

# GERMAN REALITIES

*A Guide to the Future Peace of Europe*

## GUSTAV STOLPER

Author of *THIS AGE OF FABLE* and *GERMAN ECONOMY*

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... generation perhaps is better equipped  
... Stolper to explain to Americans the  
... the German problem, the right solution  
of which is so tragically indispensable to peace.

Sir Norman Angell

# GERMAN REALITIES

BY GUSTAV STOLPER

THIS BOOK answers two leading questions: What are the realities of the German problem today, nearly three years after the unconditional surrender? And what are the basic misconceptions which may already have made the German problem insoluble and peace in Europe thereby impossible?

The course of events in Germany has taken an entirely different direction from that expected at the end of the war in 1945. To indicate a way out of the present dangerous confusion, Mr. Stolper begins by taking stock. How much of the biological substance of the German people has been destroyed and what does this imply for the future of German and European economy and the political balance in Europe? How much German material equipment was destroyed? What does the complete destruction of currency mean for the social and economic fabric of Germany? How does the moral destruction express itself? What has happened in that part of Germany behind the iron curtain? How wide and deep is the cleavage between the East and West?

The second part of his study is devoted to special problems. These include reparations, the war potential of revived industry, the struggle between socialism and private capitalism, and the question of a constitution for a restored Germany. Mr. Stolper sums up this brilliant and authoritative analysis with a provocative restatement of the historical errors in our thinking about German realities which may be fatal to the making of a durable peace.

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BY  
GUSTAV STOLPER

REYNAL & HITCHCOCK  
*New York*

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**To My Three Sons  
Who Served  
with the American Forces  
in Germany**

## PREFACE

THE IDEA of this book was conceived when, as a member of former President Herbert Hoover's mission, I revisited Germany in February of this year. The bulk of the manuscript was written in Switzerland during several summer months in close contact with German men and matters. And the finished book goes to press in the days immediately following the utter failure of the London Conference of the foreign ministers. So much was this failure anticipated that not one word had to be altered in the text on account of this momentous event.

This is not a book about a hard or a soft peace, about the good or the bad Germans, or whatever other irrelevancies have up to now dominated the debate on the German problem, though not the course of history. History goes its own inexorable way, which is not altogether determined by human folly and ignorance—however powerful forces they are—but also by the weight of the underlying realities. Just what these realities are this book undertakes to analyze.

I am grateful for the proper occasion to pay my personal tribute to Herbert Hoover. I do not know Mr. Hoover's views on most current political issues, nor has he ever inquired into mine. I guess we disagree on quite a few. Mr. Hoover has not seen any part of the manuscript of this book and is therefore free of any responsibility for its content. At the same time, I am proud to confess that its underlying philosophy is the same as that of the three reports which Mr. Hoover submitted to the President of the United States and to which I was privileged to contribute my little share. This philosophy I may presume to epitomize as passionate abhorrence of human misery and servitude. Peace must be built on tolerable living conditions, moral and material, in a world of free men. Above all, it must be built on truth. We have hardly made a beginning toward such a peace.

It has been my good fortune to observe Herbert Hoover at

work. In a long, variegated career in several lands I have never met a leading statesman acting with greater wisdom, knowledge, dignity, tact and, most of all, human kindness. It is the Quaker who is shocked by the sight of human suffering, the Republican who cannot bear the revival of slavery in the Europe of the Twentieth Century. To have witnessed and helped, in however humble a capacity, the work of this great American I shall cherish as happy memory. It inspired not a little the painful labor of this book.

Among the many friends, American and German, who aided me with advice and criticism most must remain unnamed for obvious reasons of their position or residence. A few sources are referred to in the text. I wish, however, to mention here with special thanks one friend, Hans A. Kallmann, Berlin, who spent many precious hours of day and night of his well-deserved summer vacation in Switzerland to write a current commentary as the manuscript grew. I accepted many of his suggestions and rejected others, but I was always stimulated by his friendship and his devotion to the work as a civil servant in the most difficult place for which the American Government is responsible in these days.

As with my previous books, Miss Martha Anderson has performed an invaluable editorial job. In particular, she tried to protect me against the "Infatuation with Sound of Own Words Department" of the *New Yorker* of whose watchful authority she as a most experienced editor is scared. I do not think she has been entirely successful. But if such words as chaos, collapse, catastrophe occur more than once, I can assure the *New Yorker* that it has little to do with infatuation or carelessness. Even the immense wealth of the English language is not commensurate with the inexpressible horrors of the German Realities.

Greenhaven-Rye, N. Y.  
December 18, 1947



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OF AUSTRIAN origin, trained from early youth as a writer on economics and politics, Gustav Stolper became in the 'twenties owner, publisher, and editor of the *German Economist* in Berlin, a weekly journal. Till the advent of Hitler, Stolper and his paper were in the forefront of the fight against Hitlerism and reaction. Aside from the political fight — also carried on as a leader of the Democratic Party and member of the Reichstag for Hamburg — Stolper's strength lay in his thorough knowledge and independent judgment of the European economic set-up.

In 1933 Gustav Stolper came to America with his family, and immediately set his full energy to the job of becoming an expert in his field and as much conversant with civic affairs here as he had been in the old countries.

In February 1947 came the acknowledgement of a complete fusion of the two halves of Stolper's professional background, when Herbert Hoover chose him as his economic expert on his Presidential Mission to Germany. Their findings were laid down in Hoover's Third Report to the President, issued in March 1947. This book is the outcome of intense study then started and carried further during two months in Switzerland, and was completed before the author's death in December, 1947.

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