Chapter Twelve

THE SHADOW OF WAR

§ 1

STUDIO NINE was a room "about the size of an average family living room." In it stood three desks and an old army cot with an army blanket. On each desk there was a microphone, and before one of these microphones sat a gray-haired man, wearing ear-phones. He was talking quietly in a crisp, precise voice. He looked tired and a bit disheveled, as if he had just risen from the rumpled cot. As he talked, he kept one eye on a plate-glass window, beyond which, in an adjoining room, sat a man watching him from behind a panel of instruments and occasionally signaling to him with a wave of the hand. From time to time other men would steal into the room, shove sheets of paper under his nose, and depart; he would glance at the sheets of paper and talk on, his crisp articulation unimpeded.

He was talking to millions of Americans—nobody knew how many. To hear what he had to say, girls in strapless evening dresses stilled their debate over whether to put their hair up for the winter season; lawyers turned from discussing Judge Pecora's declaration of a mistrial in the case of James J. Hines, whom District-Attorney Thomas E. Dewey of New York was attempting to convict as the "man higher up" in metropolitan racketeering; politicians laid aside the fascinating topic of the failure of President Roosevelt's attempt to "purge," in the Democratic primaries, the men who had failed to join his offensive against the Supreme Court in 1937; literary critics paused in their talk of what would become of Thomas Wolfe's mountains of manu-

scripts, now that he was dead; families in gray tenements stopped arguing about the chances for a reconciliation between the still hostile CIO and AF of L; actors and actresses interrupted their conjectures about the rising success of the hilarious Broadway production, "Hellzapoppin." For what the man in Studio Nine was telling these people seemed of more vital importance just then than anything else in the world.

The time was the latter part of September, 1938; the man was H. V. Kaltenborn, news commentator for the Columbia Broadcasting System; and Studio Nine was his headquarters at the center of the Columbia plexus in New York. He was interpreting the up-to-the-instant news of the Czechoslovak crisis in what he called "Yirrup," that crisis which was revealing to all the world what happens when an irresistible force meets a conciliatory body.

Ever since September 12 Kaltenborn had kept vigil day and night in Studio Nine, snatching sleep briefly on the army cot. Not until September 30—the day when Neville Chamberlain, just returned from Munich, came to the window of No. 10 Downing Street and said to the cheering crowd below, "I believe it is peace for our time"—would the Kaltenborn vigil end; not until he had delivered, in 18 days, a record total of 85 extempore broadcasts.

Kaltenborn was by no means the only interpreter of European affairs during those September weeks; every broadcasting system, every radio station was hurling news and interpretation into the ether. The names of Hitler, Henlein, Benes, Hodza, Chamberlain, and Daladier screamed persistently from front-page headlines, recurred in page after page of newsprint, sounded in the half-intelligible chanting of the men selling extras on the streets. In New England on the afternoon of September 21 a tropical hurricane struck without warning (the New York weather prediction that morning had been "Rain and cool today.

Tomorrow cloudy, probably rain, little change in temperature"). The hurricane ripped seashore villages into kindling wood or swamped them under tons of roaring water, it laid fine groves of trees in lines on the ground, made rivers out of the streets of cities, derailed trains, blocked highways, broke off communication by telephone and telegraph, and took an estimated 682 lives. Yet even in New England, when householders repaired from their darkened houses to their automobiles to listen over their automobile radios (uncrippled by the storm) and find out how wide-ranging was this havoc that had separated them from the rest of the world, the twist of the dial brought them into the midst of the man-made hurricane that was raging in Europe.

Out of the night came the familiar refrains of "A Tisket, a Tasket" . . . then, as the dial turned, a bit of comedy on the Rudy Vallee hour . . . and then, as the dial was twisted again, a voice swelling forth in the midst of a sentence: . . . "town of Godesburg where Prime Minister Chamberlain held a second historic conference with Chancellor Hitler. The effects of that meeting already have brought reactions from world news centers. Now, tonight we'll attempt first to receive a broadcast direct from Prague, the capital of Czechoslovakia, where Maurice Hindus, well-known authority on Central European affairs, has been observing the day's happenings. We take you now to Prague." A pause, while the mind leaped the Atlantic in anticipation; then another voice: "Hello, America, this is Prague speaking. . . ."

How the world had shrunk! In July, 1914, when Karl von Wiegand of the United Press had cabled a mere 138 words from Berlin to New York on the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum to Serbia—one of the grave events which produced the World War of 1914-18—he had been admonished for wasting cable tolls. Now, in September, 1938, the news of

YORK
Tribune
LATE CITY EDITION

CTOBER 1, 1938

THREE CENTS
New York City and Vicinity

Britain and Germany in Compact Never to Fight Each Other Again; Nazi Troops Cross Czech Border

Hitler's Vanguard Passes Austro-Czech Frontier at 1 A.M., an Hour After Deadline He Had Fixed

General Settlement Expected in Berlin

Deal on Spanish War, an Air Pact and Limit on Arms Due, Plus 4-Power Accord Sought by Italy

By The Associated Press

BERLIN, Oct. 1 (Saturday).—The first contingent of German troops crossed the Czechoslovak frontier near Aigen, Upper Austria, early today, starting the Nazi occupation of territory granted to Chancellor Adolf Hitler by the four-power Munich accord.

The gray-clad German infantrymen marched over the border shortly after 1 a. m. (7 p. m. Eastern standard time, Friday), little more than an hour after the midnight deadline Hitler had set for his occupation.

An infantry battalion, numbering about 600 men, advanced along several roads from Aigen to take possession of posts immediately behind the Czechoslovak frontier in southwestern Czechoslovakia. It was explained this movement was regarded as merely a vanguard operation, reconnoitering the terrain and preparing for the main army of occupation to march in later today, taking over the first of four districts granted to Hitler by the Munich pact.

The main body of troops, 30,000 men, assembled along the border of

Herald Tribune radio photo—Acme

Prime Minister Chamberlain at Heston Airdrome yesterday

Czechs, Bowing to Munich Pact, Get an Ultimatum From Poland

Warsaw Demands Evacuation of Teschen Today; 'We Want to Fight,' Prague Crowds Reply to Plan; 50,000 Non-Nazis Flee Sudetenland

Chamberlain Reveals New Pact of Friendship to Crowds Wildly Cheering Him on Return Home

Tells Them He Won 'Peace With Honor'

'I Believe It Is Peace for Our Time,' He Asserts; Later Parley Expected to Give Reich Colonies

By Joseph Driscoll

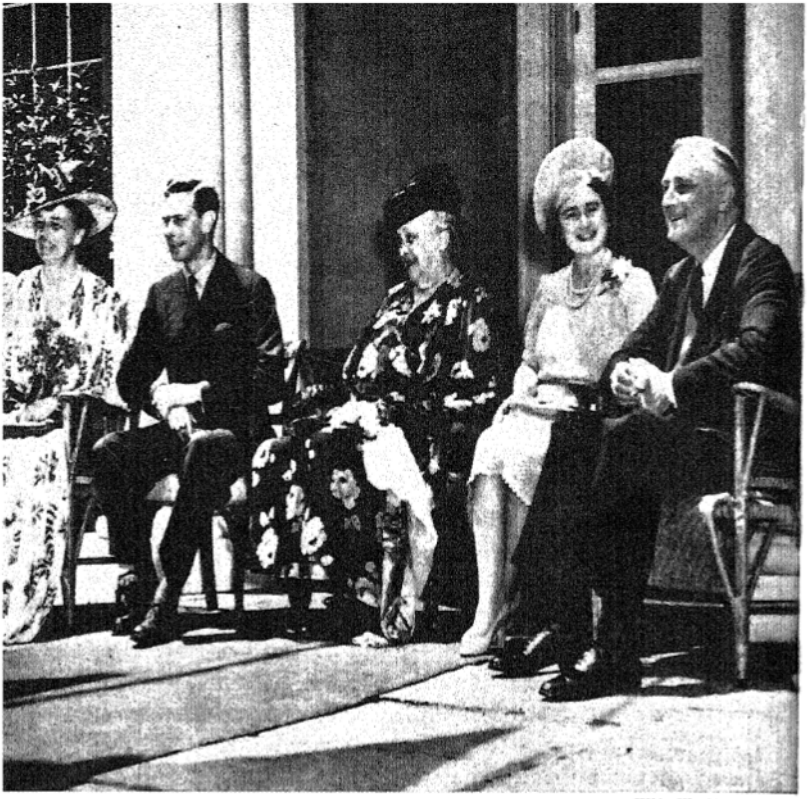
From the Herald Tribune Bureau

LONDON, Sept. 30.—Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, returning tonight to receive a grateful welcome from hundreds of thousands of peace-loving Britons, brought from Munich not only the four-power agreement which authorizes Nazi Germany to take over Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland by gradual stages, but an Anglo-German pact of friendship, by which the two nations resolve never to go to war against each other and to settle all disputes by consultation and negotiation.

When his American Lockheed airliner brought him back to England still at Heston Airport this afternoon Chamberlain received his first hearty welcome, which was followed by stirring street scenes the like of which had not been equaled in London since Armistice Day, 1918. The Prime Minister responded by reading, for the benefit of the newsreels and television apparatus, the text of the peace pact to which he and Hitler had affixed their signatures.

"PEACE" AFTER MUNICH, 1938

From the front page of the New York Herald Tribune, October 1, 1938



Wide World

ENTENTE CORDIALE, JUNE, 1939

The King and Queen of England at Hyde Park with President and Mrs. Roosevelt and Mrs. James Roosevelt (center)

another grave event in the same part of the world—the submission of Czechoslovakia to dismemberment—stood in the very center of American attention. Not until 1930 had there been such a thing as a world-wide news broadcast; now one could hear, in quick succession, voices from London, Paris, Berlin, and Prague, and millions of Americans were hanging on every word.

Far back in the distance, already, seemed those lively events of the earlier part of the summer of 1938 which had so captured the public mind: Joe Louis knocking out Max Schmeling at the Yankee Stadium in the first round—actually before some radio listeners had got tuned in on the fight; Howard Hughes flying round the world in the incredible time of 3 days, 19 hours, 8 minutes, 10 seconds; the "wrong-way" pilot, Douglas Corrigan, starting in an antiquated plane from Long Island "for California" and fetching up in Ireland, to return and be feted in America, still wearing his smile and his brown leather jacket; the demented John Warde tying New York traffic into knots as he stood for eleven hours on a narrow ledge on the seventeenth floor of the Hotel Gotham, contemplating his leap to suicide. Even American events and problems of real significance were being thrust into the background. The hesitant upward progress of the business indices, as a nation still beset by large-scale unemployment tried to come back from its Recession; the application of the new wages-and-hours act; the still-unsolved farm problem; the perennial headache of relief—all these things seemed to fall away into unimportance as Hitler demanded the Sudetenland, Chamberlain flew to Berchtesgaden and Godesburg with his furled black umbrella, and the heads of four nations met at Munich to sign and seal the destruction of Czechoslovakia. The war clouds from Europe were blotting out the American landmarks one by one.

§ 2

The chain of events which had dragged foreign problems into the forefront of American attention was a curious one, full of kinks.

At the beginning of the decade the United States had seemed to be drifting from a policy of national isolation toward a policy of acting in concert with other nations to maintain world peace. To be sure, there was no popular disposition to enter the League of Nations or to make foreign commitments, but there was a tendency in the State Department to come as close to doing this as public opinion would permit. In 1931, when Japan, seeing the European powers preoccupied by the Depression, seized its happy opportunity to invade Manchuria, it was Henry L. Stimson, Hoover's Secretary of State, who led the chorus of international condemnation. An American representative sat at Geneva as an "observer" while the League of Nations discussed Japan's offense; Secretary Stimson proclaimed that the United States would not recognize the Japanese conquest; he also sought to invoke the Nine-Power Pact against Japan, only to be rebuffed by Sir John Simon on behalf of Britain. Nothing that the League could or would do, none of the outcries of disapproval from Europe or America, stopped Japan; the first great breach in the post-war system of territorial arrangements was successfully completed—but not for lack of active interest on the part of the American government. America was in the thick of the diplomatic battle throughout. Its policy in 1931 was far from being isolationist.

The next great act of international aggression did not come for several years, and in the meantime the relations between the United States and the outside world went into a new crisis—this time economic. During the early Depres-

sion years, as nation after nation in its agony had lifted tariffs, devalued currencies, and otherwise dammed the international currents of trade and financial exchange in its attempts to save itself, the government at Washington had looked on in alarm. It was true that we had laid new bricks on top of our own tariff wall in 1930, but of course we considered our own tariff a purely domestic matter; we felt differently when other countries did such things. It was axiomatic in the minds of Hoover, the Treasury officials, the financial experts of Wall Street, and dominant American opinion generally that barriers to commerce must be removed, that the international gold standard was sacrosanct, that there could be no real American recovery without world recovery. But then came the New Deal—and the shoe was on the other foot. For now *we* wanted to do things which might upset international monetary and trade relations.

At first few people foresaw the impending clash of policies. President Roosevelt, to be sure, in his first inaugural in 1933, said explicitly that "our international trade relations, though vastly important, are in point of time and necessity secondary to the establishment of a sound national economy"—but had he not already appointed as his Secretary of State Cordell Hull, an inheritor of Woodrow Wilson's world-mindedness, and a passionate devotee of the stimulation of international trade by tariff reduction? Roosevelt, to be sure, took the United States off the gold standard, to the confusion of foreign currencies—but was he not simultaneously inviting foreign delegates to come and discuss measures of international economic co-ordination? Not even Roosevelt himself realized how sharp a collision he was headed for. He cheerfully entered into the preliminary plans for an economic conference to be held in London, in June, 1933, and sent to this conference, with inadequate instructions, a delegation headed by Secretary Hull which

at once began arranging for the stabilization of currencies. A bit later, fearing that the United States might be tied into a hard-and-fast agreement for stabilization just as the inflation boom was lifting prices and delightfully stimulating business in America, Roosevelt sent to London his chief brain-truster, Assistant Secretary of State Raymond Moley, to restrain the delegates. But it was not until Moley had arrived in London that Roosevelt, becoming more and more entranced with the idea of prosperity through currency manipulation, decided abruptly that the conversations at London must not be allowed to endanger his domestic plans. When Moley agreed to a rather mild statement approving of stabilization in general principle, the President suddenly pulled the floor out from under everybody—Hull, the delegation, Moley, and for that matter the whole London conference—by refusing to have anything done about stabilization at all. An impulsive man had resolved the conflict between economic nationalism and economic internationalism by throwing his weight belatedly and without notice on the national side—to the utter discomfiture of his representatives.

After that—or rather after the experiment in gold-buying which followed it—the United States returned gradually to the ways of international economic facilitation. Secretary Hull doggedly carried on as if nothing had happened. He was permitted to get his reciprocal tariff bill enacted in 1934, and under it to ease the flow of goods between the United States and various other countries. In due course Secretary Morgenthau and the chiefs of British and French finance stabilized the currencies of Britain, France, and America. The adventure in economic isolation appeared to be over, though it had left its scars.

In the meantime, too, an olive branch had been held out to Latin America. In his first inaugural Roosevelt had proclaimed a "good neighbor" policy. To show the Latin

Americans that this was no mere phrase, the United States took its troops out of Nicaragua, did away with those parts of the Platt Amendment that had permitted intervention in Cuba, and assured the nations south of the Rio Grande that it interpreted the Monroe Doctrine as a doctrine of co-operation and mutual aid, not as a doctrine of domination. Such was Secretary Hull's patent sincerity that the assurance was on the whole well taken. Toward the end of the decade the United States was better liked and better trusted in most of Latin America than ever before.

But long before that the smashing of international frontiers had begun again. In 1935 Mussolini invaded Ethiopia in extremely cold blood. Britain and France and the League could or would do nothing effective to discipline Italy, and Mussolini was not stopped. Early in 1936 Adolf Hitler, whose attempt to engineer a Nazi coup in Austria had failed in 1934, entered the Rhineland—and was not stopped. Later in the same year the Spanish Revolution broke out; Mussolini, and Hitler too, began using the Spanish Revolution for their own imperial ends—and were not stopped. In 1937, the Japanese attacked China—and were not stopped. In March, 1938, Hitler swept into Austria—and was not stopped. And as the summer and spring of 1938 wore on, he began confidently polishing his knife for Czechoslovakia.

At the time when this series of crises began, American public opinion was perhaps more isolationist than at any time since before the World War. By 1935 the "revisionist" view of the World War of 1914-18 had become the majority view. According to this version there had been guilt on both sides, not simply on the German side, and the United States had been unhappily sucked into participation in the war by British propaganda and by its economic stake in an Allied victory. As late as April, 1937, a Gallup poll on the question "Do you think it was a mistake for the United

States to enter the World War?" drew a Yes from 71 per cent of those polled. In 1935 Walter Millis's *Road to War,* which presented the American decision of 1917 as a lamentable tragedy, became a best seller, influential among the highbrows. Several books and magazine articles drew sensational attention to the part played by munitions-makers in fomenting wars; and simultaneously the Nye committee of the Senate embroidered the same theme in a long investigation, showing up the unholy profits of American arms manufacturers from 1915 on, exposing the pretty little deals made by munitions salesmen abroad, and dragging Morgan partners to Washington to answer an implied charge that they had schemed to get the United States to fight Germany in 1917 in order to pull their chestnuts out of the fire. The picture of war as a horror into which the innocent common people were lured by the machinations of conscienceless bankers and big business men was the more readily accepted because the general public still had a very lively memory of the failure of such men to lead the country out of the valley of Depression, and of the shoddy conduct of many bankers and big business men as laid bare in the investigations of 1933.

It must be remembered, too, that in 1935 the American radicals were nearly all hotly anti-war. Nor was there, then, any widespread American fear that the dictators in Europe might actually harm the United States from the outside; when people spoke of "the fascist menace" in 1935, most of them meant the menace of an American fascist movement, which they variously imagined as being led by Roosevelt, or by somebody like Huey Long, or perhaps by an army officer supported by big business. So general was the belief that America must hoe its own row, and take preventive measures in advance so that it could not be seduced into hostilities, that in a Gallup poll taken in the fall of 1935 no less than 75 per cent of the voters thought Congress

should get the approval of the people in a national vote before declaring war.

In this very isolationist state of mind, the country welcomed the passage by Congress in 1935 of a Neutrality Act which decreed that when war broke out anywhere, Americans must not sell munitions to either of the belligerents. The Neutrality Act was at once applied to the Italian-Ethiopian conflict.

But the Administration—and the permanent staff of the State Department—did not like compulsory neutrality. They wanted the United States to be free to use its diplomatic influence in international affairs and they felt that a blanket law might be embarrassing in some unforeseen circumstance. They liked to play along with the British in foreign policy, and the Neutrality Act might hobble them. When the Spanish Revolution broke out, they fell in with the British scheme for non-intervention (a scheme which notoriously failed to prevent Mussolini from intervening in behalf of Franco) and pushed through Congress a strange act which applied the neutrality principle to the Spanish dissension, despite the fact that this was not a war between nations but a rebellion against a government recognized by the United States. When, a little later, Japan went into China, the Administration wobbled this way and that, first telling all Americans to leave China or remain at their own risk, then proposing to defend Americans in China, and *never applying the Neutrality Act at all*! They were able to do this by taking advantage of a loophole. The Act as passed in revised form in 1937 provided that the mandatory ban on shipments of munitions should take effect either when war was declared or when the President "found" that a state of war existed. Neither Japan nor China declared war—and the President failed to "find" that a state of war existed, though the Japanese were blasting at China with everything they had.

Presently the Administration departed still further from the isolationist idea and the idea of compulsory neutrality. In a speech at Chicago in October, 1937, Roosevelt said that "the moral consciousness of the world . . . must be aroused to the cardinal necessity . . . of putting an end to acts of aggression," added that an "epidemic of world lawlessness" was spreading, and that "when an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease." This looked like intervention against the aggressive nations with a vengeance. Later in 1937, in a letter to Governor Landon, Roosevelt insisted that "we owe some measure of co-operation and even leadership in maintaining standards of conduct helpful to the ultimate goal of general peace." When the American gunboat *Panay* was sunk by Japanese bombers early in 1938, the Administration made much of the incident, though it had occurred in the interior of a country at war and the *Panay* had been convoying Standard Oil tankers—in other words, had been engaged in just the sort of enterprise which the neutrality advocates of 1935 had sought to eliminate as a possible *casus belli*. At about the same time the Administration used its political influence with Congress to bury in committee the Ludlow Resolution which would have required a national referendum to get the United States into war; this measure, it said, would "cripple any President in the conduct of our foreign relations." Clearly the intention was to give full defense to American rights in China—even the right to convoy tankers with our own gunboats close to a battlefront; to impress the Japanese with the extent of American disgust at their behavior; and in general to use American influence wherever possible to keep aggressive nations within bounds.

Such a policy offered such a sharp contrast with what

public opinion had wanted in 1935 that it might have been expected to lead to general public condemnation of President Roosevelt and Secretary Hull. It did not—though the "quarantine" speech required some quick and deft explaining. There was grumbling, but never enough to prevent the continued nullification of the Neutrality Act. The basic reason was that American public opinion, too, was shifting ground. With each new crisis, American dislike of Hitler, Mussolini, and the Japanese war lords was becoming sharper.

It is not, to be sure, clear that there was any great weakening of the underlying preference for "keeping out of foreign entanglements" on the part of the great mass of the American people, particularly in the interior of the country. A study of the Gallup polls from 1935 to 1938 gives no sure evidence of any such shift. But informed and audible opinion, especially on the Eastern seaboard, had undeniably altered. Influential Republicans like Governor Landon and ex-Secretary Stimson stood back of the President in his anti-aggressor moves. Specialists in foreign affairs like the members of the Council on Foreign Relations felt strongly that America must uphold the "democracies" against the "dictatorships." And radical opinion had changed almost unrecognizably.

The communists had shifted from an anti-war policy to an anti-fascist policy and had become almost as warlike as the Daughters of the American Revolution. Back in 1934, Earl Browder (who became the communist candidate for President in 1936) had declared, "The only way to fight war is to begin by fighting the war-makers in our own land. . . . The Roosevelt Administration is carrying on the greatest war program ever seen in peace time." When Roosevelt made his "quarantine" speech in 1937, on the other hand, Browder applauded it as a "declaration of a positive peace policy." The half-somersault executed by the American

Student Union, a somewhat leftist youth organization, offered a perfect illustration of the general change in radical and liberal thought: at its meeting at the end of 1936 it had endorsed the Oxford pledge "not to support any war which the government may undertake"; at the end of 1937 it called for "immediate steps to restrain fascist aggression, . . . American leadership in naming aggressors, employing embargoes against aggressors, and organizing these efforts through international collaboration," and it urged "repeal or modification of the present Neutrality Act so as to discriminate between aggressor and attacked and to give aid to the latter." Young men and women who in 1934 and 1935 had spoken scornfully of war as a device for the enrichment of capitalists were by 1937 and 1938 making bonfires of silk stockings to express their detestation of Japan. Still they did not want war, but they were militantly taking sides in foreign quarrels.

In some respects, too, general public opinion was changing. The Gallup polls showed a swelling majority in favor of a larger American navy, army, and air force. When in February, 1938—just before Hitler's conquest of Austria—the Gallup poll-takers propounded the question, "If Germany and Italy go to war against England and France, do you think we should do everything possible to help England and France win, except go to war ourselves?" the vote came out Yes, 69 per cent. (If the issue had been differently phrased, there might not have been such a heavy affirmative vote; nevertheless the two-thirds majority was impressive.)

Still the great majority of Americans were earnestly anxious to keep out of war. But as the Hitler advance continued, crisis by crisis, more and more people began to feel that it menaced America too, that deliberate non-participation in foreign quarrels would be difficult and might be morally wrong. Then, almost on the heels of Hitler's

Austrian coup, came his Czechoslovak coup of September, 1938, and shook America from end to end.

§ 3

A feeling of insecurity and apprehension, a feeling that the world was going to pieces, that supposedly solid principles, whether of economics or of politics or of international ethics, were giving way under foot, had never quite left thoughtful Americans since the collapse of Coolidge-Hoover prosperity in 1929 and 1930. It had been intense during the worst of the Depression, had been alleviated somewhat as business conditions improved, and had become more acute again as the international aggressors went on the rampage (and as, simultaneously, the United States slid into the Recession). The Munich crisis of September, 1938, produced a new attack of nerves.

Whether the strange incident of the Orson Welles broadcast should be considered a manifestation of this attack of nerves cannot be proved one way or the other—but at least it is significant that at the time a great many observers thought that it was one. On the evening of Sunday, October 30, 1938—a month after Munich—Orson Welles of the Mercury Theatre gave, over the Columbia Broadcasting System, a scheduled radio dramatization of an old fantasy by H. G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds*. To make it vivid, he arranged it to simulate a current news broadcast. After an announcer had clearly explained the nature of the program, a voice gave a prosaic weather forecast; then another voice said that the program would be continued from a hotel, with dance music; shortly this music was interrupted by a "flash" to the effect that a professor at "Mount Jennings Observatory," Chicago, reported seeing explosions at regular intervals on the planet Mars; then the listeners were "returned" in orthodox radio fashion "to the music of

Ramon Raquello . . . a tune that never loses favor, the popular 'Star Dust' "; then came an interview with an imaginary Princeton professor, with more information about disturbances on Mars—whereupon a series of further "news bulletins" described the arrival of Martians in huge metal cylinders which landed in New Jersey. The broadcast gathered speed, bulletin following bulletin. More Martians landed—an army of them, which quickly defeated the New Jersey State Militia. Presently the Martian attack was vividly described as being general all over the United States, with the population of New York evacuating the city and Martian heat-rays and flame-throwers and other diabolical devices causing terrific destruction, till all was laid waste.

Despite the announcer's introduction, despite the fact that this was a scheduled program, that one needed only to twist a dial to hear the reassuring voice of Charlie McCarthy, that all names given were fictitious, that the program was once interrupted in the routine manner for an explanatory station identification, and that in numerous respects the "news" given out was preposterous on its face, the following remarkable reactions to the program took place:

All over the country, people called up newspapers or the police in wild panic to find out what to do. (The *New York Times* alone received 875 calls; the Associated Press had to send out an explanatory bulletin to its member papers.) In many communities terror-stricken people rushed out of their houses and milled about in the streets, not quite sure whether they were being attacked by Martians or by Germans, but sure that destruction was on the way and they must flee somewhere. In Newark, New Jersey, several families, convinced that a "gas attack" had begun, put wet cloths on their faces and tried to pack all their belongings in a car; the traffic was jammed for blocks around. A woman in Pittsburgh prepared to take poison, crying, "I'd rather

die this way than that!" A woman in Indianapolis rushed into a church screaming, "New York destroyed; it's the end of the world. You might as well go home to die. I just heard it on the radio," and the church service came to a hurried end. When a church service in New Jersey was similarly interrupted, the congregation prayed for deliverance from catastrophe. A man in the Bronx section of New York rushed to the roof when he heard the news and thought he saw "the smoke from the bombs" drifting over the city. In a town in the State of Washington the electric-light service was interrupted during the broadcast, convincing listeners that the terror was close at hand, and women fainted.

So it went, with endless variations, all over the country. Even if only one person in twenty among those who heard the program took it at its face value, this credulous minority—together with the people whom they alarmed with their garbled stories of what they thought was happening—caused enough panic to serve as a remarkable case study in national hysteria.

But let us not argue whether the broadcast incident showed that people's nerves had been shaken by the September war scare. (Perhaps there was better proof of nerve strain in some of the observations made upon the incident. Dorothy Thompson, for example, in her syndicated column, called the episode "the news story of the century—an event which made a greater contribution to an understanding of Hitlerism, Mussolinism, Stalinism, anti-Semitism, and all the other terrorisms of our times than all the words about them that have been written by reasonable men," and said that it "cast a brilliant and cruel light upon the failure of popular education." That was pretty tall talk.) There was other and more reliable evidence of mounting apprehension. Throughout the United States in the winter of 1938-39 there was a marked upsurge of anti-Semitism, noticeable even in Western towns where Jews were few, and even in

the behavior of men and women who had no use for Hitler. Father Coughlin's anti-Semitic broadcasts did much to accelerate this sort of uneasy scapegoat-hunting. Among many liberals there was manifest a new and lively fear of Nazi influence within the United States; people who all their lives had laughed at red scares and had made light of the Russian connections of the Communist Party saw nothing to laugh at in Nazi propaganda in America and cried out that organizations with German connections must be investigated and broken up. Dinner-table conversations turned to the alarming increase in German trade with Latin America (which actually was no larger, relatively, than in 1913 and was less than half as great as United States trade with Latin America) and to the ominous question whether Nazi planes operating from South American bases could not quickly smash the Panama Canal and destroy American cities. Many lovers of peace had become obsessed with a sense that the United States, along with the rest of the world, was on its way to an inevitable doom. "When war breaks out in Europe, we'll be in it in six months—nothing on earth can stop it." The best that sanity seemed able to offer by way of reply was, "If in 1929 our best thinkers thought capitalism was triumphant, and in 1933 they thought communism was becoming triumphant, and in 1938 they think fascism is becoming triumphant, what will they think in 1943?"

All the while the Administration was quickening its efforts to make American influence felt by upholding the British and French, excoriating Hitler, and trying to impress him with the idea that if he went on he might have America against him. When in November, 1938, there were new and cruel German attacks on Jews, the American Ambassador at Berlin was called home "for report and consultation"; he did not return. Roosevelt said that the news from Germany had "deeply shocked public opinion in the United States." The American delegation at the Lima Con-

ference in December sought strenuously to line up the Latin American nations against interference by European dictators—and met with a limited success. In his annual message to Congress in January, 1939, Roosevelt called for American unity in the face of foreign threats to free institutions, and for a heavy increase in American armaments—which was granted him. Pointedly he said (and he might have added "Berlin papers please copy") that there were "many ways short of war, but stronger and more effective than mere words, of bringing home to aggressor governments the aggregate sentiments of our own people." Later that month a Douglas attack plane crashed at Los Angeles, and soon it was discovered that the passenger in this plane built to United States Army specifications had been a Frenchman; obviously France was being permitted, with the Administration's blessing, to order good new American fighting planes. Then the President held a long secret session with the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, and after this meeting came senatorial rumors—which were sharply denied—that the President had said that if war came, America's frontier would be in France.

On Easter Sunday, as he left Warm Springs, Roosevelt called out to the crowd in the station, "I'll be back in the fall if we don't have a war"; he afterwards made it clear to the press that "we" had been meant to include, however vaguely, the United States. Secretary Ickes, long famed for the deadliness of his epithets, and other members of the Administration, were turning their rhetorical artillery upon the German government. When in due course Roosevelt issued a plea for peace to Hitler and Mussolini in mid-April of 1939—an eloquent document to which Hitler replied, not in a letter, but in a belated speech of great length, refusing guarantees—many observers felt that the plea had been weakened in advance by too much loose anti-Nazi talk by American officials.

Concurrently the pace of aggression in Europe was quickening. In January, 1939, Barcelona fell, and soon the Spanish Civil War was over: a fascist victory. In March Germany broke her promises at Munich, overran the rest of Czechoslovakia, and annexed Memel. In April Mussolini, not to be quite outdone, seized Albania. Then followed a pause; the news from Europe dropped for a time out of the American headlines. But already there had been a new intensification of the American dismay at these constant and frightening disturbances.

In March, 1939, a Gallup poll on the question "In case war breaks out, should we sell Britain and France food supplies?" had brought a Yes from 76 per cent of those polled; in April the question was repeated and the percentage jumped from 76 to 82. In March the further question "Should we sell them airplanes and other war materials?" brought a Yes from 52 per cent; in April the figure had gone way up to 66—a striking increase. True, only 16 per cent of those polled thought we should send the Army and Navy abroad to help England and France. But the great majority of Americans wanted to help somehow—and more than half of the Gallup voters expressed the ominous expectation (though not by any means the wish) that if war broke out America would be "drawn in."

Was the United States moving along that road to war which only a few years previously it had tried so hard to block off with red lights?

§ 4

On the morning of Sunday, April 30, 1939, the gates of the New York World's Fair were thrown open. The theme of the Fair was "The World of Tomorrow"; the opening ceremonies were held in a vast enclosure called the "Court of Peace." Could anybody in that throng of tens of thou-

sands, gathered under a blue sky in which hung mountainous clouds, fail to reflect upon the question ironically posed by those two phrases?

Here, all about one, was the embodiment of the American dream, 1939 model. Bold modern architecture, sometimes severe, sometimes garish, but always devoid of the traditional classical or Gothic decoration, and glowing with color—offering the first chance most of the visitors had ever had to see what modern architects might do if the economic condition of the country let them go in for large-scale construction. Gardens, fountains, waterfalls leaping off buildings; music resounding everywhere; at night, the splendor of superb lighting. Miracles of invention and of industrial efficiency to goggle at. A sense of festival. Here every man could briefly feel himself, if not a king, at least the citizen of a gay and friendly country, the beneficiary of spotless industrial engineering, privileged to idle along the lagoons, to watch the fireworks flower in orange and blue and green, to see the trylon piercing the sky behind the young trees turned silver by the lights. Here General Motors and Remington Rand sat cheek by jowl with the WPA, Soviet Russia presented her delights to people who would presently compare them with Eastman Kodak's delights; in this fantastic paradise there were visible no social classes, no civil feuds, no international hates, no hints of grimy days in dreary slums, no depression worries. Here was a dream of wealth, luxury, and lively beauty, with coca-cola at every corner and the horns of the busses jauntily playing "The Sidewalks of New York."

Outside the gates was a nation one-third of whose citizens were still "ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished," and a world from which the hope of true peace seemed to have passed forever. What would the real world of tomorrow hold for America?

Still the basic economic problem of America remained

unsolved. An uncertain climb out of the pit of the Recession brought the Federal Reserve Board's adjusted index up to 102 in August, 1939. But that was only a shade higher than the point it had reached during the New Deal Honeymoon; and still there were nine and a half million people unemployed, according to the estimates of the National Industrial Conference Board. The colossal enterprise of work relief was becoming every day more clearly a tragic makeshift, demoralizing, as the years dragged on, to many if not to most of those unfortunate enough to be dependent upon it. Though it had been generously conceived, had produced some fine achievements in the arts and some welcome civic improvements, and had at least kept millions of men and women from the extremities of want and despair, nevertheless as a permanent institution the WPA offered an intolerable prospect—and it was getting to look all too permanent. The farm problem was still unsolved, despite Secretary Wallace's herculean efforts; instead of an ever-normal granary the United States seemed to be saddled with an ever-subsidized granary. A kindly government could alleviate the lot of families forced off the land, but could not yet catch up with the tractor as it drove new families, east and west, into homeless migration. Fine things as well as foolish things had been done in Washington, but still the prosperity which had vanished in 1929 looked as unattainable as a rainbow.

Must America at last be reconciled to the dictum that as its population growth slowed up its economic growth must slow up too? Must it accept either a continuance of this twilight-prosperity, with the burden of carrying the unemployed becoming progressively greater, or else a grim deflation of prices and wages and debts till the labor surplus could become absorbed—a deflation which might be even less endurable than that of 1929-33? No one could relish either of those prospects. Well then—a war boom? No gain

thus made could be lasting. A speculative boom? That, too, would carry with it the seeds of its own destruction. No healthy expansion of the American economy could be achieved without a steady flow of money into new investment (along with a maintenance of popular purchasing power), and this flow was still dammed.

What dammed it? That question could not be answered adequately without taking into account one of the most significant economic developments of the nineteen-thirties: the increased importance of the great corporations which I have called economic principalities. Everybody was aware that the power of the Federal government had grown enormously during the decade, until its fingers reached into every nook and cranny of the country. Everybody was aware that all manner of activities and enterprises which had been managed on an individual or small-group basis were now becoming socialized—until even that company of rugged individualists, the medical profession, found itself fighting a rear-guard action against the gradual advance of group medicine, even of state medicine. Not everybody was aware of the extent to which the general trend toward centralization, toward bigger and bigger units of social and economic action, was affecting business as well.

Gone since 1929, it was true, were the dizzy days when promoters merged companies into super-companies and super-companies into super-super-companies, when holding-company pyramids were built four and six and eight stories high, and little groups of men in Wall Street, playing with paper stock certificates, thought they were well on their way to the control of all American enterprise. Some of the pyramids had fallen down in the Depression, others had been at least partly razed by a disapproving government; and as for the rest, their days of skyscraping growth were over—for the present at least. The public wanted no more Insulls or Van Sweringens to flourish. Yet most of the great corporate struc-

tures which had been put together in the generation before 1929, and especially in the decade before 1929, still stood intact after the storm.

Not only that: it was these great corporations, generally speaking, which during the nineteen-thirties had been making whatever money was made in business. Look at these revealing figures from E. D. Kennedy's *Dividends to Pay*. In the year 1935 there were nearly half a million corporations in the United States, and they made, between them, a tidy profit of over a billion and two-thirds dollars—but if one omitted from the reckoning 960 of the biggest (the 960 companies, with stocks active on the New York Exchange, for which the Standard Statistics Company tabulated earnings) that collective profit turned into a deficit. In short, in 1935 the 960 big companies were, collectively, making a profit; the 475,000 or so smaller companies were, collectively, losing money. Mr. Kennedy was not able to show what happened in 1937 to the great mass of corporations because the government figures had not yet appeared, but he was able to trace the further fortunes of the 960 at the top, and his findings provided more illumination. Of all the money made in 1937 by these 960 aristocrats of business, well over a half—60 per cent—was made by just 42 of them; and nearly a quarter—24 per cent—was made by a mere six of the very biggest. (You would like the names of these six? They were General Motors, American Telephone, Standard Oil of New Jersey, United States Steel, du Pont, and General Electric.)

Imagine yourself setting up a new company to compete against one of these giants or even a group of lesser giants, with their huge resources and their ability to maintain prices by mutual custom and business understanding if by no more devious means, and you will begin to understand one of the reasons why new investments did not flourish. Too many of the roads on which it might wish to proceed were already

occupied by marchers able to keep the highway to themselves.

Parenthetically it should be added that the great principalities were now becoming less dependent upon the investment houses of Wall Street for capital; they could maintain and modernize and even expand their plants out of their own ample pockets. Perhaps the palmy days of the Wall Street bankers were over—not only because of government restrictions but also because the great principalities were becoming more powerful than the banks. Was it wholly irrelevant that during the last two or three years of the decade several big corporations, notably U. S. Steel and General Motors, moved in one way or another to reduce the authority of officers and directors who represented essentially Wall Street and the traditional power of capital, to increase the power of men who represented the active management, or to add directors who represented local business interests outside Wall Street? True, there was doubtless a political motive behind such moves. The managers of the principalities had waked up to the fact that they were in politics whether they wanted to be or not. "Public relations" were no longer a mere press-agent's job, but demanded the attention of at least a vice-president. The big corporations were spending millions to win popularity. Wall Street was not popular; why not go through the motions, at least, of casting it off? Nevertheless there may have been more to it than that. Perhaps the day was at hand when, figuratively speaking, Mr. Sloan would not call on Mr. Morgan; Mr. Morgan would call on Mr. Sloan.

The profits of these great principalities went into millions of American homes, for their cohorts of stockholders had never been so numerous. But to only a tiny minority of wealthy stockholders did enough money go to be potentially an important factor in new investment. This tiny minority, beset with taxes, were in no mood for gambles in the areas

where the great principalities did not stifle competition. "Why take a chance?" they would say; "if we lose, we lose; if we win, the government will take most of it away." They preferred to keep their money invested in the principalities and in tax-exempt bonds, or even to hold it uninvested in cash. Give us a government that will free us from burdens and restrictions, they had been shouting, and you will see new investment burgeon. But the behavior of the business indices in 1938 and 1939, when the New Deal had certainly become less adventurous and more willing to conciliate capital, had given little indication that such would be the case. There was always some good reason why the burgeoning must be postponed: the man who in 1937 had sworn that the return of "confidence" waited only for the repeal of the undistributed profits tax lamented in 1938 and 1939 that new investment was being held back by the fear of war. The banks continued to be glutted with idle money.

There were other reasons, of course, why the money lay idle. Who, for example, would risk money in new building when costs were held so high—by crushing real-estate taxes, high prices for materials, high hourly wages for labor, antiquated and inefficient building methods, etc.—that no profit could be anticipated? Here the difficulty was not that a few great corporations monopolized the field, but that a multitude of suzerainties, large and small, and a multitude of frozen debts and unresolved Depression problems, prevented great corporations from entering the field at all with the economies of large-scale production. Yet on the whole the generalization appeared to stand. The highways of industry and trade were well filled with going concerns with which only big, well-heeled companies could compete, and the men who could afford to bring such companies to birth had no enthusiasm for the battle. They thought their troubles were mostly political; actually, the evidence suggested that they were mostly economic.

During 1938 and 1939 the government, through a Temporary National Economic Committee, set out to investigate the blocking of new investment, especially by the competition-stifling practices of the principalities (which for political reasons were referred to by the good old fighting term "monopolies"). Some of the New Dealers were studying the prospects for investments by the government itself to take up the slack. But the problem was thorny; and when in the spring of 1939 the President made a gesture in the direction of investment by the government—combining the idea with that of unemployment relief in what was called the Lending-Spending Bill—Congress threw the whole scheme out the window. (Not content with thus rebuffing Roosevelt, Congress cut the admirable Theatre Project out of the WPA and decreed that wage-rates for skilled workmen on the WPA should be cut, thus provoking a strike which the columnist Bugs Baer called the "mutiny on the bounty.") The 1940 elections were becoming visible to the naked political eye, ardent New Dealers were prophesying a third term for Roosevelt, Republicans and conservative Democrats were taking a rich delight in demolishing his domestic proposals, and the economic issues were becoming lost in the political shuffle.

Now at last it looked as if the New Deal was really through. It had played its cards and had no more new ones to offer—or, if it had them, it could no longer induce Congress to let it play them. The country was manifestly wearying of economic experiment; the Republican party had taken advantage of this weariness to make substantial gains in the 1938 elections. The social salvationists were losing their zeal for legislating prosperity. Now, like Roosevelt himself, they had become tense with excitement about foreign affairs and had half forgotten the dismal unsolved problems on the domestic front; they were either forming committees for the defense of freedom and tolerance against

dictatorship, or breaking up into new alignments over the question whether America should stay out of war at all costs or come to the rescue of Britain and France. Yet still the secret of prosperity remained undiscovered.

For three and a half of the ten years since the Panic of 1929 the Hoover Administration had fought valiantly but vainly against disaster. For six and a half years the Roosevelt Administration had experimented and palliated, and had merely kept disaster at bay—to the tune of an increase of not far from twenty billion dollars in the public debt of the United States.

But was that all that could be said?

On the credit side of the national ledger there were certain entries to be made. *Item 1.* No revolution, no dictatorship born of the Depression had done away with the essential civil liberties of Americans. *Item 2.* The government in power had never willfully denied the principle stated in Roosevelt's second inaugural, that "we are determined to make every American citizen the subject of his country's interest and concern, and we will never regard any faithful law-abiding group within our borders as superfluous." Whatever sins were to be charged against the New Deal, at least it had done its task humanely. (This item loomed large in the eyes of men who looked abroad in 1939 and thought of the hordes of refugees seeking footholds where they would not be "regarded as superfluous.") *Item 3.* Despite all the miseries of the Depression and the recurrent fears of new economic decline and of war, the bulk of the American people had not yet quite lost their basic asset of hopefulness.

It was still their instinct to transform a suburban swamp into a city of magic and call it "The World of Tomorrow." In that world of tomorrow the show which they liked best of all and stood in hour-long queues to enjoy was the General Motors Futurama, a picture of the possible delights of 1960. They still liked to build the biggest dam in all crea-

tion and toy with the idea of the happy farmsteads it would water, the enormous engines it would drive, the new and better business it would stimulate. They still liked to stand with elbows on the fence at the edge of the farm and say, "Sooner or later I aim to buy those forty acres over there and go into this thing on a bigger scale." They still scrimped to give their sons and daughters "a better education than we ever had," feeling obscurely that a better education would be valued in the years to come.

A nation tried in a long ordeal had not yet lost heart.

§ 5

So one meditated as the summer of 1939 slipped by. But always now the meditation was interrupted by the recurring question: What will happen in Europe, and what will it mean to us here?

That question could hardly fail to be in the back of one's mind when, early in June, the King and Queen of England visited the United States. The Roosevelts tactfully made the most of this opportunity to cement the bonds of Anglo-American amity and erase whatever unfavorable memories lingered from *l'affaire Simpson*—and from Munich. Their reception of their royal guests was carefully arranged to be both dignified and heartily American, with more than a touch of the military.

When the King and Queen arrived in Washington—on a day of terrific heat which must have made the King's epauletted admiral's uniform almost intolerable—ten "flying fortress" bombing planes roared over the route of the procession to the White House, and the cars in which rode the King and the President, and the Queen and Mrs. Roosevelt, were preceded by sixty businesslike-looking baby tanks. After the state dinner that evening, there was a White

House concert the program for which included Negro spirituals, cowboy ballads, and square dances, with well-assorted solos: not only by Lawrence Tibbett but also by Marian Anderson, the great Negro singer—with Kate Smith contributing that perennial radio favorite, "When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain." Three days later, their Royal Highnesses picnicked with the Roosevelts at Hyde Park, and the King consumed hot dogs and beer. (He could have dodged the hot dogs, for the menu also included cold ham, smoked and plain turkey, and various salads, as well as baked beans and brown bread, doughnuts and ginger bread, cookies, coffee, and soft drinks—but he knew well that a hot dog eaten smilingly in America might be worth a dozen battleships.) When the guests boarded their train at Hyde Park that evening, the President clasped his hands together high over his head in democratic farewell and the crowd sang "Auld Lang Syne" and "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

Nor did Mrs. Roosevelt, in her amiable newspaper column "My Day," fail to take the American public into her confidence about her concern over the domestic arrangements for the visit—such as the care taken to provide the guests with early morning tea and with water chilled but not iced—and about those small mishaps which would cause every hostess who read of them to vibrate with sympathy—such as the fact that a butler entering the big library at Hyde Park with a tray of drinks slipped and dropped the tray with a crash.

The King and Queen in their turn were by universal consent cordial, unassuming, and engaging. The crowds both in Washington and New York were enormous and enthusiastic; in fact, Mrs. Roosevelt remarked in her column that during the procession in Washington she had been quite unable to explain to the Queen what buildings they

were passing because the roars of applause drowned every word. No untoward incident marred the triumphal royal progress. Altogether, the visit was an almost incredible success.

A few weeks after this success, the President tried hard to get Congress to rewrite the Neutrality Act and do away with the mandatory ban on the export of arms and munitions to warring countries. Not yet, however, was Congress ready to take this leap. In a matter which might determine the issue of war or peace, a majority of the men on the Hill were still unwilling to yield to this volatile man who so firmly believed that Hitler must be stopped and that the United States must help stop him by making it plain that if he did not hold his hand he would have American planes and guns, if not American soldiers and sailors, to reckon with.

Wherever one turned, that summer, the thought of Europe followed.

The Transatlantic Clippers (41-ton planes with a wing-spread of 152 feet) began carrying passengers from Long Island Sound to France and England—a potential link between allies, one asked oneself, or between belligerency and neutrality? The American submarine *Squalus* sank off Portsmouth in 240 feet of water, and 33 of her 59 men were rescued by diving bell—was it just a coincidence that a British submarine and a French submarine were lost at about the same time? *The Grapes of Wrath* lay upon the summer-porch table—and beside it lay *Days of Our Years*, *Inside Asia*, and *Not Peace, But a Sword*, all three of which took the American reader overseas. The long quarrel between the TVA and the Commonwealth & Southern utility system was moderated with the government's purchase of the Tennessee Electric Power Company's properties—and one realized that the hatred of Roosevelt which had burned for years in the hearts of big business men was already dying

to embers. A salesman could still get orders by sending in a card which said

If You Don't Give Me An Order
I'll Vote For Him Again

but some of the once-indignant business men were even beginning to like Roosevelt now—for his foreign policy.

Prospective débutantes were wondering, that summer, who would succeed Brenda Diana Duff Frazier as the "glamour girl" of the new season; the idea of glamour (or "oomph" if you preferred) was now so ubiquitous that *Life* was calling Thomas E. Dewey "Republican Glamour Boy No. 1," and Attorney-General Murphy "New Deal Glamour Boy No. 1." The fashion experts were returning from Europe with the news that Paris said corsets and hour-glass figures. Summer vacationists were bending over their Chinese checkers; trying to emulate the swimming mermaids and mermen of Billy Rose's Aquacade; comparing Grover Whalen's financial troubles, as he tried to prevent the "World of Tomorrow" from going bankrupt, with the troubles of the managers of the San Francisco Fair; discussing Johnstown's speed on the racetracks; driving to the movies to see Robert Donat in "Goodbye Mr. Chips," or Bette Davis in "Dark Victory." Would all these everyday trifles of the 1939 summer season come back to memory, some day, as incidents of the happy lull before the storm?

One thing was almost certain. If war broke out in Europe, we should look back upon the day of declaration as the day when a line was drawn across our national life. Whatever strange form the war might take, whatever might be America's relation to it, it would bring America new problems, new alignments, new hopes and fears.

But surely there wouldn't be war. Things were really rather quiet in Europe, on the surface, in July and early August. And if Hitler should make a new crisis over Danzig

and the Polish corridor, surely somebody would back down before it was too late. Somebody always had.

§ 6

The storm moved up late in August.

First, like a rumble of premonitory thunder, came the report that von Ribbentrop was to fly to Moscow to sign a German-Russian agreement. Then came the agreement itself; it was proclaimed in streamer headlines in the papers of August 24:—

GERMANY AND RUSSIA SIGN 10-YEAR NON-AGGRESSION PACT; BIND EACH OTHER NOT TO AID OPPONENTS IN WAR ACTS; HITLER REBUFFS LONDON; BRITAIN AND FRANCE MOBILIZE

That announcement sent ideas, expectations, and assumptions reeling the world over. In America, the supposed experts on world affairs stumbled for a foothold in reality as their logical premises fell away from under them. The communists performed quick ideological contortions as they saw the party line coming to a hairpin turn. Business men decided not to put in that buying order yet awhile, to wait till the shape of things was clearer; steamship officials debated the canceling of sailing dates; the stock market hesitated, sold off a little, wobbled uneasily. Americans went again to their radios for last-minute European bulletins.

Days of negotiations, mobilizations, frantic efforts for settlement, threats and counter-threats—then, very early on the morning of September 1, Hitler's armies marched into Poland.

It had begun. But still there was a question hanging in the air—what about Britain and France?

All that day—it was a Friday—the question remained not quite answered, and all the next day too. It traveled along with Labor Day week-enders departing for their three-day holiday, burned in their minds even on the golf links and the bathing beaches.

The answer was delivered at last on Sunday morning, September 3—ten years to a day from that hot September 3 of 1929 with which this chronicle opened. Over the radio came from London the voice of Neville Chamberlain, an infinitely unmartial voice, speaking in tones low and tired and sad:—

"This morning the British Ambassador in Berlin handed to the German government a final note stating that unless we heard from them by eleven o'clock that they were preparing at once to withdraw their troops from Poland, a state of war would exist between us. I have to tell you that no such undertaking has been received and in consequence this country is at war with Germany."

With those sentences, spoken so quietly thousands of miles away, an era ended for America and another one began.