

left office after the elections of 1930, the hope that the people of Danzig might develop a new Danzig tradition, independent of Berlin, and closely collaborating with Poland, finally disappeared.

21. *Danzig's Nazification.*—In the 1930 elections the Nazis increased their representation from one to twelve seats in the Volkstag, whose numbers had been reduced to 72. They were thus able to hold the balance between the main groups, and to exert a powerful influence on the Centre-Nationalist coalition which took office in 1931. In the 1933 election the Nazis gained 38 seats out of 72 in the Volkstag. In spite of propaganda and intimidation the Nazis had not yet succeeded in gaining the two-thirds majority which would empower them to alter the constitution of Danzig. But they had gained a majority of seats; and Dr. Rauschning became the first Nazi President of the Senate, which was composed of 8 Nazi members, 2 Centre and 1 independent. Dr. Rauschning was subsequently turned out as being too loyal to the constitution and later left the party and escaped from Germany. At the elections of 1935, 60 per cent. of the population voted Nazi compared with 50 per cent. in 1933. The Nazis, however, only gained one more seat. This political set-back was followed by a ruthless campaign to exterminate the Opposition, culminating in the dissolution of the Centre Party in 1937, and adoption of the Nuremberg Laws in 1938. The slogan "Back to the Reich" was now openly used. All authority was divided between Dr. Greiser, the President, and Herr Forster, the Nazi *Gauleiter*. In August 1939, by a decree of the Senate, Herr Forster took over complete power in the Free City, thus sweeping away the Versailles settlement in respect of Danzig.

22. It has always been one of the principal aims of National Socialism not only to regain all the territory lost as a result of the War of 1914-18 but also to suppress Poland as an independent State. The first step taken in Danzig itself was Hitler's appointment of Forster in 1930 as his personal lieutenant in the Free City. The next step, taken after Hitler's accession to power, was the lulling of Polish suspicions and the obtaining of a breathing-space by the German-Polish Agreement of 1934. The next stage was the open adoption by Hitler of the rôle of protector towards Danzig and the gradual weaning of the city from the protection and tutelage of the League and the Western Powers—a policy which led Mr. Sean Lester in 1937 to feel it impossible to continue to hold the office of High Commissioner.

23. From 1935 onwards the Nazi Government (Senate) in Danzig acted in a manner increasingly contrary not only to the spirit but also to the letter of the city's constitution. The High Commissioner declared, indeed, that even the elections of 1935 took place "in conditions contrary to the constitution." The effective power was concentrated more and more in the hands of the *Gauleiter*, and the authority left to the Senate became smaller and smaller. The powers of the League of Nations in regard to the internal affairs of the city virtually lapsed after the President of the Senate had made it clear to the Council at Geneva in July 1936 that the Nazi authorities in the Free City, with the backing of the German Government, did not intend to allow the League to intervene for the protection of Danzigers who were opposed to the Nazi régime. The Council thereupon appointed a Committee of three of its members (with the British member as *rapporteur*) to follow the situation in Danzig, and in particular to decide what questions should be referred to the League; and early in 1937 it appointed Professor Burckhardt to succeed Mr. Lester as High Commissioner. In effect the Nazis were able to consolidate their hold upon the Free City during the next two years without interference from the League.

24. *Events in 1939.*—On the 28th April, 1939, six weeks after the German occupation of Czechoslovakia, Germany denounced the German-Polish Agreement of the 26th January, 1934, and put forward to Poland a demand for the return of Danzig to Germany, referring to conversations which had already taken place between the two Governments on this latter subject. At the same time Germany demanded a road and railway across the Corridor, under German sovereignty. These demands were given public expression by Hitler in the Reichstag on the same day (the 28th April). On the 3rd June the Danzig Senate informed the Polish Commissioner-General at Danzig that Danzig would no longer allow Polish customs inspectors to give orders to Danzig customs officials. In June a *Freicorps* was formed at Danzig and housed in barracks; Danzig Nazi Corps (SA) began to fortify the approaches to the town; some hundreds of SS men arrived in Danzig from East Prussia, and German officers arrived from Berlin to organise the Danzig *Heimwehr*. Military movements increased during July. On the 11th August, Professor Burckhardt, the League High Commissioner, visited