

# Germany between two wars

A STUDY OF  
PROPAGANDA AND  
WAR-GUILT

*By*  
LINDLEY FRASER

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## PREFACE TO ENGLISH EDITION

THE writing of this book was undertaken in the spring of 1944 at the invitation of persons officially concerned with the occupation and administration of Germany after the end of the Second World War. It was primarily intended to be read by Germans—as a means of showing them how they had been misled by their own propagandists both before and during the National Socialist régime. But it was also designed to assist British and American officers and any others who may be in contact with Germans in the immediate post-war years to understand the intellectual background of the people with whom they will be dealing. It does not profess to be a *history* of the period between the two wars. In the central chapters I have found it convenient to adopt a narrative form of presentation, though even there without any attempt to relate events in their chronological sequence. But essentially the book is an *argument*—a reasoned refutation of the main articles of National Socialist teachings on the origins of the war, and an exposition of the role of propaganda as part of Hitler's preparations. Towards the end of the book I attempt to show the extent to which Germany as a whole can be considered guilty of the war—though without entering into the unprofitable controversy as to whether there are, or are not, 'good Germans'.

The English and American reader may feel that I have argued certain points at unnecessary length, particularly in the last section of Chapter I and in certain parts of Chapter VI, where I deal with National Socialist allegations which seem to him too obviously false—or too obviously unimportant—to deserve the attention I have paid them. But all these allegations have been, in their time, whole-heartedly and indeed passionately accepted by many intelligent Germans—and the realization of that fact is in itself a not unimportant contribution to our understanding of the German mentality, which has shown itself amazingly able to believe the incredible and attach weight to the trivial in all questions relating to German national honour and German national guiltlessness.

Much of the material of the book has been included in broadcasts delivered by me in German during my work as B.B.C.

German News Commentator. At the end of 1941 I delivered a series of talks which covered the main ground, and thereafter I and various of my colleagues from time to time reverted to the theme. We know that we were heard and that our arguments had some efficacy in shaking our listeners on the fundamental issue of war guilt—particularly when we dealt with the theme of the secret rearmament of Germany during the twenties and early thirties (see Chapter IV of the present work). But the material used in these broadcasts has been greatly added to and revised, the argument elaborated, the subject-matter rearranged, and the whole case against the National Socialist version of the events of the last thirty years presented from a post-war point of view. The book must not be thought of as simply a reprint of a series of broadcast talks.

I have made no attempt to provide an exhaustive list of my sources and authorities. References on particular points have, however, been included in footnotes to the text. And more generally I must acknowledge my debt to Mr. Gathorne Hardy's *Survey of International Affairs*, and to the following Oxford Pamphlets: Falls, *Was Germany defeated in 1918?*; Arnold Foster, *The Blockade of Germany, 1914-19*; Wheeler-Bennett, *The Treaties of Brest-Litovsk*; Gathorne Hardy, *The Fourteen Points and the Treaty of Versailles*; R. R. Kuczynski, *Living Space and Population Problems*; and Brierly, *Encirclement*.

I could not have written this book in the middle of my other labours had I not had the assistance and advice of a number of my colleagues and friends, to all of whom—and particularly to Mr. Duncan Wilson, Dr. H. Koeppler, Mr. S. D. Stirk, and Miss A. Andrews—my best thanks are due. The British Broadcasting Corporation generously allowed me a month's special leave in March 1944, during which I was able to write the first draft of the manuscript.

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With these modifications the Fourteen Points represented the agreed view of the Allies as to the shape of the peace settlement.



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