

Because of this attempt by Yugoslavia at self-preservation, Hitler is now seeking to gain by violence what he failed to obtain by subtle means.

The courage of the Yugoslav nation in standing up to the armed might of Germany has electrified the world. It is the more heroic in that Germany within the past few months has gained all the advantages of a complete occupation of Roumania and Bulgaria, and is supported in her present onslaught by Italy and by her control of Hungary, each of which countries have had designs on Yugoslav territory. Italy has, in fact, already boasted of attacking Yugoslavia.

The nazi attempt to subjugate Yugoslavia, followed what has come to be the classic nazi pattern of aggression. Just as Czechoslovakia was half conquered by the occupation of Austria; just as Poland and Hungary were half conquered by the occupation of Czechoslovakia; just as France was more than half defeated by the invasion of the low countries; and just as the nazis hoped by the conquest of Norway and the occupation of France to outflank Britain; so the nazis expected that the outflanking of Yugoslavia by the occupation of Roumania and Bulgaria would serve to undermine the spirit of resistance in the Yugoslav people. The nazis expected that, almost surrounded, Yugoslavia would consider resistance hopeless and surrender without a struggle. The action of Yugoslavia in offering resistance in the face of well-nigh overwhelming odds has undoubtedly come as a surprise to Germany.

Throughout their troubled history, the Yugoslavs have given proof on a hundred battlefields of great military virtues and of a stubborn courage in the face of heavy odds. Their determination to resist this latest act of brutal aggression, to fight, and if need be to die in order to preserve their homeland and their hard-won liberties, opens a chapter, however tragic, which does the highest honour to their great traditions. A reversal of policy so sudden and complete as that witnessed in the case of the Yugoslav administration in the past few days is rare indeed, even in a generation which has become accustomed to kaleidoscopic changes. The Yugoslavs, however, to cite as examples only their immediate neighbours, had before them the fate of Hungary, of Roumania and of Bulgaria. One by one these countries in turn, having yielded to a succession of threats, first economic and then military, have found themselves in the end the victims of German aggression. Whatever form the so-called cooperation took, in practice it was discovered to mean the occupation of their territory by nazi forces, and a complete submission to nazi domination in economic, political and military spheres. All three countries