April--was dismissed by Halifax. The subtlety of the very large difference between Goerdeler and Hitler's claims--whether to use peaceful measures or war--did not influence Halifax, who believed that Goerdeler's message was not worth deflecting "us from any conclusions that we may reach on the main issues."178 This was surprising, considering Halifax's beliefs a scant half year earlier. During Halifax's interview with Hitler on 19 November, 1937, he stated, according to his biographer, "that nobody wished to treat Germany as anything but a Great Power, and that nobody in their senses supposed the world would stay as it was forever. The whole point was how changes were to be brought about."179 Further, Halifax had then spoken of "possible alterations in the European order which might be destined to come about with the passage of time."180 Goerdeler, too, had spoken of the legitimacy of Germany's claims to some settlement of the Sudetenland, but also on the need for the British to show resolve against Hitler. Goerdeler was asking the British government to help the moderates reassert

themselves by issuing a strong warning to Germany against "dangerous adventures" in Czechoslovakia.181 Vansittart took this to be a request to help overthrow the Nazi regime, only to have the new government pursue the same aims. Subsequently, during their next meeting, when Goerdeler told Vansittart of the disgruntlement felt by many German generals, Vansittart dismissed it as "treasonous" talk.182 While Goerdeler's hopes for a settlement of the Sudetenland question were supported by Halifax in November 1937, Vansittart now rejected these points, and Halifax ignored them. Because of the Foreign Office's own inconsistency in policy, Goerdeler was disparaged.

On 22 April, Cadogan wrote a letter to Nevile Henderson saying, among other things, that rearmament was going too slow, and also recognizing the coming danger which Germany posed.183 Thus, he was aware of the coming dangers from Germany, and was seeking to redress them. But the perceived weakness of the current British position184 was what precluded a firm stand against Germany. Not willing to make threats it could not, if needed, back up, the Foreign Office felt it had no choice but to continue its current policy of appeasement. Cadogan's assessment of the threats was not far removed from the assessments of the Chiefs of Staff. They warned Chamberlain, in early 1938, against opening staff talks with France and Belgium because they wanted to keep the door open for a possible detente with Germany.185 But this was a political decision, and they recognized the

military threat posed by Germany: A simultaneous war against Italy, Germany and Japan would be "a commitment which neither the present nor the projected strength of our defence forces is designed to meet, even if we were in alliance with France and Russia."186

In early May, 1938, Colvin was approached by Kleist in a cafe in Berlin, where, after preliminaries, the latter told him that "Czechoslovakia is the next step [...] Tell your friends in London that we cannot make war yet. The army has few reservists and no reserves of material. The people are against war."187 Furthermore, Hitler feared a diplomatic intervention from the British to steal his thunder. A full month had gone by before more rumours of incidents brewing in Czechoslovakia convinced Colvin to take his story to Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes, who forwarded it to the Foreign Office.188

The point from the British perspective was not whether or not Germany could make war, but whether Britain could. Thus, during the state visit of the King and Queen to Paris, Halifax, after watching a French military parade, was "painfully aware of the nakedness of our own land in every requisite for war."189 With such "nakedness", Germany's position became a secondary consideration in British decision-making.

Oliver Harvey's diary entry 11-16 July reads:

> Van[sittart] is very excited again as his own mysterious sources tell him that things are going from bad to worse in the Czechoslovakian question: that Benes is holding back again, that Henlein is fed up and has been to see Hitler to tell him that Benes's

> negotiations are nothing but a swindle, that the Nazi party bosses are pressing for an Einmarsch, whilst Ribbentrop and the moderates are losing ground. H[alifax] does not take this too tragically. H[alifax] does not see what more can be done."190

The visit by Captain Wiedemann in July 1938 did not have much of an impact on the British government. It was taken by Halifax as an attempt to defuse tension between Britain and Germany, and only led to the conclusion that no forcible action would be taken by Germany in the immediate future.191 Wiedemann's visit was more of a pain for Cadogan than a fruitful exchange; he spent most of the time during the visit trying to cover up indiscretions with the press.192

Harvey's account of the 18 July visit of Wiedemann stated that Wiedemann carried a message from Hitler: "no forcible measures were contemplated by Germany: she had no present intention of intervening by force in Czechoslovakia." Despite these assurances, the British government were somewhat sceptical of the benefits of entering into talks with Germany; to enter into conversations with Germany and have them fail would be worse than not entering into them in the first place.193

Proof that the British government not only received but accepted the contents of the information they received from unofficial sources is found in a letter from William Strang, head of the Central Department of the Foreign office (which included Germany) to Nevile Henderson in Berlin on 21 July. Information had been reaching London that a German attack on

Czechoslovakia was planned for the autumn. Henderson showed it to his Military-Attache, and Mason-Macfarlane agreed that it was possible, but

> [...] on the other hand I am continually coming across evidence that Germany as a whole is not ready for a war this autumn [...] Unfortunately the decision does no rest with the army, and I have continually stressed the fact that under the circumstances Herr Hitler will almost certainly march against Czechoslovakia without warning. But I am quite unconvinced that the military evidence even now at our disposal indicates a clear intent to march this autumn.194

Ambassador Henderson concurred:

> I think we can summarise matters by saying that, while it is reasonably certain that there is no intention or desire on the part of the army to take action against Czechoslovakia, the possibility that the government may have intentions in this respect is becoming much greater, and they are forcing the army to take steps which might well produce a crisis.195

Thus, Henderson and Mason-Macfarlane in effect lent weight to the reports of Christie and Conwell-Evans through July. The problem remained, however, that unless Britain was prepared to confront Germany with force, there was nothing they felt that could be done.

On 3 August, Colvin reported to Lloyd that he had been able to learn from Kleist that the date of the attack on Czechoslovakia was to be 28 September. He also gave details of why the 28th September would be the optimum time for the Germans, in terms of total strength of the army.196 Further, he reported that trips abroad for reservists after 1 August were not permitted (similar to Conwell-Evans' reports of late July197), and that 400 000 reservists in all had been called up. Furthermore, the Germans were showing

extreme haste in attempting to complete their western fortifications.198

By early August, warnings had reached Downing Street from Germany from still undefined opposition groups that a critical time lay ahead. The groups involved were known to centre in the Abwehr, the diplomatic service, and the higher ranks of the army. Chamberlain's response to Vansittart's memorandum on Kleist, during his visit in mid-August, was not encouraging:

> I take it that Von Kleist is violently anti-Hitler and is extremely anxious to stir up his friends in Germany to make an attempt at its overthrow. He reminds me of the Jacobites at the Court of France in King William's time and I think we must discount a good deal of what he says.199

The Prime Minister also recognized that there might have been more truth to the information than he was willing to admit: "I confess to some feeling of uneasiness and I don't feel sure that we ought not to do something."200 Chamberlain's doubts were further compounded by reports from Mason-Macfarlane in Berlin.201

But despite the warnings coming in to London, at the end of August, from Berlin, Henderson was also writing to the Foreign Office calling for exactly the opposite policy; if Hitler was not antagonised, war might be avoided.202

When Chamberlain called Cabinet into session on 30 August, it was in large part due to the volume of intelligence coming in--Halifax told Cabinet that the wide extent of German military manoeuvres and intentions were "confirmed by a number of apparently independent

sources."203 On 20 August, he continued, messages had been sent to the German embassies in Yugoslavia, Rumania, and the Soviet Union that Germany was "prepared to intervene if necessary to obtain a satisfactory solution of the Sudeten problem."204 This verifies, then, that much of the information which was sent to London through the summer of 1938 had reached its mark. However, while the information was accepted, it didn't have to follow that the prescriptions for stopping Hitler would also be agreed to.

As far as Halifax could see, so he told the Cabinet on 30 August, there were two options. The first was a declaration of support to Czechoslovakia in case of a German attack205--precisely what the resisters who had sent the information wanted. The Foreign Minister was against this because he had heard disparaging comments on the state of Czech defence, and because of the uncertainty of opinion elsewhere in the Empire. What would be the good in bluffing if Germany could destroy Czechoslovakia before Britain could even find consensus with the Dominions? The second option, which he favoured, was to do nothing beyond what they had already done, in order to "keep Herr Hitler guessing" as to Britain's intentions.206

Halifax acknowledged the fact that

> [M]any moderate Germans were pressing us to go even further than the Prime Minister's speech of 24th March, and said that, if we did so, there would be no attempt to coerce Czechoslovakia, and the Hitler regime would crack [...Halifax received] these messages with some reserve. Further, [Halifax] did not believe that the internal regime of a country was destroyed as the result of action taken by some other countries [...However] if this policy failed, the government

> would be told that if only they had had the courage of their convictions, they could have stopped the trouble [...] But these criticisms left [Halifax] unmoved.207

Thus, Halifax knew quite well what the stakes, and odds, were. But there were simply, from his perspective, too many unknown factors on the resisters' side to risk getting into a war which Britain was completely unprepared for.

Prime Minister Chamberlain concurred:

> No State, certainly no democratic State, ought to make a threat of war unless it was both ready to carry it out and prepared to do so [...] Although it was possible that such a statement, if made now, might avert war, it was not certain that it would do so.208

The British government, then, wanted certainty, not only probability.

There was some dissent in the meeting, but Chamberlain summed up the record: "The Cabinet was unanimous in the view that we should [...not threaten Hitler that...] if he went into Czechoslovakia we should declare war on him."209

As this was going on, on 30 August, Colvin sent another report to Lloyd including a short memo written after meeting with "our friend" (presumably Kleist). The memo reiterated the opposition's prescription that Britain and France be strong, and not yield to Hitler's demands.210 But the Cabinet had just supported Chamberlain's view to the contrary.

On 2 September, Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) Boehm-Tettelbach arrived in London. He had been sent by Lieutenant-General Halder, who was unsatisfied with the results of Kleist's visit. He made initial contact with Mr.

Julian Piggott, but his views were forwarded to Vansittart and to the head of the Press Department of the Foreign Office. He repeated much of what Kleist had said, and gave broad hints that a conspiracy against Hitler existed. However his mission was a failure, for he failed to make much of an impression on anyone.211

On both 3 and 4 September, Cadogan was given a "pile" of secret reports. "After my reading of all of the papers, I gave support to the idea of a private warning to Hitler that we should have to come in to protect France."212 One may wonder here how a warning could be given without it being a bluff. The policy decided upon in Cabinet on 30 August--while Britain would not guarantee Czechoslovakia, they would come to the aid of France if she attacked Germany in the fufilmeent of her alliance with Czechoslovakia, and lost--marked an important inconsistency which had a direct bearing on the efforts of the resisters in Germany. The British government could not fulfil the requests of the German resisters because, they decided, Britain was not prepared to fight. This was untrue. That Britain would come to the aid of France indicates that a part of the real issue was willingness, not ability, to fight. Britain would fight for France and not Czechoslovakia, because France was a more important component of the balance of power than little Czechoslovakia. For the resisters, however, Czechoslovakia was the place make a stand. That the British government did not define their position to the resisters in these terms

contributed to the incredulity with which the resiters received news of British policy.

When Chamberlain met with Theo Kordt in early September, he was forced to re-think his opinions of the resisters' message. As Colvin states, "Theo Kordt was not, like Herr von Kleist, a reminder of the Jacobites, but the accredited Counsellor in the German Embassy [...] it added another and more authoritative voice to the many reaching him out of the shadows." 213 Kordt reported that Hitler was expected to order a general mobilisation on the 16th September and to attack Czechoslovakia no later than 1 October. He also informed Chamberlain that the conspirators were prepared to strike of the day mobilisation was announced.214 Despite this, and after consultation with Halifax, John Simon, and Cadogan, Chamberlain still decided against a direct warning, though he would go there himself. Vansittart was called in to offer his opinion--he was against a visit by Chamberlain to Hitler, and wanted instead a firm warning against attacking Czechoslovakia to be issued to Germany. He was not heeded.215

By Cadogan's account, Kordt wanted Chamberlain to "broadcast to German nation. I said that [would be] fatal--and the suggestion almost makes me suspect Herr X [T. Kordt]."216

As a result of the Kordt meeting, however, Halifax, Wilson, Sargent and Cadogan agreed that Henderson ought to give "the right sort of hint", though not an outright

threat, to Hitler about Britain's position on Czechoslovakia, and also that Britain would not stand to see France defeated should complications arise and war erupt.217 Thus, the onus for action was passed along to the French; if France indeed honoured her obligations to Czechoslovakia, and faced the prospect of defeat by Germany, then Britain would unreservedly intervene. If France chose not to fulfil her guarantee, or if she was not defeated, then Britain would not intervene; either way, the British government distanced themselves from direct involvement. This policy hid the fact that Britain was yielding to Hitler over Czechoslovakia due to a lack of willingness to go to war. Further, this policy served to make France entirely responsible for standing up to Germany. The Foreign Office claimed that it did not want to make a direct public statement because it did not want to put Hitler in an embarrassing position; a cornered animal must be allowed to leave without feeling forced to fight. But the "hint" was to be given some official weight, and not as the ambassador's private opinion, some time during the Nuremberg festivities.218 Henderson, however, was "violently against a warning"; he had already, after all, delivered three previous warnings,219 and he felt that any more would serve to push Hitler to war by not allowing him room for manoeuvre. As the result of Henderson's protestations, Cadogan recorded that the "Ministers decided to hold their hand" and not press him to deliver the warning.220

On 13 September, the British government confirmed the earlier report that German embassies abroad had been told of the intention to invade Czechoslovakia on 25 September.221

On 14 September, Vansittart told the Foreign Office, as reported by Harvey, that "all moderate opinion in Germany was wanting us to [issue a final warning] so as to give them something to enable them to stop Hitler with. Conwell-Evans who was at Nuremberg, has come back with passionate pleas from moderate German leaders begging HMG to take some steps to stop their mad Chancellor!"222 Britain, however, had already decided that it could not risk war in its current state; as Chamberlain had stated in Cabinet in August, there would be no bluffing. British policy was by this time, thus, fairly contradictory. The justification for ignoring the pleas for action was that war with Germany could not be risked. But on the other hand, Chamberlain and Cabinet had already committed to entering into war, should France get involved and be losing. Further, Chamberlain wrote to his sister, on 11 September, that "we should be wrong to allow the most vital decision that any country could take, the decision as to peace or war, to pass out of our hands into those of the ruler of another country, and a lunatic at that."223 But his implicit guarantee to the French government (an often hysterical body) did just that.

Theo Kordt did have some effect on policy when he asked Vansittart, on 14 September, to try to put pressure on the Italians, who did not want war. This was one of a

surprising number of ideas which the resister's put forth which was adopted (such as the warnings through Henderson, the attempt to follow Weizsäcker's advice, the decision to help France, and the later mobilization of the fleet). In June 1939, Orme Sargent admitted to Vansittart:

> For instance, in the early days of last September, Weizsäcker's advice was, through Burckhardt, to send a strong warning to Hitler. It was largely on this advice that the Cabinet decided to instruct Sir N. Henderson at Nuremberg to deliver the famous message to Hitler. If you remember, Sir N. Henderson demurred, and eventually won the day.224

Although there were individual successes, these instances were incorporated into British policy, and were part of the strategic policy that the resisters wanted Britain to follow.

But on 24 September, after the first two meetings with Hitler had occurred, Cadogan couldn't believe what he was hearing from both Chamberlain and Halifax:

> I was completely horrified---[Chamberlain] was quite calmly for total surrender. More horrified still that Hitler has evidently hypnotised him to a point. Still more horrified to find P.M. has hypnotised H[alifax] who capitulates totally [...] Ye Gods! [...] They don't yet understand and they haven't seen the map [...] I know we and [France] are in no condition to fight: but I'd rather be beat than dishonoured. How can we look any foreigner in the face after this? [...] Above all, if we have to capitulate, let's be honest. Let's say we're caught napping: that we can't fight now, but we remain true to all our principles, put ourselves into war conditions and rearm. Don't--above all--let us pretend we think Hitler's plan is a good one! I've never had such a shattering day, or been so depressed and dispirited.225

Cadogan seems to have waffled quite a bit during this time. At best, the changes can be described as the difference between two alternatives (Cadogan was not sure which was the

better one): to either avoid antagonising Hitler, in the hopes of avoiding war; or honouring Britain's obligations. Cadogan was in favour of the first, but, as shown often in his diary, was quite clear that it meant sacrificing the second. This emotional outburst seems the result of a realisation that others in the government blurred the two options. At worst, Cadogan's swings of opinion are indicative of a mind not made up, in a time where indecision would be the worst policy of all. Although Cadogan's views did not decide policy (demonstrated by the warning decided upon after Kordt's visit, against Cadogan's opinion) his own vacillations had some impact. This outburst resulted in Halifax's retraction of support offered to Chamberlain. In short, Cadogan added to the confusion and contradictions of his masters' policies.

Mason-Macfarlane was chosen to go to Prague to pass to the British Embassy the results of the Bad Godesberg discussion; his opinion of the state of Czech defence was low.226 On 27 September, Cadogan wrote: "Unfortunately Mason Macfarlane (M-A in Berlin) also here, and he painted a gloomy picture of Czech morale [to Cabinet]. What does he know about it?"227 It was a valid question. An officer of Mason-Macfarlane's rank should not have made as simplistic observations as he did: He generalized on the state of the entire Czech army based on a drive past a border unit comprised partly of policemen and partly of civilian militia-men (not even a regular army unit).228 Cadogan

might have appreciated the opinions of Colonel Humphrey, the military attache in Prague, who strongly disagreed with Mason-Macfarlane; the Czech army was, according to Humphrey,

> [...] confident in their cause, their leadership and their equipment [...] if they have moral support knowing that they possess powerful allies, even if these cannot immediately act on their behalf [...] they may render [a] good account of themselves."229

Humphrey's report from Prague did not arrive until 11:23 pm on the 27th, well after the Cabinet meeting of 3:00 pm digested and made use of Mason-Macfarlane's perceptions.230

After the war, Gladwyn Jebb attempted to justify the lack of support offered by the British government to the German resisters who were planning a coup against the Nazi government in the midst of the Munich Crisis. Jebb wrote in his memoirs: "But even supposing [Halder] had deposed Hitler, we should still have to negotiate with a German Nationalist government which [...] would have done their best to absorb the Sudetendeutschen by 'peaceful' means [...] more devious means."231 This view, speculative and written with hindsight, did not really reflect the attitude in the Foreign Office at the time. While there was some suspicion concerning German aspirations, the British rejected the course of action which might have led to a coup for their own reasons (contradictory as they were), not because it wouldn't have made a difference anyway.

Halifax, in his memoirs, related some of the difficulties he had during the Munich crisis: "Almost every day I would receive unsolicited advice to take some action,

of which the plain consequence, if the bluff did not succeed, was to make it rather more likely that the issue must be war."232

While this is more plausible an explanation of Britain's policy than Jebb's, it does not address the two major contradictions in British policy of this time. Britain would not offer idle threats (a bluff) to Hitler, but decided to send an muted protest (which Henderson refused to deliver). Britain could not offer a commitment to Czechoslovakia because they were unprepared for war, and yet they would guarantee France. Britain would not utter threats to Hitler which could not be backed up with a willingness to fight, and yet the fleet was mobilized. What the German resisters wanted from Chamberlain was a series of bluffs to try to implement a risky but potentially worthwhile policy. The British government ended up pursuing some of the resister's requests, but at the same time sought to distance themselves from Czechoslovakia. The policy pursued by Britain and that requested by the resisters were mutually exclusive. The true crux, however, seems to be the perception of where the balance of power needed to be maintained. The British felt that France was the key, but the resisters believed that Czechoslovakia was where Hitler needed to be challenged. Further, the British government was unwilling to admit that Czechoslovakia was expendable.

Halifax also urged Chamberlain, after Munich, to take Churchill into the Cabinet--"I [Halifax] should not myself

rate too high the annoyance caused to dictators by the inclusion of some of those whom they dislike [...]"233 This was also one of the requests from the resisters which got through, even though Chamberlain did not act upon it.

The immediate aftermath of Munich was a slow-down of pace for both the British and the German opponents of Hitler. Britain had given in to Hitler in return for the promise on paper which Chamberlain waved in triumph upon his return. For the German opponents, such as Goerdeler, Munich was the worst of all possible disasters; not only had an opportunity to rid Germany of Hitler been lost, but the British government also proved to Germany that Britain would succumb to Hitler's demands if the pressure was hard enough. The majority of contacts which resisters had with Britain consisted of telling the effects of Munich in Germany.

After Munich, according to Jebb, secret reports agreed on two points:

> (1) Hitler had been at once encouraged and infuriated by Munich, which had deprived him of his 'quick war' and a military occupation of Prague; (2) his irritation was thenceforward focused on the Prime Minister and the British generally [...] he would take for himself what he could not get by negotiation.234

Furthermore, all evidence suggested that the "explosion" of Hitler in 1939 was going to occur in the East (with the exception of one report). The German Chiefs of Staff had

been told to get plans to Hitler by 15 February for "(a) an attack in the East and (b) a combined attack on Holland and Switzerland with simultaneous action against Britain and France (some believed (b) to be a bluff)."235

The use of informal information was extremely limited, and even during the Czech crisis, Cabinet's responsibility had been reduced to a formality. As Colvin wrote, "they were deprived of secret Intelligence [sic], unsure of what had been said, done and written, and unconsulted until the essential and irrevocable lines of policy had been devised by Chamberlain."236

On December 10, Cadogan wrote that

> Gwatkin had a message from Goerdeler outlining plan of a (army) revolution in Germany, to take place before the end of the month. G[oerdeler] wants a `message' from us. He had already sent us a `programme', which we couldn't subscribe to--too much like `Mein Kampf'--and that rather put me off him. But he may want something merely to show his fellow conspirators that we shan't fall upon a divided Germany, and would want to work with any decent regime that might come out of the mess. I drafted hurriedly the kind of message (very non-committal) that we might send him [...] I don't believe much of this, but if there is anything in it, it's the biggest thing of centuries.237

Cadogan's dismissal of Goerdeler's points seem incredible when one considers a policy paper written by Cadogan less than a month earlier, on 8 November. In it, he wrote:

> We have never challenged [the Nazis] to state their grievances [...] Is it too late even now to try and clear the air? Say that we were anxious to join in attempting to devise a general settlement, even if it involves scrapping what is left of the Versailles Treaty (including colonies) [...] In the light of the history of the last five years anything would seem better than doing nothing. [...] If we can show that we are willing to remedy eighty per cent of Germany's remaining grievaces, will Herr Hitler get his people to

fight for the remaining twenty per cent?238

The remainder of Cadogan's paper deals with many of the same issues raised by Goerdeler, with the same opinions concerning their resolution. And yet, Goerdeler's proposals read "too much like 'Mein Kampf'". This blatant contradiction in policy can be explained two ways; either Cadogan was personally biased against Goerdeler, or he was biased against any information or prescription coming from any German source. The common thread is an anti-German bias. In his April 22 letter to Henderson, Cadogan had inquired: "What I wonder is, is it even now not too late to treat the Germans as human beings? Perhaps they wouldn't respond to such treatment."239 The opinions of the highest ranking civil servant in the Foreign Office did not seem to have become more moderate with the passing of the Munich Crisis.

Harvey's response to the Gwatkin/Goerdeler proposals was even less kind than Cadogan's:

> Gwatkin has produced in triumph a half-baked scheme of Goerdler's [sic] (he is a crypto-enemy of Nazism who is in with the moderates who are supposed to be only waiting to overthrow the regime). Goerdler [sic] wants assurances from us that HMG will not take advantage of an internal revolt to impose fresh sanctions on Germany, that they [HMG] will provide a large interest-free loan, that they will return colonies and give a free hand in the East--in return for which the Goerdler [sic] Germany, if and when successful, would agree to limit arms. A mad scheme which we cannot have anything to do with [...] Both P.M. and H[alifax], of course, turned it down and declined to agree to any message being returned.240

As in April, this exchange of opinion between Goerdeler and the Foreign Office highlights the inconsistency within

British foreign policy. In November, 1937, Halifax spoke of "possible alterations in the European order [i.e. Austria and Czechoslovakia] which might be destined to come about with the passage of time [...] On all these matters [Danzig, Austria, and Czechoslovakia] we were not necessarily concerned to stand for the status quo as today [...]."241 Goerdeler, at Ashton-Gwatkin's request, provided a programme which logically fitted Halifax's earlier desires (and Cadogan's of a month before). If anything, Chamberlain's abandonment of Czechoslovakia at Munich confirmed this policy. Nonetheless, Goerdeler's proposals were rejected. Cadogan, one day after writing of it as possibly "the biggest thing in centuries", entered in his diary on 11 December that Chamberlain was against the proposals, "and I think he's right. These people must do their own job."242

It seems that Chamberlain, as Halifax stated in Cabinet on 30 August, "did not believe that the internal regime of a country was destroyed as the result of action taken by other countries."243 This might be a justifiable explanation of the rejection of Goerdeler's advice if Chamberlain held consistently to this view. But early in 1939, and throughout the year, Chamberlain ordered the SIS to stay in contact with an alleged conspiracy to remove Hitler [the conspiracy which proved to be a sham at Venlo].244

A few days later, on 15 December, Ivone Kirkpatrick reported to Cadogan that a retired high ranking army officer informed him that plans were to be drawn up within the next

three weeks for a bombing of London in March. Kirkpatrick called it "first-hand information from the War Office and Air Ministry. Hitler has ordered preparations to be made for an air attack on London in peace-time..." His informant was supposedly in close touch with General Beck; despite the fact that Beck had been dismissed, his connection with the information was enough to cause Kirkpatrick to treat it seriously.245

While it sounded far-fetched, Chamberlain, to whom the information was referred, took it seriously enough to convene the Committee of Imperial Defence on 17 December to discuss the problem.246 They decided to have anti-aircraft guns placed in London, in sight of the German embassy. Also on this day, Schacht met with Chamberlain in London to tell him that 'appeasing' Hitler was not possible.247

In December 1938, Halifax told Cabinet that "we began to receive reports that the minds of the rulers of Germany were moving in a different, and for us more sinister direction."248

> We have very definite indications that Herr Hitler may be contemplating an attack on the West during the coming spring...but we have no proof that the Fuehrer has definitely committed himself to such an action.249

The PM, while acknowledging the secret nature of the report, was

> a long way from accepting all this information. Some allowance must be made for the rather disturbing atmosphere in which those who received these secret reports necessarily worked. Again, while many of the forecasts received from these sources had proved correct in the past, this was not always the case.250

The last statement was spurious. It acknowledged the accuracy of many of the previous reports, but warned that they were not one hundred percent accurate. Very few sources were always correct. This statement seems to be a defensive justification for not having listened to the reports in the past.

On 2 January, Harvey heard from Vansittart, who had it from his sources in Germany, that Montagu Norman was off to Berlin to see Schacht. Norman had told Chamberlain and Nevile Henderson, who approved, but not Halifax or Cadogan. Harvey told Cadogan, who in turn informed Halifax. "Such a visit can only do harm [...] in Germany itself where it will be regarded as proof of our anxiety to run after Hitler."251 Thus, it seems that Vansittart was not always ignored.

Reaction to the 15 January "Memorandum based on most trustworthy information" in the Foreign Office was generally critical: "[I]t is a pity that Dr. G[oerdeler] tries to curdle our blood by overstating his case."252 This condescending opinion was no doubt a reinforcement of the reactions to Goerdeler's December proposals to Ashton-Gwatkin.

On 25 January, Halifax gave Cabinet a lengthy summary of intelligence received in recent months, and what it indicated for the future.253 Halifax told Cabinet that reports sent said that war was going to occur by March or April at the latest; a German plan for a surprise air attack on London was being studied and the German General Staff

"[...] has now been instructed to furnish the Fuehrer by the 15th February plans for (1) an attack on the East; and (2) a combined attack on Holland and Switzerland, which would involve simultaneous action against England and France."254 Hitler's plans included "[...] invading Holland and Switzerland and holding them as pledges until his demands were met in full."255

This was precisely the information sent by Goerdeler and forwarded by Vansittart on 15 January. Thus, Halifax did indeed acknowledge Vansittart's sources, albeit indirectly. Despite this there was no action taken on it.

> I [Halifax] conclude my summary of these disturbing reports on the same note as I began it. We have some very definite indications that Herr Hitler may be contemplating an attack on the West during the coming spring, and possibly as early as the second part of February, but we have no proof that the Fuehrer has definitely committed himself to such action. All that can be said with practical certainty is that an "explosion" of Germany is likely to come in the comparatively near future and that it is necessary for us to take immediate measures to guard against the possibility of its being directed against us.256

Again, the Foreign Office would only deal in certainties.

The reactions to Strong's report of 26 January, describing his meeting with Lieutenant-Colonel Gerhard Graf von Schwerin, was highly critical. "As usual the German army trust to us to save them from the Nazi regime", wrote Frank Roberts of the Central Department. Sargent minuted: "Such an example as this of gross treasonable disloyalty is very significant--or is the whole thing nothing but a Machiavellian lie--and if so with what object?" Cadogan's

response: "To test our nerves and try to find out how far Hitler can safely bluff."257 The Foreign Office seemed to be categorizing all Germans as Nazis. These bitter replies follow logically an increasing bias which the Foreign Office as a whole held towards any Germans who offered advice. While, at an individual level, German resisters occasionally made a good impression, the Foreign Office was not prepared to extend the possibility to a larger scale. As seen, individual advice was even occasionally followed by the British government. But the position and purpose of the German conspirators were not considered in depth, let alone understood.

Vansittart had warned, in his January report, that Czechoslovakia was going to be invaded in the near future. Cadogan also came across many reports indicating the same. Of one report, Cadogan wrote, on 26 February, that he had

> the profoundest suspicions of Hitler's intentions: I believe they are entirely dishonourable [...] The writer [of the report] admits that Hitler's plans change from week to week: but that does not deter him from telling us as an absolute fact that he is going to engulf Czechoslovakia in May [...] The only thing certain in a very uncertain world is that we must be prepared as best we can for anything.258

In a memo written also in February, Cadogan wrote that "it is true to say that recent scares have not originated principally with the SIS agents in Germany, but have come to us from other sources [i.e. Vansittart, as Hinsley suggests]."259

By the end of February 1939, the tenor of intelligence

coming to the Foreign Office on Germany was reassuring, with regard to a possible attack on Britain. 260 However, by 11 March, Cadogan wrote that the Head of MI5, Major-General Sir Vernon Kell, "came to raise my hair with tales of Germany going into Czechoslovakia in next 48 hours. Maybe. Told [Halifax and then] warned P.M. [...] Jebb rang up after to say S.I.S. have some hair-raising tales of Czecho[slovakia] for the 14th. It can wait."261

On 13 March, Cadogan heard the "S.I.S. news that the Germans are prepared to walk in. I showed this to P.M. this evening, observing that the one question we couldn't answer was whether the Germans would put their plan into operation [...] Van[sittart] in a neurotic state."262 The next day, Cadogan wrote: "All sorts of reports of what Germany is going to do--'march in' tonight, &c. Probably true [...] Van[sittart] wants to withdraw Nevile [Henderson]. I against--it's futile. But of course Van[sittart] doesn't like N. in Berlin..."263 These comments by the Head of the Foreign Office illuminate another possible reason why information from resisters was given short shrift. Since taking over as the top civil-servant of the Foreign Office in January, 1938, Cadogan's impatience with Vansittart grew to the point that his professionalism was clouded by personal bias against anything Vansittart had to offer. Though Cadogan alone did not make policy, his experiences with Vansittart were similar to those of Halifax, and thus are indicative of Vansittart's ineffectiveness as a conduit.

On 29 March, Colvin spoke to Simon, then Cadogan, Halifax and Chamberlain, about the information which he was receiving. "What amazed me about this conversation was that important information which I had carefully passed on to the British Embassy in Berlin seemed entirely unknown to these Ministers."264 Cadogan wrote that Colvin "gave hair-raising details of imminent German thrust against Poland [...] I was not entirely convinced. I am getting used to these stories."265

Despite Cadogan's admission, in his diary entry for 26 March, that "it is turning out--at present--as Van predicted and as I never believed it would [...]"266, and despite his belief that reports of the impending troubles were "probably true", Cadogan still down-played Colvin's visit. His judgement was not consistent. However, Halifax "seemed impressed [with Colvin's report], and we took [Colvin] over to P.M."267 Harvey wrote that as a result of the visit by Colvin, it was decided to speed up the announcement of a guarantee to Poland without waiting for a reply from Beck.268

According to Jebb, at the end of April Goerdeler sent a message to the British which

> concerned the German General Staff. The latter, he assured us, had now come to the conclusion that, given the presumed industrial support of the USA, the Western democracies would prove too much for Hitler who would therefore be restrained 'by force' at the critical moment. If only Britain and France could 'remain strong' to any new aggression, by force if necessary,

> the whole 'Hitler adventure' might be 'liquidated before the end of June.' They should also 'attack the cruelties of the regime, demand the restoration of Czechoslovakia, introduce conscription and take Churchill into the government.'269

In May, Jebb had a conversation with Theo Kordt. This was not a constructive one. When Jebb expressed the opinion that he thought war could be avoided, "the Counsellor, with a heavy wink [agreed]. But it quickly became evident that, whereas what I was suggesting was that at the last moment the Nazis would recoil [...] he was convinced it would rather be Mr. Chamberlain [...] So I spent a lot of time trying, without much avail, to persuade him of the contrary."270

Kordt similarly made a poor impression on Cadogan, who wrote, on 5 May, that "H[alifax] told me [...] that Kordt has intimated that Hitler wants to negotiate, and hopes we'll give him a reasoned and helpful reply--soon--about naval Treaty. Don't quite trust Kordt."271 The German opponents to Hitler were indeed suspect.

Christie's 18 May report to Vansittart outlining the terms of the Soviet-German negotiation was passed along to Kirkpatrick, whose reaction to the information was: "This report seems unreliable for a variety of reasons which it would be otiose to set forth. I personally do not believe that Germany, so long as Hitler rules, will compound with Stalin."272

On 13 June, Cadogan recorded attending a "meeting on Danzig to hear Makin's report of his talk with Burckhardt.

Upshot, do nothing now." 273

On 15 June, the brothers Kordt warned Vansittart of the Soviet-German talks. Vansittart replied: "This time Hitler will not find us asleep. Put your mind at ease, we are definitely concluding the agreement with the Soviet Union."274

In early July, Jebb met with Schwerin and Admiral Godfrey. They hit it off better than Jebb had done with Kordt.

> The Count, who seemed a brave and sincere man, said that it was obvious that Hitler was going to go for Danzig before September and that we should not only say that we would fight in that event, but actually do something about it, such a mobilizing the Fleet...Admiral Godfrey and I naturally emphasized that great unity of purpose that now animated our country. There was absolutely no question of our not assisting Poland.275

In July, Colvin was told by a "German visitor to London [...] of German-Soviet discussions actually in progress in Berlin [...] I took care that he should impart his information to Winston Churchill, Lord Lloyd and others [...]."276

On 26 July, 1939, Halifax informed the Cabinet of a conversation he had just had with Burckhardt. Forster had allegedly told Burckhardt in Danzig that Hitler thought "the question could wait, if necessary, till next year. Nothing would be done on the German side to provoke a conflict."277 Although Halifax was uncertain whether this was a real effort at detente or a cover-up, he "informed the Polish government that we have information that the Germans are

working for a detente and that it is of the utmost importance that the Poles should direct their endeavour to the same end."278

Also in the end of July, Strong received a message conveyed to him by a contact in the German High Command who told him that "a small group of officers was prepared to assassinate Hitler providing the West remained neutral during the forthcoming attack against Poland [...] I believe the offer was genuine and that my friend spoke in good faith, but I doubt if there was any organised group capable of carrying out the assassination."279

Halifax remembers, in his memoirs: "Through the summer months [...] on the now familiar pattern the crescendo in German abuse of Poland mounted, and by the second week in August the news coming into the Foreign Office, both officially and unofficially, was all pointing one way."280

Cadogan's reaction to the 14 August report of Burckhardt (through Weizsäcker and Henderson) was subdued: "Really nothing definite resulted from interview. Hitler apparently undecided, rather distracted, rather aged. We shall see."281

On 18 August, Cadogan wrote that

> 'C' [Head of SIS] has news that [Germany could have] transport for Party Rally or for mobilisation, but not both at once! Unconfirmed report says H[itler] chose rally. Dined at home. At end of dinner Van[sittart] rang up in high state of excitement [...] I asked him to come round, and gave him cold supper. His source has told him H[itler] has chosen war, to begin between 25th and 28th. I have my suspicions of his source. Still, one can't ignore it. Spoke to [Halifax] who will be here noon tomorrow [...] Eventually calmed Van[sittart] down a bit and packed him off about 11. This is the

beginning of the 'War of nerves'. And I have seen the first casualty!282

Halifax wrote to Chamberlain that 'C' had changed his initial report, so that "I understand that both [...] sources are now disposed to be of one mind in the sense of thinking that the Nuremberg Rally will be [...] symbolic--the railways being absorbed by troop transport."283 And even if Cadogan was suspicious of Vansittart's sources, Halifax considered it "reliable".

And "early in the third week of August," Halifax wrote to Henderson the result of his conversations with Vansittart: "Vansittart gave me a good deal of information which came from a reliable source [...] to the effect that [...] it was pretty well decided in Berlin to take action against Poland any day after the 25th of this month. The actual dates given were between the 25th and the 28th."284

In response to the 22 August request from Graf Ulrich von Schwerin-Schwanenfeld for a letter to Hitler to open negotiations to prevent a war, a letter was sent through Henderson, but was slightly watered down to the effect of making the British look weak: Britain was still committed to helping Poland, but would also be willing to help out with negotiations.285

On August 26th, a Cabinet was held, though without anyone from the FO but Halifax. "Fairly precise information from sources alleged to be reliable had reached us to the effect that Germany intended to march into Poland that night or the next."286

Harvey's final report before the outbreak of war was that, in Berlin, there was "bad morale, 70% against Hitler, party divided and soldiers, etc, only hoping Great Britain would be firm and then the regime would crack. Other reports from other sources confirms."287

Conclusion

The British government was not well disposed to unsolicited information and advice. Throughout the two years in question, contacts from Germans were often treated as being part of some elaborate ruse. However, it is clear from this study that the British government, despite its attitude, did not wander blindly into each successive crisis. The information reached them. Cadogan, and hence Eden (then Halifax) and Chamberlain, knew of the Anschluss in advance. The British likewise knew that Hitler was determined to foment a crisis over Czechoslovakia. Although information was more contradictory over the invasion of Prague and the Soviet-German negotiations, the British were informed of these as well. And with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, Britain also knew that war was more than likely going to be the result.

If, then, the British knew, were they guilty of negligence, as Patricia Meehan asserts? There is no easy answer. Certainly, there were fundamental contradictions within British policy, especially during the Munich Crisis. From the examination provided, it is evident that Czechoslovakia was simply, by British reckoning, not worth going to war over. The excuses that Britain could not risk to fight an unprepared war were just that--excuses. France was deemed to be worth fighting for, but Czechoslovakia was not. Chamberlain's arguments against bluffing (which he did

by mobilizing the fleet anyway) were no explanation of British policy. They were self-delusions, indicative of the weakness of British politicians to admit the truth of their priorities in Europe. Cadogan's emotional outburst in later September was a rare admission of the truth as well as a hypocritical bemoaning of policy which he helped to create. Hitler did not play by the same rules as the British statesmen, and they reacted with weakness.

After Munich, the British government knew that Hitler would remain unsatisfied. However, even given the likely severity of the impending war, Britain's policies remained often confused and contradictory. This became most evident at the end of 1938, when Goerdeler's proposals were derided. Britain had once again been dragged into the affairs of the Continent, and seemed uncomfortable with its role. The policy of Appeasement ended with the invasion of Prague, and from that point on, Britain became resolved to accept that war with Germany was probable. And, no doubt, the alliance with Stalin was a race which the British had lost. But the British were hindered by other considerations (Polish intransigence with regard to the placement of Russian troops on Polish soil, for one). Thus, while the German opponents to Hitler were warning of the success of the German delegation in Moscow, the British government was busy trying to appease its allies.

Beyond the contribution which this study attempts to make to the Appeasement debate, there are important conclusions to be drawn with respect to the nature of relationship between the British government and the German opponents to Hitler. Firstly, there were almost as many false warnings, particularly after Munich, as there were true. And even among those warnings which later turned out to be true, many were far enough off in timings to be of use in only the most strategic of pictures. In short, there was much chaff with the wheat.

Secondly, a major reason for the failure of the German resisters was their reliance on Vansittart as the primary conduit to the British government. Enough of the Germans involved, such as Trott, Moltke, and even Goerdeler, had enough close contacts with the British as to make one wonder why they didn't pick up on Vansittart's internal retirement. They didn't, though, and their access suffered accordingly.

Another reason why their attempts to influence British policy failed was beyond their control. Efforts made by the German resisters were often met with derision. Given omnipresent threat of war which marked this period, officials of the Foreign Office seemed caught up in venting their frustrations with Nazi Germany upon all Germans, rather than using every opportunity at their disposal to prevent the war. German resisters were treated as meddlesome amateurs whose reasons for contacting the British government were suspect. The mistrust of information which

was volunteered, as opposed to that curried forth by the SIS, was exemplified by Chamberlain's rejection of Goerdeler, and almost simultaneous encouragement of SIS contacts with "dissenting" Generals. That the British government later got burned at Venlo is both tragic and ironic.

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220. Cadogan, p. 96.

221. Cadogan, p. 97; Duff Cooper, Old Men Forget (London, 1953), p. 228.

222. Harvey, p. 179.

223. Keith Feiling, The Life of Neville Chamberlain (London, 1946), p. 360.

224. Great Britain, Foreign Office, [FO] File 371/22973/55491 (London: PRO).

225. Cadogan, pp. 103-104.

226. Kenneth Strong, Intelligence at the Top (London, 1968), p. 34.

227. Cadogan, p. 107.

228. DBFP III, 2, p. 581.

229. DBFP III, 2, p. 581.

230. DBFP III, 2, p. 581.

231. Jebb, p. 79.

232. Halifax, pp. 198-199.

233. Feiling, p. 385; Halifax, p. 202.

234. Jebb, p. 86.

235. Jebb, pp. 86-87.

236. Colvin, Cabinet, p. 167.

237. Cadogan, p. 128.

238. Cadogan's policy paper is in FO 371/22973/55491; see also Cadogan, p. 123.

239. Cadogan, p. 70.

240. Harvey, pp. 226-227.

241. Birkenhead, pp. 369-370.

242. Cadogan, pp. 128-129.

243. CAB 23/94, p. 295.

244. Hinsley, pp. 56-57.

245. Ivone Kirkpatrick, The Inner Circle (London, 1959), pp. 136-138.

246. Harvey, p. 228.

247. Cadogan, p. 130.

248. Colvin, Cabinet, p. 180.

249. Colvin, Cabinet, 180.

250. CAB 23/97, p. 54.

251. Harvey, p. 234.

252. Meehan, p. 198.

253. CAB 23/97, p. 65-73.

254. CAB 23/97, p. 70.

255. CAB 23/97, p. 70.

256. CAB 23/97, pp. 71-72.

257. Meehan, p. 205.

258. Cadogan, p. 152.

259. Hinsley, p. 56.

260. Cadogan, p. 153; DBFP III, 4, pp. 160-161.

261. Cadogan, p. 155.

262. Cadogan, p. 156.

263. Last ellipses in original quote--Cadogan, p. 156.

264. Colvin, Vansittart, pp. 304-309.

265. Cadogan, p. 164.

266. Cadogan, p. 163.

267. Cadogan, p. 164.

268. Harvey, p. 271; DBFP III, 4, Document 566.

269. Jebb, p. 87.

270. Jebb, p. 90.

271. Cadogan, p. 178.

272. Meehan, pp. 222-223.

273. Cadogan, p. 187.

274. Colvin, Vansittart, p. 324.

275. Jebb, p. 90; see also DBFP III, 6, pp. 295-298.

276. Colvin, Vansittart, p. 328.

277. Colvin, Cabinet, p. 231.

278. Colvin, Cabinet, pp. 231-232.

279. Strong, p. 51.

280. Halifax, p. 212.

281. Cadogan, p. 195.

282. Cadogan, p. 196.

283. Cadogan, pp. 197-199; Colvin, Cabinet, p. 234.

284. Colvin, Vansittart, pp. 334-335; DBFP III, 7, p. 80.

285. Meehan, p. 234.

286. Colvin, Cabinet, p. 239.

287. Harvey, p. 310.

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