

Germany has been disarmed; the Allied Powers have not made good their promise, and there is a widespread and growing opinion in Germany that they have no intention of doing so. Hence the rising demand which no Government in Germany can possibly ignore, that the Allies must disarm or the disarmament clauses of the Treaty of Versailles be repudiated. In part this demand is based on a feeling of helplessness against France and her allies, in part on a sense of inequality. In the family of nations states take rank largely in accordance with their military or naval power. To keep German armaments permanently lower than those of Belgium is to German nationals an intolerable injustice. And a sense of injustice is a dangerous emotion, whether in domestic or international politics.

It is on such sentiments that Hitlerism feeds. Hitlerism is largely a counsel of resentment and despair. It offers little that is constructive; its chief programme is simply the repudiation of the Treaty of Versailles. The economic depression has undoubtedly increased Hitler's following, but he was a growing force long before the depression hit Germany. To-day his party is the largest and most aggressive in Germany. So far it has been relatively content to advance to power by way of the ballot-box; but there are many who fear that it will resort to direct action, as did Fascism which it professes to follow. The present economic and financial crisis, the strength of Hitlerism and its appeal to the worst in national sentiment, make Germany ripe for revolution. The virtual dictatorship of the Brüning Government may, of course, stave it off, but there is the presidential election coming in May. Whether the personal popularity of the aged Hindenburg, if he chooses to stand again, will enable him to win against Hitler or one of his lieutenants, remains in the lap of the gods. In any case, the dangerous internal situation in Germany, both economically and politically, meantime tends to stiffen the French *bloc* against disarmament.

Reaction to the French policy of military security has not, however, been confined to Germany. Italy, too, has been affected. There are, of course, specific points of dispute between France and Italy, as for example, boundaries between their African colonies, but the matter goes deeper. Italy has found herself diplomatically isolated by the French policy, and, what is more, strategically insecure. Without the resources at home to feed her people or to fight a first-class war whatever her armaments, Italy has become apprehensive of the growing French fleet in the Mediterranean and the alliance with her eastern neighbour, Jugo-Slavia. The situation would concern a Socialist Government scarcely less than that of