THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

VANSITTART AND THE GERMAN MENACE, 1939-1945

by

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ABSTRACT

Sir Robert (later Lord) Vansittart was one of those fatally intriguing characters whose claim to fame (or rather misfortune) lay in creating waves for contemporaries. Vansittart (commonly referred to as "Van" by his colleagues) was particularly well known for his anti-German attitude. He preached about the iniquity of German militarism to his own detriment throughout much of his diplomatic career in the British government, a career which spanned the first four decades of the twentieth century. He also tried to "enlighten" his compatriots about the "real" Germany after his retirement in 1941. During the Second World War he was seen as the leading proponent of a harsh peace with Germany and had an immeasureable influence on the British public and government. A study of Vansittart's activities during the Second World War (with which this thesis deals) is, in fact, not merely a biographical sketch, but is, in essence, the history of an idea: germanophobia.

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For my parents

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO 1939

Robert Gilbert Vansittart, Permanent Under-Secretary of State from 1930-1938 and Chief Diplomatic Advisor to the British government from 1938-1941, was an extreme anti-German. Vansittart's germanophobic attitude consisted of a fanatical belief that all Germans, not merely the Nazis, were imbued with militarism. He propagated his anti-German views both before and during World War II. Vansittart was certainly not the only one to speak out on the German menace during the Second World War, but no other figure was to gain such notoriety as he in doing so. Even Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin regarded Vansittart as Britain's number one German hater.[1] Vansittart certainly became a popular figure in Britain during the Second World War. He received a considerable amount of attention in the United States as well. In Germany, while Vansittart was wrong in believing that he had been held up in that country as "bogy man number one," his name lent some credence to the idea that the Allies were going to destroy the Reich.[2]

Vansittart's extreme anti-German views created a massive controversy in Britain during the years 1941-1945. This debate centred around the questions of the German national character and the continuity of a militaristic tradition in German history. It underlay such issues as

what sort of occupation was to be implemented and what kind of reparations and retribution were to be exacted after the war. Even more basic was the question of how long it would take to reeducate the Germans so that they might become worthy of the victor's trust. Reports of unprecedented mass atrocities as the war progressed made these issues urgent questions.[3] The Vansittart controversy also served as one of the bases for the post-war historiographical debate in Britain about German militarism.[4]

Little has been written about Vansittart's activities during the Second World War and the massive debate he created. The first post-war work dealing with the Vansittart question during World War II is Hans Jaeger's "Vansittart and Vansittartism: A Survey of Controversial Literature."[5] This article, written immediately after Vansittart's death in February 1957, is a brief overview of almost all of Vansittart's publications, most of which were written during the war years. Jaeger tries to set the record straight by attempting to correct some of the myths that had gathered around Vansittart's name. Jaeger further highlights some publications connected with the Vansittart debate and some of Vansittart's adherents and detractors.

Vansittart's biographer, Norman Rose, devotes some one-and-a-half chapters to the Vansittart question during World War II in his 1978 publication Vansittart: Study of a Diplomat.[6] Drawing on a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, Rose highlights some of Vansittart's

diverse activities during the war. The author is basically sound on the question of Vansittart's importance. Rose, however, fails to answer the question of what motivated certain people to side either with or against Vansittart. He also makes no attempt to assess the nature of Vansittart's relationship with the British government both before and after his retirement in 1941. Rose, moreover, fails to explain a central issue: what accepted version of Germany Vansittart was attacking and what new vision of that country he was trying to create.

The next work dealing with the Vansittart debate during World War II is the 1979 article by Aaron Goldman entitled "Germans and Nazis: The Controversy over 'Vansittartism' in Britain during the Second World War."[7] Goldman's account is the best work on the Vansittart question to date. Goldman correctly perceives the importance of the Vansittartite debate. He also identifies the pro- and anti-Vansittartite camps and makes some effort to differentiate currents of opinion within these groups. In addition, Goldman examines more facets of Vansittart's views and activities than anyone else. He is also the only author who attempts to analyze the effect Vansittart had on public opinion. Goldman, however, only briefly examines Vansittart's relationship with the government outside the machine and the amount of influence he had in that capacity. Goldman, moreover, fails to see what Vansittart was really hoping to achieve by attacking accepted views of Germany.

The final work which deals in some detail with Vansittart's activities during World War II is Hermann Fromm's Deutschland in der öffentlichen Kriegszieldiskussion Grossbritanniens 1939-1945.[8] Fromm's work, which devotes one chapter to the Vansittart issue, is particularly useful in providing background material for the various broadcasts Vansittart made during the war. He also correctly identifies the pro- and anti-Vansittartite camps and some of their respective goals. The author deals fairly extensively with the problems Vansittart created for the British Labour party as well. Furthermore, Fromm believes that Vansittart played a very important part in influencing the public debate about Germany. But he, like the others, also failed to discuss adequately Vansittart's relationship with the British government as well as the conception of Germany he was trying to dispel.

While problems exist in all of the different works which deal with Vansittart in a Second World War context, there is an added shortcoming in the current state of the literature. All of the above works were published before the "Vansittart II" collection was opened very recently to the public. This collection, which is housed at the Churchill College Archives, Cambridge, is particularly valuable for the question of Vansittart's activities during the war years. It consists of a vast amount of correspondence to and from members of the government and various

private individuals. I have relied extensively on this collection in writing this thesis.

My thesis is divided into three main chapters. The first of these examines Vansittart's relationship with the British government from 1939 to 1945, both in his official capacity and outside the governmental machine. The second main chapter deals with Vansittart's publications from 1941 to 1945. In this chapter I will try to explain the method by which Vansittart propagated his views in public. My final chapter deals with the public debate within Britain from 1940 to 1945. I have divided this chapter into two sections, one dealing with the pro-Vansittartite camp, and the other dealing with the anti-Vansittartite camp. I have further subdivided these camps, and provided a brief illustration of the ideas and rhetoric of each respective group. Following this chapter is an epilogue in which I discuss Vansittart's post-World War II activities and make some concluding remarks. Before I discuss the first of these chapters, however, it is necessary to trace the evolution of Vansittart's anti-Germanism to 1939.

Robert Gilbert Vansittart was born of moderately well-to-do parents at Wilton House, Farnham, England on 25 June 1881. He was educated at Eton where he excelled as a scholar, particularly in French and German. His decision to opt for the diplomatic service continued a long family tradition of service to the state. During the Boer War,

Vansittart went to Germany to improve his German, proficiency in which (as well as in French) was one of the main requirements for prospective diplomats. Vansittart recounted his experience there some 40 years later:

> I was at a German school at the end of the last century, and learned what it was like to be really hated. For some time a general explosion of Anglophobia had been in full blast. It was unpleasant, sometimes painful, to be in a theatre or a restaurant. It was worse to be at home. The head-master's daughter used to pursue me about the house, even into my bedroom, cursing England, foretelling our destruction and the rise of Germany on our ruins. The other inmates joined in her pastime with gusto and venom.[9]

The result of this experience was that Vansittart came to believe that the Germans were intent on destroying Britain. "These early impressions," according to Aaron Goldman, "were nurtured and confirmed for him as he served in various diplomatic posts abroad before the First World War when Anglo-German rivalry reached its peak."[10] En route to one of his diplomatic posts, Vansittart had another memorable experience. In 1907 Vansittart was sailing on a German boat on the Black Sea. During the voyage, Vansittart observed that a shrike would every now and then spring on and kill one of the small migratory birds crowding the rigging. Writing in 1941, Vansittart stated:

> While I . . . [was trying to shoot the shrike], a thought flew across my mind, and never again left it. That butcher-bird on that German ship behaved exactly like Germany behaves. I was twenty-six at the time, and life looked pretty good

> -- or should have looked, for there were four hundred million happinesses of a sort in Europe. But already I could feel the shadow on them, for I had spent long enough in Germany to know that she would bring on her fourth war as soon as she thought the going was good.[11]

While Vansittart's anti-Germanism was initially the product of personal experience, it was also the product of generational experience. Vansittart returned, in 1911, to a country which was growing increasingly antagonistic towards Germany. Vansittart's apprehensions about Germany were shared by the British populace as well as by his colleagues in the Foreign Office, including Assistant Under-Secretary Sir Eyre Crowe. Until his death in 1925, Crowe seems to have exerted a considerable influence on Vansittart and likely hardened the latter's germanophobic views even further.[12]

During the first part of World War I, Vansittart found himself working as head of the Swedish section of the newly created Contraband Department under Crowe. While serving in this capacity, in 1915 Vansittart received news that his younger brother, Arnold, with whom he had been very close, had been killed by the Germans at Ypres. Even though Arnold's death was not unexpected, it came as a shock and probably also as a catalyst. In the words of Norman Rose, this incident "polarized his previous anti-German convictions to an even greater extent."[13]

As the war dragged on, Vansittart's anti-German views became even stronger, especially after he was appointed

Secretary of the Prisoners-of-War Department under Lord Newton. Vansittart was appalled at the German treatment of Allied Prisoners-of-War and became even further convinced of the barbaric nature of the Germans. This was reflected in his harsh views on how to react to German cruelty, views which were not appreciated.[14]

The years following the First World War witnessed the rapid advancement of Vansittart's career. Vansittart impressed most of the officials with whom he came into contact and was seen to be a very capable diplomat. From 1920 to 1924 he served as Private Secretary to Foreign Secretary Curzon. After acting as Assistant Under-Secretary from 1924 to 1928, he was seconded to the office of Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, in which capacity he ably served Stanley Baldwin and Ramsay MacDonald.[15]

Throughout the 1920s Vansittart's views on Germany did not abate or soften. Vansittart believed that the German militaristic spirit had not really changed at all under the Weimar Republic. The fact that someone like Hitler could come to power by semi-legal means under this regime further reinforced this conviction. As Vansittart wrote in the early 1930s: "The ground was already prepared for Nazism before Hitler sowed the dragon's teeth. . . . A sure way of seeing ahead is to look back."[16] Furthermore, in April 1934, Vansittart stated that Gustav Stresemann, German Foreign Minister from 1924 to 1929, pursued a policy "differing little in essentials from the policy of the Third

Reich or of the Hohenzollerns."[17] Vansittart's view of Chancellor Brüning was a little more favorable. He was at least a moderate and was "hemmed in by fools and hotheads; the general absence of sense," Vansittart said, "was no fault of his."[18]

Vansittart's attitude toward the Germans may have actually become more bitter in 1929. To take Vansittart's mind off the recent death of his first wife, Baldwin took his private secretary on an "enforced" tour of the British war-graves in France. "Again," as Vansittart wrote in his autobiography,

> It was well meant but I came to Arnold's. The endless rows of these cemeteries so lovingly tended stifled forgiveness. 'We are the dead,' said each stone, 'and for what?' This journey stiffened me toward the impenitent and further defeated my ends, for Baldwin disliked harshness, and his country was with him.[19]

A major problem for Vansittart after he was appointed to the position of Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office in 1930 was that he constantly defeated his own ends. Vansittart, who has been dubbed by one writer as "one of history's great own worst enemies,"[20] usually destroyed his own case by overstatement and by forever harping on the themes that a German war was coming and that massive preventative measures had to be taken immediately. These were themes that Vansittart's political masters, and particulary Neville Chamberlain, did not want to hear.[21]

Vansittart's literary style also did nothing to endear him to the Cabinet. It was too high-flying and tended to reinforce suspicions in Whitehall about Vansittart's great independence of mind and positon.[22]

Another problem was that although Vansittart was strong on diagnosis he was deficient when it came to dealing practically with a particular situation. As Sir Alexander Cadogan, Vansittart's successor as Permanent Under-Secretary, noted in late 1945: "Ld. V. was a notable and forceful Cassandra. Where, I think, he failed was in advising in any practical way what to do about it."[23] Furthermore, Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart said of Vansittart: "He was like an honest blunt doctor. His diagnosis was always right. But his bedside manner was said to be unfortunate and his remedies were regarded as dangerous."[24]

Aided by what was virtually a private intelligence agency, Vansittart foresaw and warned about many acts of German aggression in the 1930s. His intelligence agency also provided him with an abundance of material on the internal situation in Germany, including German preparedness for war. Vansittart sponsored this agency because he distrusted the government and its sources of information. The main character in this network was a retired group captain named Malcolm Grahame Christie. Christie, who had been air attaché in Berlin from 1927 to 1930, became a wealthy businessman in Germany after leaving the R.A.F. In this capacity, he maintained excellent contacts with Field

Marshall Göring, other officials in the German Air Ministry, as well as a number of German politicians. A less significant figure in Vansittart's intelligence agency was, after 1937, Professor Philip Conwell-Evans, who had made several German contacts through his former membership of the Anglo-German Fellowship and his earlier professorship at the University of Königsberg. This group sent its intelligence reports to Vansittart, who turned them into insistent minutes to the Foreign Secretary.[25] By early 1939, however, according to F.H. Hinsley, "criticism of Vansittart's private detective agency and his impulsive response to information had become rife both in the Foreign Office and elsewhere in Whitehall."[26]

Vansittart was by no means averse to leaking information to selected people. With Sir Robert's agreement, Ralph Wigram, head of the Foreign Office's Central Department from 1934 to 1936, leaked Vansittart's figures on German rearmament to selected publicists. Included among the few was Winston Churchill, who made good use of them in Parliament.[27] Furthermore, while Vansittart was still Permanent Under-Secretary, he provided Labour's Hugh Dalton with secret briefings about the activities of his political masters. This habit became even more frequent after Vansittart's demotion in 1938. Meetings between Sir Robert and the Shadow Foreign Secretary became, in the words of Ben Pimlott, "a vital source for Labour's critique of government diplomacy."[28] Vansittart, therefore, was leaking

information to some of the major opponents and critics of the government he was pledged to serve. His object in doing so was to use these people as outlets for opinions which he was unable publicly to express.

According to Bruce Lockhart: "To get on in the Foreign Office you have to be one of Van's men."[29] Vansittart placed control and supervision of relations with Germany in the hands of men like Ralph Wigram, Allen Leeper and Orme Sargent, all of whom shared his uncompromising view of the German menace. Vansittart attempted to persuade those with antagonistic views to accept some overseas posting but, in the case of Owen O'Malley, he was unsuccessful.[30] "By surrounding himself with crusading associates," as Donald Boadle writes, "and waging his campaign to 'educate' ministers, Vansittart adopted a radical approach to the Permanent Under-Secretary's advisory functions."[31] As Vansittart admitted in his autobiography: "The proper official should give his advice and then efface himself. I was ready to do so in all save in matters of public safety."[32] Unlike the self-effacing Cadogan, Vansittart saw himself as someone who could consider resignation over the Abyssinian crisis and contemplate "the effect abroad of my retirement."[33] This behaviour led Eden to comment disapprovingly that Vansittart was "much more a Secretary of State in mentality than a permanent official."[34]

Throughout the 1930s Vansittart warned of manifestations of militarism and aggression. As early as 1930 he

was warning that the "Old Adam" of pre-1914 militarism was on the rise, in Germany as elsewhere. At the same time Vansittart very sincerely desired to sustain the German government of Heinrich Brüning.[35] Writing in 1931, Vansittart viewed the Brüning government as "the only decent Govt. that we can see."[36]

The Nazis, however, acceded to power in Germany in January 1933. These "gangsters" hardened Vansittart's germanophobic views yet further and aroused his direst suspicions. According to Norman Rose, it was the lunatic nature of Nazi racialism and his sympathy for the Jews that did much to lead Vansittart to formulate the theory of original German sin.[37]

Vansittart was under no illusion as to the ultimate intentions and nature of the Nazis. As early as 1930 he referred to Hitler as being a "half-mad and ridiculously dangerous demagogue" bent on revising the Treaty of Versailles.[38] In February 1933 Vansittart referred to Hitler and his party as "wild men and killers."[39] By May 1933 Vansittart was convinced that:

> The present regime in Germany will, on past and present form, loose off another war just so soon as it feels strong enough. Their only fear is that they may be attacked before they are ready. Meanwhile it will endeavour to cog and lull so as better to eat the artichoke leaf by leaf. This is crude; but we are considering very crude people, who have few ideas in their noddles but brute force and militarism. . . . This crude barbarism which denies all liberty may of course change its idea. I don't believe that it will.[40]

Vansittart expected this German war anytime after the beginning of 1938 and by 1939 at the latest.[41]

Vansittart was unsure about the permanency of the Nazi regime. He was also not about to do anything that might prolong it. Vansittart advocated a policy of keeping Germany "lean," believing that economic adversity was the only thing that might bring down the government.[42] Should this occur, Vansittart believed that Germany would be too weak and disordered to embark on external aggression.[43]

Already in the summer of 1933, however, Vansittart was beginning to feel that the Nazis might be the lesser of two evils in Germany. Vansittart anticipated that a struggle would develop between the Nazis and the Nationalists, representing the Junker, industrial and military classes. The militarists, he believed, might even be worse than the Nazis.[44]

For a time Vansittart held the view that the Nazis were the mere stooges of the Junkers and militarists. The Röhm purge seemed to bear out this assumption. The Permanent Under-Secretary saw the traditional ruling classes as the ultimate beneficiaries of the bloodbath:[45]

> We shall have back in full control the class and system that made the war of 1914. Plus ça change. The danger to Europe is going to be greatly increased by the increasing power of the more competent section of these savages.[46]

It was some time before Vansittart realized that Hitler was not merely a tool of the Junkers, and that the distinc-

tion between the "extremists" and "moderates" within the Nazi hierarchy was without foundation. Many of Vansittart's colleagues and political chiefs were even slower in coming to this realization.[47]

The establishment of the Nazi regime did not exclude the possibility of reaching a negotiated settlement with the Reich. In fact, Vansittart was thoroughly convinced that discussions should proceed. One could not conduct diplomacy, Vansittart argued, by saying "no" to everything.[48]

Vansittart advocated a full-scale policy of treaty revision. This was not altogether unsurprising because Vansittart's views on the Peace of Versailles were never as uncompromising and clear-cut as he would have us believe. In public, he championed all the clauses of the treaty but in private was much more critical. During the 1930s, in fact, Vansittart claimed that the terms of 1919 "went too far, not individually perhaps, but cumulatively" and that Versailles was a "bad treaty."[49] Furthermore, in his autobiography, Vansittart says that he strongly supported the notion of German war-guilt.[50] In 1937, however, he privately doubted whether Germany was solely responsible for "her unsuccessful war."[51] In the words of Norman Rose:

> These observations were not spontaneous asides. They were measured statements intended only for the eyes of his colleagues and his political masters. We can be sure that they accurately represented his sentiments on the Versailles Treaty, sentiments which he had held consistently for many years . . . .[52]

The reason for the discrepancy between his views as described in public and private is, according to his biographer, that in his later years, Vansittart was trying to justify his public reputation as a consistent and unyielding hard-line opponent of Germany.[53] Vansittart was certainly that. But, in his autobiography, it led him to falsely maintain that he strongly supported Versailles. Nor does he once mention in his book his many attempts to reach an agreement with Germany. It should be noted, however, that Vansittart was only willing to consider concessions to Germany in the hope that she might become tied down to rigidly defined agreements that would bind her in a general European settlement. It was because he wanted to reach a general European agreement that he abandoned his opposition to the proposed Austro-German Customs' Union of 1931 and actively promoted it. Vansittart saw the proposal as the first tentative move towards such an agreement.[54]

Vansittart's policy was motivated by a concern to correct the balance of power which was moving increasingly in Britain's disfavor, and, if allowed to continue, might lead to war. Vansittart was very realistic about the chances of success of his policy. He believed that Germany was bent on aggression and that the chance she would adopt a conciliatory attitude was very small. If she did so, he argued, ". . . it will not come from any change of heart, but from isolation and external pressure."[55]

Given the clear guiding principles of Vansittart's policy (he also advocated an alliance with France), his willingness to consider concessions to Germany and his search for agreement with her do not appear incompatible with his unending warnings about the German menace throughout the 1930s. Nor are they incompatible with his basic germanophobia.[56]

Vansittart was willing to consider concessions to, and search for an agreement with, Germany until early 1937. Throughout, he was pessimistic about the negotiations and had no illusions as to their outcome. At one time he even said that negotiations under the conditions then prevailing "were worse than useless."[57] But they continued. They even yielded the limited Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935 which Vansittart neither welcomed nor objected to.[58] While in earnest about reaching a settlement with Germany, Vansittart was, at the same time, playing for time to repair Britain's defence deficiencies. In this, he was not totally without success.[59]

Vansittart rejected concessions after early 1937 because the price for a German agreement was simply too high. Hitherto, and even after then, Vansittart was pursuing a policy of appeasement vis-à-vis the Italians and Japanese. Vansittart in fact was one of the strongest advocates of the Hoare-Laval pact.[60] He did not appease Italy and Japan because he wanted to but rather because he deemed it necessary. Tension in the Mediterranean and

Pacific had to be kept low so as to enable the greater part of Britain's armed forces to be concentrated at home to face the more immediate German menace which directly threatened Britain's vital interests.

One of the upshots of the Hoare-Laval plan was that Vansittart fell into disrepute. This fiasco, in fact, marked the beginning of Vansittart's decline at the Foreign Office. This debacle also coincided with the Foreign Secretaryship of the young and ambitious Anthony Eden. Eden was very jealous of Vansittart's power, seeing it as an obstacle to his own future prospects. What Eden especially could not stand was "it being thought that any opinion he uttered in the Cabinet was really the voice of Van."[61]

Eden's desire to do away with Vansittart was complemented by the wishes of the last pre-war British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain. Chamberlain was not one to tolerate opposition to his policy of appeasement on the part of any senior official. By the end of 1937 it was decided to get rid of the increasingly isolated Vansittart.[62]

On 1 January 1938 Vansittart was "kicked upstairs," as Valentine Lawford put it, "to a sort of newly discovered Siberia known as the post of Chief Diplomatic Advisor to the Government."[63] This was a position in which Vansittart had very little power. Vansittart was henceforth to advise the Secretary of State "upon all major questions of policy concerning foreign affairs remitted to him for that purpose and representing the Foreign Office on any occasions on

which the Secretary of State may wish to avail himself of his services."[64] Given the inclinations of the existing Secretary of State and of his successor, Lord Halifax, it was obvious that few questions would be "remitted" to Vansittart.

While Vansittart was the nominal Chief Diplomatic Advisor, the de facto chief advisor was still the Permanent Under-Secretary who was now Sir Alexander Cadogan. It is clear from the latter's diary that Cadogan did not at all like the new system that had been established. With the backing of Eden, he was only too willing to quash Vansittart's attempt to recover some of his former power.[65]

There was, at the same time, a desire on the part of the government to fit Vansittart in some other more or less permanent post.[66] But nothing came of it. Vansittart continued on in his weak position at the Foreign Office and was largely ignored. For instance, as Cadogan recorded in his diary on 2 April 1938:

> Van has been away all this week, but it doesn't make much difference if he's here. He sends in minutes to the S[ecretary] of S[tate] snarling at some of Nevile H[enderson]'s telegrams which H[alifax] hands gloomily to me. I keep them for 2 or 3 days, then take them back to H[alifax] and say 'I'm very stupid: I can't remember what you told me to do about this.' He looks unutterably sad, and says 'I think perhaps we might burn it now!'[67]

The tendency to ignore Vansittart grew in times of crisis and as war drew nearer.

In the face of apparent German designs on Austria, in early March 1938 Vansittart called for some "plain speaking" at Berlin to avoid a general war. The government, however, viewed this as dangerous and failed to heed his recommendation.[68]

In the beginning of the Czechoslovakian crisis Vansittart was in favour of rectifying the internal grievances of the Sudeten Germans, a "perfectly legitimate question" in his eyes. Vansittart simply believed that the Czechs were too inflexible toward their German minority.[69] But over the course of the summer of 1938 Vansittart's sources provided him with conclusive evidence that the Führer was not intent with merely rectifying these grievances. Vansittart warned his colleagues that Hitler was determined to destroy Czechoslovakia by war. Throughout the summer crisis Vansittart tried to strengthen his government's resolve to oppose Hitler and to take preventative actions that would deter the Führer. He was again unsuccessful.[70]

Vansittart also provided several warnings about the imminent invasion of the rump of Czechoslovakia in March 1939.[71] He could not but despair once the act was consummated. As he wrote: "But nothing seems any good; it seems as if nobody will listen to or believe me. I shall never know why."[72]

In the spring and summer of 1939 Vansittart was one of the strongest advocates of a Soviet alliance. He criticized the British government's delay in coming to an understanding

with the Soviet Union. At the same time, he warned that Hitler was negotiating an alliance with the Soviets.[73] But here too his promptings went unheeded.

By the beginning of the Second World War Vansittart was a very weak and somewhat insignificant figure. But he had definitely not always been such. Vansittart became increasingly powerful in the 1920s and from 1930 to 1935 he was the undisputed master of the Foreign Office. This influence was to hold a fatal attraction for Vansittart during the war years. He yearned steadily to revive some of his former power and be consulted on all important matters. Vansittart's desires, however, were frustrated. This led to his increasing isolation within the Foreign Office and to the creation of a state of mind which was not conducive to circumspect, rational reasoning.

By the beginning of the war Vansittart was also an extreme anti-German. Nurtured during the first years of the twentieth century, his germanophobia had become a powerful influence by the end of World War I. Vansittart's extreme revulsion against the Nazis in the 1930s was genuine, yet this was merely an extension of an already deeply-ingrained animosity. But it was not until World War II that the real apogee of his anti-Germanism was reached. The force about which he had warned for so long had at last been unleashed. The fact that Vansittart's warnings had been proven consistently right increased his own dogmatism and confidence

in his infallibility. The fact that they had been ignored, however, increased his own sense of isolation and distrust of the government. These notions were to continue into the war years and colour Vansittart's activities.

Vansittart, however, certainly had no monopoly on anti-Germanism. Germanophobia was common to most members of the Foreign Office. Vansittart was only the most consistent and vehement proponent of the thesis that the Germans were tainted with militarism. He committed himself where others hesitated. This was an important factor in leading to his effective dismissal from power. But at the same time Vansittart's anti-German attitude and policy provided the cabinet with an alternative solution to the political predicaments of the 1930s. Given existing commitments and strength, however, it was probably an unrealistic policy. It was also a policy of despair. The acceptance of Vansittart's attitude would have undermined the fundamental tenets of British policy towards Germany and would have been an admission that there was little hope of a lasting peace in the world. And British policy makers were not about to believe the international picture to be as black as all that.

When war broke out, what worried Vansittart in the first instance was that Britain might not be equal to the task. But Vansittart was also worried that the mistaken conceptions of Germany's past would be applied to the present and that at most only the Nazi ruling elite (and not

an all-pervasive spiritual disease) would be held responsible for creating the war. Vansittart was not about to, and did not, let the threat go unchallenged.

CHAPTER 2

VANSITTART AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT 1939-1945

Vansittart continued on as the Chief Diplomatic Advisor to the British government for the first 21 months of the Second World War. Throughout that period he remained a figure of secondary importance. While his views were given added weight during certain periods, by and large Vansittart did not have all that much influence. Yet he was willing to go on serving in his marginal position of power so long as he felt he was making a useful contribution to the war effort. Just as this was no longer apparent to him, and as his position became increasingly isolated, he discovered his own apparent public value. Outside the machine, Vansittart maintained a vigilant watch over the government's activities. In this capacity, in fact, Vansittart was to have a greater effect on the government than he had had as Chief Diplomatic Advisor.

Vansittart was far from being the healthiest of people. One of the reasons for this was that he had a very nervous disposition. His anxieties increased with the approach of the Second World War and he developed a duodenal ulcer.[1] His ulcer caused him a considerable amount of pain and, despite the fact that he took a mild drug each night when he went to bed, it made him lose a lot of sleep.[2] Vansittart's

ulcer worsened as his sense of isolation and lack of fulfillment increased. The usual cure consisted of starving himself.[3] Vansittart, at times, also developed a skin disease that spread to all parts of his body. Vansittart's doctor was convinced that it was a psychosomatic illness that was brought about by his nervous frame of mind.[4]

Vansittart's health, in turn, affected his psychological condition. His state of chronic tiredness and frequent pain increased his own strain and exacerbated his own sense of frustration resulting from his inactivity. These factors combined to affect Vansittart's judgement, which was often ill-balanced and rash. To many members of the government, Vansittart appeared hysterical. This was particularly apparent towards the end of 1940. Alexander Cadogan, for instance, said about Vansittart: "Nothing rational about him at all -- just silly uninformed impulse . . . ."[5] Even the very sympathetic Hugh Dalton noted in his diary on 17 November 1940: "Many of his [Vansittart's] quick judgements nowadays are quite wrong."[6] He believed that Vansittart's prolonged period of "non-employment" had resulted in "a long phase of persecution mania."[7]

Part of the problem was Vansittart's second wife, Sarita. She complained constantly about others who never saw or noticed her husband. She was also very jealous of others and incited Vansittart to nurse grievances against them. "Quite certainly," Dalton noted, "this beautiful but

tiresome woman has been responsible for much misguidance, both of his mind and his emotions."[8]

Vansittart's health was to be a constant problem throughout World War II. It laid him up in bed for prolonged periods of time, sometimes for even as long as one month.[9] But his health seems to have been somewhat better after he retired than before it. One thing is certain: Vansittart was much happier outside the governmental machine than he was within it. Shortly after Vansittart's resignation was accepted, Dalton wrote: "Van looks much better and happier already, the beginnings of a new free man."[10]

During the first few weeks of the war, Vansittart advocated the urgent acceleration of rearmament. He did so not only for Britain's own security, but also for the equanimity of France. The French, he said, were greatly dissatisfied with Britain's military effort. "And lack of equanimity," he added,

> may soon turn into something worse, if it is not at once rectified, particularly as Flandin, Laval and Mistler are certainly busy on this line -- and perhaps Bonnet too. They can't get anywhere at present, but they will if we don't intensify and advertise our effort."[11]

Consideration for the French ally, in fact, was always uppermost in Vansittart's mind. He wanted no action taken that would be detrimental to the alliance and was unwilling to consider any peace that did not provide full security for France. Consideration for France's harsh, uncompromising

view of Germany also reinforced his own convictions about the Reich.

Early in the war Vansittart was not optimistic regarding the prospect of an Allied victory.[12] Yet he saw absolute ruin if the conception that Britain was fighting only Nazism prevailed in his country. This conception was inherent in the notion that the war was an accident: that Hitler and the Nazis had perverted German history and led the nation to war. They were an aberration, not an outcome, of the German spirit. The logical extension of this was that once the Nazis were eliminated, all would be well and peace would prevail.

Throughout October and November 1939 Vansittart fought feverishly against this conception of Germany which, he believed, was widely and mistakenly held by the British government.[13] His most bitter attack came in late November in a Foreign Office memorandum entitled "Origins of Germany's Fifth War."[14] In this paper Vansittart countered the "myth of accidentalism" as evinced in Sir Nevile Henderson's final report on the circumstances leading to the termination of his mission to Berlin.[15] The Chief Diplomatic Advisor argued that

> . . . the Prussian military caste and system are always there on The Day; always ready spiritually, if ready materially, to lend themselves to the profession of conquest for which they have been trained and hardened. So long as that system remains intact or unregenerate, the world can never be long at peace. . . . Let us make no further

> mistake about it: we are fighting the German Army, and the German People on whom the Army is based. We are fighting the real, and not the 'accidental,' Germany. That the real Germany contains many good individual Germans is, of course, incontestable. The trouble is that they are never there corporately on The Day . . .

These facts led to one inescapable conclusion:

> Providence has twice been kind to us. We cannot count on a third indulgence to "wishful blindness." We must eradicate not only Hitlerism, but Prussianism, lest a Sixth War be that hitherto impossible thing, the Blitzkrieg in the West, which would take unaware democracy, ever unready for the recurrent "Day," by its very nature and procedure.
>
> These reluctant truths by the nature of things -- for the nature of things political is peculiar -- cannot have the same notoriety as the myth of accidentalism; but they should at least be known -- lest once more "the clouds return after the rain." For one of the origins of Germany's Fifth War was the illusions that were cherished about her.[16]

None of the German experts in the Foreign Office who commented on Vansittart's memorandum seriously disagreed with its contents.[17]

While Vansittart was still a relatively weak figure early in the war, his views were given added importance in the "Phoney War" period as they coincided with (and as we have seen, were even affected by) those of France.[18] Over the course of the winter of 1939/40 there was increasing sensitivity towards French views on war aims.[19] Just as there was increasing consideration of French interests, so was there decreasing consideration of the "other Germany."

Vansittart was, at one and the same time, one of the strongest proponents of the French conception of the war, and one of the principal sources of information on the "other Germany."

Vansittart was eager and active in cultivating contacts with the German resistance. In this he was ably aided by his private intelligence agency.[20] Vansittart was hoping for a revolution in Germany that would mark the parting of the ways for German history. Yet he saw little promise in the feelers that were reaching the Foreign Office. As he wrote to Halifax: "I do not for a moment think that these various approaches and suggestions offer, anyhow at present, any tangible prospect of a peace that would be even remotely acceptable to us."[21] Vansittart was, however, in favor of "playing the game." If it was played adroitly, he believed it could have one of two results. At the optimum, he believed the approaches and suggestions might be very far enlarged so that they might lead to the possibility of a solid peace. This he considered unlikely, though not completely impossible. He added: "Even however if the optimum does not occur, there will still be considerable advantage to us in keeping these people in play, and at worst, therefore, gaining time which is particularly valuable to us."[22] Vansittart's suspicions about these feelers and what could be gained from them paralleled the ideas of other members of the Foreign Office.[23]

There was only one proposal emanating from Germany which Vansittart saw as sensible: the one coming from the so-called "South German Group," a loose association of industrialists and conservative politival figures who sought a non-federal solution for the German problem.[24] This proposal was also taken seriously by the British government as a whole. The group's suggestion for preventing Germany from making her sixth war was, in Vansittart's words: "Don't break up Germany; break up Prussia, and do it good and proper." To achieve this, a prolonged occupation of Berlin (and the total destruction of the Nazi party) was necessary. In place of the Reich a German federation was to emerge.[25] This prompted an almost immediate response, with a proposal by Sir Robert, apparently approved by Halifax, that Christie be encouraged to go to Switzerland to make further contacts with his friends. In the words of Peter Ludlow:

> Taken with Chamberlain's decision to meet at least part of Wirth's request in his Mansion House speech,[26] the decision to give semi-official blessing to Christie's trip suggests that hopes of a negotiated settlement, albeit of a kind very different from the sort that had been contemplated in October and November, had not completely disappeared.[27]

In mid-March, Christie and Conwell-Evans gave Dr. Wirth a number of far-reaching proposals on behalf of the British Government.[28] The proposals, however, never reached the resistance.[29]

Thus, one of the two 1940 feelers which the British took seriously (the other being the contact through the Vatican) came to naught. Pessimistic from the start about the prospect of a revolution, Vansittart had grown increasingly doubtful over the course of the winter. By March 1940 he believed that neither Wirth nor the Generals nor anybody else either could or would deliver the goods of revolution. After this had indeed been demonstrated, as he expected, Vansittart wanted no other "experiments of like nature." He added, "I am sure it is best that we should realise as early as possible that this war must be won, and that it can only be won by fighting."[30]

The German offensives in the spring of 1940 brought the resistance into disrepute. Having long promised a coup in which they would overthrow Hitler and bring the war to an end, they could not but be discredited when the Führer attacked Denmark, Norway and France.[31] To Vansittart, these offensives were the final proof that no stock could be placed in the German anti-Nazis. Furthermore, the fact that the Germans attacked France, in particular, had proved to him that there was no such thing as a civilized <u>group</u> of Germans. Vansittart now turned against members of the resistance with whom he had earlier collaborated, most notably Dr. Wirth and Carl Goerdeler, the former mayor of Leipzig.[32] After June 1941 it also led him to attack publicly any and every notion that a German opposition existed.

Vansittart, meanwhile, was very anxious about the deleterious effect British external and internal policy was having on the neutral nations.[33] Vansittart was so worried about the effect British inactivity was having on the small neutrals and was so vehement that Britain take the initiative that he was willing to court war with a large neutral, the Soviet Union.[34]

In March 1940 Vansittart was very active in attacking the idea of a compromise peace. So long as he believed he was useful in doing so or in correcting "mistaken" conceptions about Germany, he was willing to continue serving in his position of marginal power. As suggested by Lothar Kettenacker, Vansittart's warnings actually may have even had a "sobering" effect.[35]

One of Vansittart's targets in March was the newspaper proprietor Lord Beaverbrook who, the diplomat believed, was a member of the Fifth Column.[36] More serious, still, was an anticipated American peace feeler arising from the Sumner Welles peace mission. Vansittart's response to this mission was a short and bitter memorandum entitled "The Nature of the Beast." In it, Vansittart attacked the conception of the "innocents" (anyone who did not see the German problem as being a deep spiritual disease and instead believed in Germany's goodwill. Such people were, consequently, partly responsible for the war). To accept a compromise peace, Vansittart argued, would be suicide. He earnestly hoped that the expected peace feeler would be "firmly rejected."[37]

Vansittart further attacked the "innocents" on 9 April, the day the Germans invaded Denmark and Norway. On this occasion Vansittart's tone was very sharp and bitter, no doubt due in part to the utter failure of the resistance. He wrote:

> I hope that what has happened today will be a <u>final</u> lesson to the innocents at home and abroad . . . who say that we must not aim at splitting up Germany,[38] and that we should declare our anaemic intentions. We should on no account declare anything of the sort, and we should most certainly aim at splitting up Germany if we possibly can. If we can't, small nations will continue to get their throats cut by this accursed German race . . . .

Furthermore, Sir Robert said, the fact that Britain always reacted to danger very late was

> . . . not due to sin, but [to] a refusal to swallow the hard fact that eighty per cent of the German race are the political and moral scum of the earth. You cannot reform them by signatures and concessions. They have got to be hamstrung and broken up. So long as they remain coherent, the same "skin-game" will go on and on, and the world will continue to be the uninhabitable place that one race of bone-headed aggressors has made it for the last three generations . . . .[39]

With the opening of the Western offensive in May, Winston Churchill became Prime Minister. According to John Colville, Churchill's private secretary,

> When Churchill came to power, Van doubtless hoped for renewed influence since he had constantly warned of the German danger in the years before the war. However, though Churchill felt the usual Prime Ministerial distaste for the

> Foreign Office, he did not seek to interfere in that department's internal arrangements.[40]

The result was that, as Hugh Dalton noted in his diary: Vansittart "still sees no one in the Foreign Office, and no papers, and is consulted about nothing!"[41] Churchill, however, seemed to feel guilty or sorry for his old friend with whom he had fought a common battle against appeasement. This feeling soon manifested itself in the Prime Minister's desire to keep Vansittart busy.

Though this was a welcome development, an even greater consolation for Vansittart was the fact that there was now a more "reliable" Prime Minister at the helm. Yet so long as certain quarters continued to toy with the idea of a negotiated peace, Vansittart continued to feel that he was of some use to the government in vehemently opposing any such inclination.

The Western offensive, meanwhile, was proceeding apace. By mid-June it had become clear that France was doomed. In the last few days before the capitulation of that country, Vansittart was very active. While his constant complaints about the Home Office's lax treatment of enemy nationals and pro-German Britons went unheeded,[42] Vansittart's French activities regained for him a small amount of his previous influence. After the meeting of the War Cabinet on the morning of 16 June, Halifax asked Vansittart to draft a formal Declaration of Union between Britain and France. The aim, Halifax explained, had been to draft "some dramatic

announcement which might strengthen M. Reynaud's hand."[43] Vansittart drew up the document "in consultation" with General de Gaulle, Jean Monnet, René Pleven, and Desmond Morton. On the 16th John Colville noted that Vansittart, one of the declaration's principal sponsors, "has suddenly returned into the limelight."[44] On the following day Vansittart proposed to appeal to Marshal Petain, the "vainqueur de Verdun," to encourage the French to continue the struggle from North Africa.[45] This prompted Colville to note: "Van looked well and full of energy; he has come into his own, like so many black sheep and discarded statesmen."[46] According to the same diarist, it was at Vansittart's instigation that Britain's demand for forty destroyers from the United States not be dropped even though President Roosevelt had turned it down.[47]

Vansittart, like the rest of the government, was very concerned about the fate of the French fleet. On 18 June Vansittart was instrumental in getting Churchill to agree to send a third emissary to Admiral Darlan at Bordeaux to see if it was possible to save the French fleet.[48]

On 22 June the French signed an armistice with the Germans. In the words of Norman Rose: "For Van the fall of France was not only a political-military disaster of the first magnitude, it was a personal tragedy."[49] Vansittart, who had spent much of his life cultivating the closest possible relations with the French, could not but be shattered at such a blow. This worsened both his mental and physical well-being.

France's demise made Vansittart very gloomy. "Life is an uncertain thing now," he wrote on 21 June.[50] Vansittart was to remain gloomy until early September when, in the face of increasing Luftwaffe casualties during the Battle of Britain, he now thought that Germany, not Britain, would be defeated.[51]

On the day before the Franco-German armistice was signed Vansittart assumed the chairmanship of a small committee on French resistance. The terms of reference for the committee were as follows: "the examination and co-ordination of all plans of dealing with the continued resistance of France." This committee dealt with a variety of issues including the position of French citizens in the United Kingdom; possible action against some French colonies; and the status of de Gaulle and various other French leaders. Some of the recommendations of the committee were followed while others were not.[52] Vansittart, in the chair, does not seem to have cut a very good figure. According to Major-General Edward Spears, a member of the committee, Vansittart was much past his best and no longer seemed able to take decisions.[53]

Vansittart served in the chair of the committee until 7 August. His keen interest in France, however, never ceased afterwards. After 1940, Vansittart was concerned with keeping the French people, as opposed to the Vichy government, well disposed to Britain. All of his broadcasts to France reflected this aim.[54]

Meanwhile, the search for an additional post to keep Vansittart busy continued. In mid-July Churchill succeeded in getting Vansittart seconded to Special Operations Executive (S.O.E.) as Chief Advisor to Hugh Dalton.[55] Vansittart's influence in the S.O.E. organization, which was responsible for sabotage and subversive propaganda, was never great and soon became minimal.[56] Like his position as Chief Diplomatic Advisor, Sir Robert's position as Chief Advisor to S.O.E. was thus a sham. The de facto Chief Advisor to Dalton was Gladwyn Jebb.

Egged on by his wife, Vansittart spent a great deal of time grumbling against Dalton's top subordinates, Richard Crossman and especially Jebb.[57] Dalton considered all this something of a nuisance, but in order to maintain harmony within his organization he encouraged his subordinates to go out of their way to win over Vansittart. In this, it seems that they were successful.[58]

Vansittart's advice in connection with S.O.E. was not very good. It was "very uncertain" and was concerned with unessential matters. According to Hugh Dalton, Vansittart "has been pestering me with silly little notes on unimportant individual cases. It is rather pathetic."[59] By April 1941, if not earlier, Vansittart was doing very little at S.O.E.[60]

Vansittart's drudgery and inactivity in the Foreign Office and S.O.E. was offset in late 1940 by his broadcasts on the German people. In September 1940 Vansittart was

commissioned by the B.B.C. "to convince North America both that we are determined to continue the war and that we can, and will, win it."[61] The upshot of this was Vansittart's first public essay into propaganda writing. The subject matter of Black Record, the title under which his work was later published, is almost identical in content to his memorandum "The Origins of Germany's Fifth War" and its polemical character similar to both this paper and his March 1940 memorandum "The Nature of the Beast."[62] The B.B.C. was taken aback by Vansittart's manuscript for the six-part broadcast and referred to the Chief Diplomatic Advisor's "abusive comments" as "bad propaganda."[63] The B.B.C. appealed to the Ministry of Information, which was responsible for the content of broadcasts, to weaken several passages of Vansittart's text. The corporation was, however, unsuccessful. There was no dissension within the Ministry of Information itself until the sixth and final broadcast was made. The Director-General of the Ministry, Frank Pick, forbade the transmission of this broadcast but Duff Cooper, the minister, removed the ban.[64] Propaganda in Britain was ultimately in the hands of officials whose thinking was very similar to Vansittart's. Besides, Vansittart's views accorded well with the Ministry's own indiscriminate anti-German propaganda.[65]

The Black Record broadcasts were delivered on the B.B.C. overseas program between 24 November and 5/6 December 1940. Governmental reaction as a whole to the Black Record

broadcasts was mixed. It was well received by the junior officials in the Foreign Office, who regarded Vansittart's general thesis as correct though his manner of presentation upset "half, if not more, of those who heard it."[66] There was more opposition at the top. Cadogan referred to "that ass Van's ridiculous (and vulgar) broadcast."[67] Churchill also disagreed with Vansittart's thesis and wrote in reply:

> I contemplate a reunited European family in which Germany will have a great place. We must not let our vision be darkened by hatred or obscured by sentiment. A much more fruitful line is to try to separate the Prussians from the South Germans . . . . The expressions to which I attach importance and intend to give emphasis are 'Nazi tyranny' and 'Prussian militarism.'[68]

Colville added: "What a contrast between the erratic, feverish genius and the wisdom of a statesman!"[69]

In Parliament, government spokesmen would not accept responsibility for Vansittart's broadcasts. But they also defended and would not disavow him.[70]

Public reactions to the broadcasts were also varied. The enormous response with which Vansittart's polemical broadcasts were greeted led him to believe that he was a good propagandist. It also convinced him that there was a vocal and dangerous group which did not agree with his views that had to be checked. These discoveries coincided with his own crise de conscience he was experiencing by continuing to work in the service of the government. From late 1940 on, the threat of a compromise peace had virtually disappeared. Vansittart consequently no longer felt that he was

of use to the government. By this time he was also totally isolated and neglected at the Foreign Office.

On 10 February 1941 Vansittart wrote a long letter to the new Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, stating that his position had become unbearable: he was consulted only rarely. Vansittart recounted his period as Chief Diplomatic Advisor. Vansittart said that he knew the post was a sham from the beginning though he felt bound "to give the show a year's run." At the end of 1938, feeling the position was untenable, Vansittart asked to be released. According to Sir Robert, Chamberlain "seemed glad of my departing, but changed when he heard I was contemplating going into the House of Commons."[71] Vansittart, however, was not keen on entering the House anyways. He also feared that war was coming.[72] But what finally convinced Vansittart to carry on a little longer was the advice of Winston Churchill. So Vansittart stuck with it for two more years. But this brought no improvement. At the end of 1940 Vansittart again felt it was wrong for him to go on, when, as he put it, "anything I was doing I could do as a free man and at half price." He decided to resign before Anthony Eden became Foreign Secretary. But, he explained, as he did not want to embarrass the government by retiring immediately after Eden assumed control, Vansittart began thinking whether there were any means by which he could conscientiously remain in the public service. He came to the conclusion that there was only one way in which he could justifiably go on: he

could help the government to enlighten the public. As he wrote: ". . . I could help to ward off from the Government the eventual pressure for a bad peace, which will come as surely as the sun rises." If, he added, he would be an embarrassment to the government in such a capacity, he would depart quietly.[73]

Part of this justification to continue on in the government service was, admittedly, merely rationalization on the part of a long-serving official who simply did not want to relinquish his position. But part of it was also genuine conviction. As the public controversy surrounding his name grew in the early months of 1941, Vansittart became increasingly convinced that it was necessary to dispel the "mistaken" conceptions of large sections of the public so as not to hinder the eventual implementation of a harsh peace.

Vansittart's crise de conscience continued. In February Sir Robert experienced a further outrage when Churchill forbade him to broadcast to France. While this veto was later revoked, it brought Vansittart closer and closer to resignation.[74] On 8 April Vansittart wrote another long letter to Eden, who had just returned after a two-month absence in the eastern Mediterranean. Vansittart stated that the compromise he had in mind on 10 February would no longer work, "owing to the agitation of people greatly to blame for this war." Furthermore, he said that his position had steadily worsened, "and has now become so notoriously

ridiculous that matters have come to a head." Vansittart also added, somewhat inaccurately, that

> In these three and a half wasted years I have never been consulted on anything that really mattered, and now I am not even consulted on things that don't. In one period of three months the only question 'remitted' to me was whether a ballet should go to Rome! Even that has now ceased! . . . It has been made clear to me that my views are not really desired on any topic.

While the last three years, he said, "have been an insult to my intelligence . . . I make no personal complaint, and try instead to extract some crumb of comfort from the fact that I bear no responsibility for them." All that remained to be done was to make an honourable and peaceable end of the current state of affairs.[75]

On 17 April Eden accepted Vansittart's resignation as Chief Diplomatic Advisor.[76] Vansittart was greatly relieved. Churchill, however, still desired to fit Vansittart in somewhere and toyed with the idea of making him an additional Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Economic Warfare or to the Ministry of Information. The Ministry of Information post was possibly to be combined with the British Council and, in any case, a peerage.[77] Vansittart, however, was neither attracted by a political post in the government nor by the British Council. Nor did he want to engage in administrative matters. He wanted to be free to write and speak on the German menace and did not seem averse to a seat in the House of Lords as a forum for the dissemination of his views. He also wanted to go on

with Dalton as at present and be consulted sometimes by Churchill and Eden.[78] An illustration of his reasons for thinking that the government might find it useful to hear his intuition from time to time was the following: Vansittart said that in 1940 he wrote Halifax stating that the government would find it difficult, maybe even impossible, to get the British people through all the sufferings that lay ahead of them unless the government supplied them with hate.

Hatred was a characteristic of Vansittart's theory of propaganda. It was embodied in Black Record and his subsequent works. It meant creating a revulsion of the Germans on the part of the British populace. This was easy for Vansittart to do. For him, it simply meant telling the "truth" in plain language.

In 1941 Vansittart stated that the Germans were creating this hatred for him every night. But he did not want to leave it entirely to them. Otherwise, he said,

> I foresee this: if odium be not guided in the proper and legitimate direction, it will find other vents; and with every reverse or hardship there will tend to be firstly grumbling against the Government . . . which may develop secondly into something more tangible . . . .

"Meanwhile," he added,

> if the Government feel that, for internal reasons, they can only move slowly and cautiously in regard to showing up the true Germany, I shall at least be doing them that service -- without involving them -- by throwing light on the psychology of the past."[79]

Vansittart regarded this as his mission. By throwing light on the psychology of the past Vansittart intended to dispel "mistaken" conceptions of Germany and so secure the full support of the public for a harsh government policy towards the Reich.

Vansittart felt that he was performing an invaluable service for the government. The fact that he was ridding himself of a burdensome official connection would, he said, actually enable him to do his best.[80] There was one problem, however. While Vansittart believed that he was aiding the government, he did not entirely trust it (not even one led by Churchill). All his actions between 1939 and 1945 must be seen in this light.

Vansittart agreed to stay on until his 60th birthday on 25 June to make it appear as though he had retired. His "desire to retire" was announced in the Times on 22 May.[81] One month after his 60th birthday, Vansittart was introduced into the House of Lords as Baron Vansittart of Denham.[82]

After his retirement Vansittart embarked on a massive campaign to enlighten British public opinion. As he never completely trusted the authorities, during the next four years Vansittart repeatedly checked up on the government to ensure that it was "sound" on the German question. During this period Vansittart was to have a greater effect on the government than he had had as Chief Diplomatic Advisor. The government could no longer ignore him as it had from 1938 to 1941.

One of the reasons he could not be ignored was that he was now a member of the House of Lords. With a seat in the Lords, Vansittart was in a position in which he could embarrass the government. If he believed that the British government was not acting quickly enough or in the sense he desired on a certain issue (and in his view it often was not), he frequently threatened to raise the topic in the House of Lords. This was a most unwelcome development for a government which, firstly, belatedly began planning for the post-war world, and, secondly, was often not eager to disclose publicly its thinking on war aims.

Though Vansittart believed he had been treated shabbily by the British government, his threats to raise issues and his motions in the House of Lords were not forms of revenge. They were merely a way of ensuring that the government was on the "right track."

Vansittart's motions in the Lords revolved around four main themes: the activities of the neutrals; German atrocities; war criminals; and the control of German war potential in the post-war period. Vansittart was concerned that the government was not taking a firm enough line on all of these issues. The latter two themes, in particular, greatly worried the former diplomat towards the end of the war. Vansittart feared that the German war criminals would be allowed to escape punishment and that Germany would be left with a sizeable industrial complex which would serve as a basis to launch another world war. Vansittart tried to

steer government policy on these issues in the direction he wished it to go. For instance, in continually pressing the government to warn neutrals not to harbour war criminals, Vansittart was trying to get the British government to take the lead in the matter -- to get them in first, not second. While he was unsuccessful, he at least did get the following acknowledgement from the government: "You're in the happy position of the pioneer who has helped blaze the trail."[83] Furthermore, Vansittart's motion of 18 April 1944 prompted the government to appoint a committee of scientists to prepare a practical and efficacious scheme of preventing the manufacture of all explosives in Germany after the war.[84]

Vansittart was successful in other ways as well. Conscious of the limited power of the House of Lords, Vansittart got an assurance from the government that the House would have an opportunity of discussing the broad lines of the projected peace settlement despite the fact that, constitutionally, there was no need for the prior submission of any peace treaty to Parliament.[85] In addition, in the 18 March 1942 debate entitled "Enemy Aliens and Propaganda," Vansittart seems to have successfully established that the views of the German émigrés in Britain were now at odds with Allied policy.[86]

But there were definite limits to his influence from the rostrum of the House of Lords. In one notable instance, on 7 February 1945, Vansittart was forced by a hostile House to withdraw his motion calling for a declaration that

neutrality rights did not extend to the granting of asylum for Axis war criminals.[87] Furthermore, the government was not about to associate itself with his view that the Gestapo should be declared "outlawed fair game for anyone."[88]

While Vansittart's activities in the Lords were a nuisance, he could have been even more irritating than he was. For example, throughout 1943 (when the issue was not as pressing as it was one year later) Vansittart was willing to continuously postpone his motion of preventing German war criminals from finding asylum in neutral countries until it was convenient for the government for him to raise it.[89] Vansittart was also willing to inform the government of the gist of his argument on a particular issue in advance of the debate if the government so desired.[90] Furthermore, Vansittart withdrew most of his motions, a fairly common procedure in the House of Lords. But he did so only after he received an assurance that government planning was proceeding along the same lines as his own thinking. While this may not have been totally satisfying, Vansittart may have simply believed that the various assurances that he got were the best that could be obtained at present and he was willing to let the issue drop temporarily.

Aside from having to deal with most of Vansittart's enquiries and activities in the House of Lords, the Foreign Office found Vansittart to be a nuisance in other ways. Vansittart was constantly badgering the Foreign Office concerning the welfare of the Poles and repeatedly enquiring

whether or not it was true that certain "intolerable" German émigrés were employed by the government. Vansittart also enquired about the alleged Foreign Office desire to cooperate with German groups such as the Free German Committee in the United Kingdom or the London Büro of Austrian Socialists. He even questioned the government regarding its putative intention of maintaining the administrative structures introduced by the Nazis in Austria.[91] A typical Foreign Office reaction to all this was: "This is all rather fiddling and tiresome."[92] The answer the Foreign Office usually gave to Vansittart's allegations was that they were false and, in the case of the Poles, that the government was doing all it could.

Vansittart also proved to be a nuisance in desiring to publish his memoranda written while at the Foreign Office. Vansittart wanted to publish various memoranda to defend himself from the attacks of his opponents who were often accusing him of being an appeaser. But his efforts were without success.[93]

But not all of Vansittart's Foreign Office enquiries were totally without effect. Vansittart managed to get some arrangements the government had with German émigrés terminated, particularly those involving Germans in what Vansittart regarded as the sensitive world of Allied propaganda.[94] An enquiry by the former diplomat about Germans who had in mind a peace incompatible with British interests also led the Foreign Office to request MI5 for a report on

trends in German émigré opinion and activities in Britain.[95] A Vansittart enquiry in September 1944 also prompted the government to take action to see whether the alleged Vatican offer of asylum to war criminals was true.[96]

Vansittart was also a nuisance for the Home Office. He was constantly bringing instances of "defeatism" and "German propaganda" to the attention of the Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison. While Vansittart invariably hoped that the various offences about which he complained would be removed, the Home Office saw Vansittart's accusations as exaggerated and stated that the activities of the various people about whom he enquired were not having an appreciable effect on the war.[97]

Vansittart was also a nuisance to some extent for Anglo-American relations. For instance, Vansittart's broadcast on 1 August 1943 criticizing American policy towards France was not at all to the liking of American Secretary of State Cordell Hull. Hull let his dissatisfaction be known to the British embassy in Washington.[98] This led Anthony Eden to comment: "Lord V. does not help us."[99] Churchill himself complained that "surely this broadcast should have been vetted beforehand by the F.O."[100] Fortunately for the British, the storm in the United States blew over quickly.[101]

Vansittart's complaints in the Lords about the United States were also a nuisance.[102] Furthermore, the Foreign Office felt compelled to keep an eye on Vansittart and his

activities abroad.[103] This was extremely ironical. In his role as Chief Diplomatic Advisor at the Foreign Office, Vansittart was a neglected and isolated figure. Now, outside the government, he attracted a considerable amount of attention and the Foreign Office felt it had to spy on him. The Foreign Office watched for press reactions to Vansittart's publications and noted that they may have had some influence in hardening American opinion towards Germany.[104] It also feared the possibility that the former diplomat would found "Vansittart clubs" in the United States since "this would . . . promote the idea that anti-Germanism of his sort is a foreign-sponsored movement and objectionable as such."[105] The Foreign Office further watched those organizations in the United States which were interested in Vansittart.[106]

While Vansittart may have been somewhat of a nuisance, in some instances the Foreign Office agreed with Vansittart's statements and activities vis-à-vis the United States. There was some desire in the Foreign Office to take advantage of the opportunity provided by Vansittart's August 1943 criticism of American policy to reproach the Americans themselves.[107] The Foreign Office also must have looked favorably on Vansittart's request of 16 July 1941 for an American Expeditionary Force[108] and his October 1943 request that the Americans stop lecturing the British. "It has got to stop," the former diplomat said. "We will not accept one jot less than equality from anyone!"[109]

Vansittart both criticized and complicated British propaganda. British propaganda toward Germany took the hard line in the spring of 1940.[110] "From May onwards," as Asa Briggs says, "the term 'Nazi' was excluded from B.B.C. news bulletins in German except when in the context of a quotation, and was used only sparingly elsewhere."[111] From late 1940 on, the Political Warfare Executive (P.W.E.) considered the proposal of distinguishing between "good" and "bad" Germans and appealing to the former. But again and again they had been constrained to reject it. The reason they had done so was not because it would necessarily be ineffective in Germany. One of the reasons was because of the Vansittart debate.[112] In order to avoid splitting public opinion to a dangerous degree at home and thus weakening the war effort, the British government had to steer between "the Scylla of Lord Vansittart and the Charybdis of the Bishop of Chichester."[113] The Bishop of Chichester was a strong proponent of the "good" German idea, i.e. that the Nazis were an aberration, not an outcome, of German history. While government policy did not exacerbate the split in public opinion on the Vansittart controversy, the Vansittart debate raging in the country consistently prevented Britain from taking a definitive line in her propaganda to Germany.[114] The government's basic attitude was: "The Nazi system must and will be overthrown by force of arms, <u>but</u> the German people cannot entirely escape

responsibility for the horrors which that regime has brought on the world in their name."[115]

Some members of the government, however, apparently still thought there was greater advantage to be had by making a distinction. There was, in fact, to be a serious split in opinion in the Foreign Office regarding the proper kind of political warfare to use against Germany. On 10 July 1941 Alexander Cadogan referred to Black Record as being a "sterile policy" which "can only cement the German people behind their rulers. I have never thought it wrong, but always thought it silly."[116] Anthony Eden admitted to not having read the pamphlet but he agreed with the verdict of his Permanent Under-Secretary.[117] By April 1942 Eden had changed his mind regarding propaganda to Germany.[118] Furthermore, Geoffrey Harrison and Frank Roberts were cautiously in favour of hope clauses. Assistant Under-Secretary William Strang, however, was, according to the head of P.W.E., "even more cautiously against, knowing the mind of the Secretary of State who is anti-hope clauses . . . . "[119]

While the British did not pursue a definitive line in their propaganda, Vansittart still found room to criticize it. This was due partly to the lack of coordination between the different bodies responsible for propaganda.[120] Vansittart's private intelligence agency established a network to listen in on B.B.C. broadcasts to Germany. Instead of supplying information about Germany as in the 1930s and the

early part of the Second World War, his private intelligence network thus spied on particularly suspect government agencies during the latter part of the Second World War. When a broadcast distinguishing between "good" and "bad" Germans was made, Vansittart was notified who could, if he thought the case was strong enough, send it to Brendan Bracken, the Minister of Information. The object was, as Malcolm Grahame Christie wrote to the former diplomat: "By feeding Bracken through you with a series of machine-gun bursts we may at last call his attention to concrete cases and gradually to a general overhaul and change of policy and personnel."[121] And Vansittart's private intelligence agency invariably found cases of B.B.C. "stupidity."[122] Vansittart was particularly incensed about Richard Crossman who apparently authorized an attack on him on the B.B.C.'s German Service in January 1942. Vansittart was "determined to have Crossman out."[123] He was, however, unsuccessful.

But Vansittart also came in for his share of criticism in connection with propaganda. This was because he was accused of being a gift to Dr. Goebbels' propaganda machine. Goebbels was not one to deny it. As he wrote after the publication of Vansittart's Lessons of My Life:

> This fellow Vansittart is really worth his weight in gold to our propaganda. After the war a monument ought to be erected to him somewhere in Germany with the inscription, 'To the Englishman who rendered the greatest service to the German cause during the war.'[124]

The great use German propaganda was making of Vansittart's speeches and writings to promote its "strength through fear" campaign did not escape the attention of the Foreign Office.[125] In fact, it made many officials, including the Permanent Under-Secretary, even more bitter towards Vansittart.[126] Geoffrey Harrison concisely summed up his feelings on the subject in the following phrase: "Lord Vansittart is always a gift to Dr. Goebbels."[127] Furthermore, there was even some talk about getting the Vansittart debates in the House of Lords stopped.[128] If this was tried, the attempt was unsuccessful.

While Vansittart was a nuisance to the government, he was stating what was a widely held view. Even though members of the government did not think of or call themselves pro-Vansittartites,[129] many held views on Germany which were very similar to those of the former diplomat. Included in this category were, among others, Lord Beaverbrook (after May 1940),[130] Anthony Eden,[131] and Arthur Greenwood.[132] Several members of the government, however, went even further than Vansittart. For instance, Duff Cooper, the Minister of Information from May 1940 to July 1941 and later Ambassador to France, advocated the destruction of the German state.[133] Brendan Bracken, his successor at the Ministry of Information, also outdid Vansittart in the conviction that all Germans were irredeemably tainted with militarism. Bracken further supported the drastic dismemberment of Germany, including the transfer of territory

to France and the establishment of a Rhineland republic.[134] Winston Churchill, as we have seen, disliked Black Record and believed in upholding a European family of nations in which there would be no pariahs. The Prime Minister was willing to treat the Germans generously though depriving them of their arms.[135] At times, however, he went further than the former Permanent Under-Secretary. For instance, in a broadcast from Chequers on 27 April 1941, Churchill said: "There are less than seventy million malignant Huns -- some of which are curable and others killable . . . ."[136] He also considered using poison gas in retaliation for the 1944 V-weapon attacks.[137]

Some Americans also went further than Vansittart was willing to go. American Secretary of State for the Treasury Henry Morgenthau called for the pastoralization of Germany. The American president was also no moderate. On 19 August 1944 he said:

> We have got to be tough with Germany and I mean the German people, not just the Nazis. You either have to castrate the German people or you have got to treat them in such a manner so that they can't just go on reproducing people who want to contribute the way they have in the past.[138]

But on perhaps the single most important issue -- the continuity of militarism in German history -- and its corollaries -- the need for reeducation, disarmament, reparations, occupation, and control of industry -- there was no real discrepancy between the views of Vansittart and the government.

Vansittart's attitude towards the British government from 1939 to 1945 was marked by distrust. Vansittart believed that he knew better than the government on the German issue. He did, after all, claim to be Britain's number one expert on Germany.

In the first instance Vansittart tried to dispel the conception that Britain was fighting only Nazism, a conception which he believed was widely and mistakenly held by the British government. He also combatted any and every governmental inclination for a compromise peace. So long as he thought he was useful in such a capacity, Vansittart was willing to continue serving in his position of marginal power. However, after the threat of a compromise peace virtually disappeared, Vansittart became increasingly uncomfortable in his position as Chief Diplomatic Advisor. His sense of increased isolation merely exacerbated this feeling. This crise de conscience which he was experiencing was characterized by very poor mental and physical health. This made his dilemma even more acute. But Vansittart's crise de conscience also coincided with his discovery that he was apparently a good propagandist and that there was an ignorant and even dangerous segment of public opinion which had to be checked. Vansittart's new mission was the result of these various influences. His mission was to throw light on the psychology of the past and thus secure maximum public support for the anticipated harsh peace that the government would impose upon Germany. When the government moved too

slowly in this direction, Vansittart felt at liberty to try to push it along. At bottom, he was unsure that the government (even one headed by Winston Churchill) would impose a harsh peace upon the Reich. He thus checked up continually on the government by laying down carefully timed motions in the House of Lords.

Vansittart's post-retirement activities were considered to be a nuisance by the government. Yet, after all, what more could one expect from an "erratic, feverish genius" (as he was described by John Colville) than nuisance? Vansittart's activities proved to be very irritating for most government departments and for government policy as a whole. Though Vansittart does not fit the pattern of a twentieth century troublemaker as defined by A.J.P. Taylor,[139] he certainly can be considered one.

CHAPTER 3

VANSITTART'S PUBLICATIONS (1941-1945)

Attempting to secure public support for an anticipated harsh government policy led Vansittart to re-enact the same battles he had fought in 1939-40. But due to the persistence of his enemies in the public sector, his approach now was much more systematic and thorough. In his publications, Vansittart strove to dispel existing conceptions of Germany and establish a new understanding of that country. Despite the engrossing nature of the campaign he set out to conduct, he also managed to turn his attention to a peace program.

One of the most difficult burdens Vansittart had to endure while at the Foreign Office was the fact that he was debarred from expressing publicly his strong beliefs and intense feelings about foreign affairs and politics.[1] With his resignation from the government in July 1941, however, he was free to speak and write as he chose. Vansittart was glad at his prospect of freedom. As he wrote to Stanley Baldwin:

> I have found thirty-nine years of silence and subordination too much for my conscience. I have much to say about the world and particularly about Europe and it is my duty to say it before I die . . . .[2]

In fact, Vansittart regarded telling his compatriots what he had learned as being "the end and most important part" of

his life work.[3] Much of what he intended to say, he explained to Sir William Max Müller

> both verbally and in writing, will be of a polemical character. Indeed, I intend that this should be so. . . . I do not intend that cranks and charlatans should allow the Germans to get the world into this mess again if I can help it. There is a sharp tussle ahead, and I intend to be in the thick of it . . . .

Vansittart saw himself as the only qualified person who could do the work that he had planned.[4]

Vansittart's speeches and writings, and Black Record in particular, created a massive controversy within Britain about the German national character and German history. While Vansittart's publications affected the popular debate, they were in turn affected by it. Vansittart, admittedly, had much he wanted to say; however, the persistence of his opponents ensured that he would turn out a regular stream of publications. A more obvious way in which Vansittart's publications were affected by the popular debate is that in his writings, Vansittart was repeatedly defending himself against accusations from his critics. For instance, Vansittart was often disclaiming that he advocated the extermination of the German people and that when he spoke of Germans he did not mean 100 percent but well over 75 percent. He was also repeatedly countering charges that he was a gift to Goebbels and a reactionary.

There are two main phases or elements to Vansittart's writings. The first element is what was, in effect, a dual

myth policy: on the one hand the demythologization of British thinking about Germany; on the other the creation of new serviceable Vansittartian myths about the Reich. This phase extends from January 1941 to the end of the Second World War. The second element of Vansittart's writings is the development of his peace program. This dates from 1943 and also extends to the end of the war.

The demythologization of British thinking about Germany and the creation of new Vansittartian myths are two closely interrelated developments. Together with his debunking of British thought about the Reich, Vansittart was trying to establish a new vision of the "true" Germany. The chief component of this new myth of Germany was the militaristic inclinations not only of Hitler, but of the masses.

Vansittart's attacks had very specific targets: the British public's perception of the "good" and "bad" Germans and the public's identification with would-be redeeming qualities in Germany -- religion, German culture, and liberalism. Vansittart believed that these ideas were widely and mistakenly held. That such was the case was a tribute, Vansittart believed, to the great effect that German propaganda had on the British mind. Vansittart was obsessed with the supposed great influence of German propaganda. It was, as Vansittart said in Lessons of My Life, one of the reasons for the considerable amount of repetition in his writings.[5] In fact, both of Vansittart's books published during the war consisted largely of material

that had been previously published. Repetition was, indeed, one of the central features of the Vansittart issue. The former Permanent Under-Secretary felt that he had to make a point -- that the Germans were as bad as all that -- and make it stick in the face of a very vocal opposition.

In Vansittart's eyes, if one was not with him, one was against him. There were no half measures when all of civilization was at stake. If one did not believe Vansittart's brand of truth, one was instantly labelled a "dupe", "confident amateur", "soft-peace merchant", "innocent", "pseudo-intellectual", "masochist", "crank", "charlatan", "quack", "Germanophile", or the more derogatory form, "Germanofool". Vansittart saw enemies all around him and was obsessed with the activities of his domestic opponents as well as the German émigré community.

Hans Jaeger has suggested that Vansittart felt he had to exaggerate in his writings in order to impress, "as the skeptical British will believe only a fraction of what they hear in war-time." He added that it must be kept in mind that Black Record dates from 1940 when some still held a separate peace to be possible and that Vansittart tried to convince even the most ardent disbelievers by painting the blackest possible picture of the Germans.[6] Aaron Goldman rightly disagrees with Jaeger. Goldman states that after 1940 the possibility of a separate peace became almost nil, yet the invective in Vansittart's speeches and writings did not diminish. "A more likely explanation," he says

> lies in the former diplomat's authoritative nature -- his belief in the correctness of his cause, no matter what it was. The minutes and memoranda he wrote while at the Foreign Office have a ring of certainty and definitiveness about them. He knew his subject and he knew how to make a case -- most important of all, as far as he was concerned, he almost always knew he was right.[7]

Vansittart firmly believed that what he wrote about Germany was the truth, albeit in a sometimes simplified form. This is corroborated by the fact that there is no major discrepancy between his views as expressed in his publications and those expressed in his private correspondence, the ultimate indicator of his true feelings.

The second part of Vansittart's thinking vis-à-vis Germany -- his peace program -- was contingent on the first -- the establishment of new myths. One first had to have ideas about how to win the war -- that all the Germans were guilty and had to be totally defeated -- before there could be any ideas about winning the peace. Stated another way: "there can be no confidence of cure without accuracy of diagnosis."[8] It was to this latter element that Vansittart applied himself initially.

One can see Vansittart's debunking of old myths about Germany and the propagation of new ones already in his first and most famous wartime pamphlet entitled Black Record. The pamphlet was first published in January 1941 when Vansittart was still attached to the government. As he told the journalist Erica Mann in an interview in 1941, Black Record was designed to prove two things:

> (1) the enemy is formidable and all our efforts are needed to defeat him; (2) defeat is not likely to tame the enemy whose insatiable aggressiveness is a matter of long and notorious standing and has never been affected by either defeat or victory.[9]

In Black Record, Vansittart spoke as "a diplomatist with his coat off." His basic attitude was that the Germans had not changed since the time of Tacitus. In the words of the Chief Diplomatic Advisor: "Hitler is no accident. He is the natural and continuous product of a breed which from the dawn of history has been predatory and bellicose."[10] Hitler was merely the ultimate and ugliest expression of German militarism.

In describing Germany's behaviour to her neighbours, Vansittart likened Germany to a butcher-bird which would every now and then spring on some smaller unsuspecting bird around it and kill it. But the German "butcher-bird" had not totally had its way. If it did, Vansittart said, "there would have been a war every eight years of the last three-quarters of a century" instead of five wars and four "near misses."[11]

How was it possible for Germany to destroy "Four Hundred Million Happinesses?" Vansittart asked. It was simple:

> Impregnate a race with militarism, imbue it with a sense of its own superiority, convince it of its mission to enslave mankind for the good of mankind, persuade it that this end justifies any and every means however filthy; and you produce a race of hooligans which is a curse to the whole world.[12]

Having created his own myth that not only Hitler, but the German masses, were imbued with militarism, Vansittart now set out to demythologize British thinking about Germany. One of his targets was the "good" German theory. Vansittart did not deny that there were good individual Germans (he always referred to "Germans in the plural").[13] The problem was that "they are never there on The Day." Vansittart argued that

> . . . the programmes of their leaders always <u>have</u> been executed. . . . It is therefore dangerous to persist in the hallucination that there is in Germany an effective element of kindly and learned old gentlemen, and sweet pig-tailed maidens. This is unhappily a myth.[14]

Potential reformers in Germany, he added, have always been "a weak minority" and incapable of impeding "the iniquitous habits and causes of the majority."[15]

Vansittart also belittled the positive contributions of German culture:

> Compared with the pain that Germans have brought to man, the pleasure that they have given us is literally a drop in the ocean. . . . To mankind as a whole, Germans have brought nothing but misery in all its worst forms.[16]

"Generations of us," the Chief Diplomatic Advisor added, "have never tasted <u>real</u> peace; and we never shall taste it until the incubus is removed."[17]

Vansittart, however, did not believe that the Germans were necessarily irredeemably tainted. According to the diplomat,

> The regeneration of the Brazen Horde is not impossible. Nothing is impossible in history. . . . The cure will have to be drastic, and largely self-administered. Without a fundamental change of soul, no other cure, no mere administrative or technical tinkering can be permanent. I will only add that it must at best be slow. It will take at least a generation.[18]

The Black Record broadcasts were a summary of Vansittart's views on Germany, though presented in a simplified form for mass consumption.[19] The origins of Black Record contributed to this. In the words of Norman Rose:

> The origins of the pamphlet as a series of broadcasts lent itself both to simplistic presentation and evaluations. It is undeniable that Black Record contains some embarrassing elements of instant history and psychology.[20]

Vansittart, however, never intended it to be a comprehensive study.

Black Record met with an enormous response. One of the reasons for this was that the author's writing style was very appealing. According to his biographer,

> Van studiously avoided the tortuous style which so bewildered many of his colleagues; he kept his prose simple, uncomplicated and full of many lively passages -- the mark of a successful controversialist. Black Record is in fact a highly readable philippic.[21]

In addition, in the circumstances of the winter of 1940/41 when London was being bombed nightly, Vansittart's views struck a deep and receptive chord among large sections of the British populace.[22]

Vansittart's views were also popular elsewhere.[23] Excerpts were quoted in the press, and the pamphlet itself was translated into Polish, Portuguese, Dutch, French and Spanish.[24] Fifty thousand copies alone went to Australia; at least 2,000 were published in the Dutch East Indies; 250 copies were even sent to Iceland. By 30 April 1942, 350,000 copies had been published in Britain.[25] Altogether some 500,000 copies were published.[26]

With one exception,[27] Black Record was the only publication in which Vansittart cited classical authors in his indictment of the Germans. While Vansittart later rued his single reference to Tacitus in Black Record -- the Germans "hate peace . . . and think it weak to win with sweat what can be won by blood"[28] -- Vansittart's early history of Germany was not crucial to his case -- the militaristic and brutal nature of present-day Germany. Vansittart himself never took his early history all that seriously. He was content to "start our abhorrence of Germany and the Germans from Friedrich, or Wilhelm, but not from Adolf."[29] When Vansittart descended deep into Germany's past, he did so only because,

> in contrast to other peoples, the Germans had not changed and certain characteristics of their earliest days remain significant even now; in fact, the majority of the Teutonic people is still as truculent and ruthlessly aggressive as their ancestors used to be; there is nothing new, nothing accidental, and therefore, nothing that will necessarily pass in any of Mr. Hitler's repulsive features . . .[30]

Vansittart's debunking of allegedly popular conceptions of Germany and the propagation of new ideas was carried one step further in the foreword he wrote in June 1941 for the book Thus Spake Germany. Here Vansittart was even more explicit than in Black Record that Britain was fighting the German nation.[31] It was, Vansittart believed, only by telling the British people this "truth" that it was possible to obtain their full support. Vansittart's warning to his readers was also more explicit than in Black Record. If there was any further flinching from the truth, he said "there was not a monkey's chance of a better world."[32] As he later told Erica Mann: "I shall not live to see . . . [such a world]; as long as I live however, I shall go on fighting for it; for it is the one thing worth living, fighting and dying for."[33]

In Thus Spake Germany Vansittart also developed a new mythology concerning the fate that would befall Britain should Germany ever gain control of the United Kingdom. As he wrote:

> Were we in the power of the German butcher-bird, the policy of extermination pursued in Poland and Jugoslavia would be child's play compared with the horrors that would be perpetrated in our towns and shires. . . . The plan is, in fact, to reduce our population to one-half by a combination of massacre and depopulation.[34]

While this may sound like Vansittart was deliberately exaggerating, the author firmly believed such "atrocity" propaganda. In his view, the Germans were capable of

anything. At the same time, however, Vansittart was very good at turning such propaganda against his opponents and utilizing it to support his own cause.

In Black Record Vansittart wrote that the regeneration of the Germans was not impossible. He also said that it would have to be largely self-administered and would take at least a generation. In the foreword to Thus Spake Germany, Vansittart was more pessimistic about the possibility of conversion. He was also more vague about the amount of time required for this regeneration. He merely referred to "some happier, but distant, future."[35] By December 1941 Vansittart no longer believed that the necessary regeneration could come from within. As he wrote in the foreword of the Library Edition of Black Record: "Germans in the plural have got to be completely regenerated and retaught -- and this can only be achieved by force and time."[36] The necessary reeducation of the Germans could only come from without, i.e. through the efforts of the victorious enemies of the Third Reich.[37] Vansittart's view of the rejuvenation period necessary for the Germans and the nature of this rejuvenation was thus increasingly pessimistic. This was probably in direct relation to the increasing scale of atrocities. The longer the Germans proved that they were ruthless conquerors and murderers the longer it would take to purify themselves.

In Roots of the Trouble, published in November 1941, Vansittart felt it necessary to establish some guiding prin-

ciples in the conduct of international affairs, especially in connection with Germany. Vansittart's debunking of old myths and propagation of new ones took another turn. Vansittart deprecated the fact that, in the realm of foreign affairs, the three great democracies (the United States, Britain and France) had suffered from an abundance of ideals and a lack of direction. All three, according to the former diplomat, "have attempted to live through an era of emergency on systematized chaos, rusty machinery and short-sighted egotisms, plastered over with constitutional sanctions."[38] France, he continued, had perished in the attempt, and the other two "have found themselves in widely differing degrees of danger." There was, Vansittart said, "no excuse for their predicament. A century of German Hitlerature had lain open for inspection."[39] The former Chief Diplomatic Advisor attributed "the two greatest and most gratuitous catastrophes of civilization" not to any obscurity on the part of the Germans, for their attitude was clear, but to the absence of guiding principles in democracy's conduct of international affairs. Vansittart believed that it was essential in the future for those who were to deal with politics, and above all foreign affairs, to have first obtained some specialized training. "In the unhappy past," he explained, "the invasion of foreign affairs by home politics led to such a queering of the pitch by the spectators, that the very battle was lost."[40] In this field, he stated, "ill-informed meddlers" were a mortal menace to

civilization. Vansittart believed there was a need to show up these meddlers -- to show that they had been wrong. Finally, Vansittart added,

> The civilized world has been almost irretrievably ruined by two insane gambles on German nature, though Germany has run absolutely and disastrously true to form, and will do so again if she gets the chance. To be wrong once may be unlucky; to be wrong twice must be unwise; to be wrong thrice would be criminal.[41]

Vansittart proceeded to outline seven principles which had been ignored in the past and were to be applied in the future. Here Vansittart was continuing his attacks. He was demythologizing British thinking about Germany by pointing to the problems on the home front during the interwar period. But he also continued his propagation of new (by now old) myths about Germany, including the all-pervasiveness of German militarism. It also proved to be Vansittart's first explicit attack on the Weimar Republic. Vansittart stated that the Republic had "insufficient popular support, and no Republican Idea for its foundation." "The Weimar Republic," he added, "was but a breathing space between the rounds."[42]

The first of Vansittart's seven principles was that the British were henceforth to remember their friends and not forget their enemies.[43] According to Vansittart, there was also a necessity for straight thinking on Germany: seeing the "true" Germany. Where there was a need for straight thinking there was also a need for thinking in simple terms:

the German problem was not complex. It was due to a deep-ingrained militarism. Furthermore, according to the former diplomat, foreign affairs were the key business and there was a great need for background in it. Trusting one's own people was also very important. Trusting and informing them, he said, was a "surer and cheaper way to an abiding settlement than to bid for the favour of enemies."[44] Coming during the Second World War this sounds very hypocritical. Vansittart did not trust large sections of the public himself. His point, however, was that if the public had been informed and trusted after the First World War, Britain would not have been so eager to meet German grievances. Vansittart's seventh and final principle was that one had to have the wherewithal.

Vansittart made some further suggestions. He recommended that the pre-war Cabinet system be improved. Since foreign and home affairs were not easy to combine, foreign affairs might be treated by a smaller body such as the present War Cabinet, "with a minority of experts on terms of full equality."[45] Another overdue reform, according to Vansittart, was that foreign policy should be removed as far as possible from the realm of party politics. He further warned his readers to be vigilant towards those who did not maintain that the German problem was a spiritual one. Until that was recognized, he argued, there was no chance of peace in the world. Vansittart concluded on a curious twist of

Burke: "You not only can indict a nation; you cannot escape from doing so."[46]

Vansittart's next major work, entitled Lessons of My Life, was published in April 1943. In this book Vansittart's debunking and propagation of new ideas reached a new height. One of the probable reasons for this was the vehemence of his opponents. In Vansittart's view, the left-wing socialist intellectuals, in particular, were continuing to obscure the real issues of the war. As peace was looming ever nearer, this was, he believed, potentially disastrous. Vansittart was very bitter towards the socialists. As he wrote in his book: "There are two lots of people who must be beaten in this war: the Germans and the English pseudo-intellectuals."[47] Vansittart, however, had mixed feelings about the prospects of defeating the latter.[48]

One of the reasons for the book was, as Vansittart wrote, "because it is essential in the highest interest of humanity that we should remain in Europe; and we can only do so by seeing the Germany that our friends have felt."[49] If Britain was unable to feel in European terms (i.e. hate the Germans), Vansittart feared that Europe would ultimately go her own way without Britain. This would be a calamity for both Britain and Europe.

In Lessons of My Life, Vansittart attempted to demythologize three factors within Germany which he said should have restrained German militarism -- German culture, Liberalism or Socialism, and the Churches. The first two

Vansittart had dealt with before -- though now he dealt with them in a much more thorough and systematic manner -- but the third factor was new. Vansittart argued that not only have these would-be restraining factors proved themselves totally untrustworthy, but they have always sided openly with the Right and militarism whenever there was an opportunity to do so.[50] Vansittart was, as he was most prone to do, arguing a one-sided story. Viewing everything in terms of German aggression, Vansittart was blind to the positive contribution of any and all redeeming qualities in Germany.

According to Vansittart, German nationalism had always been stronger than socialism and the former always prevailed where there was a conflict of interests between the two. The German Left, in Vansittart's view, was only barely better than the German Right.[51]

The German Churches, both Catholic and Protestant, were, in the eyes of Vansittart, likewise infected with militarism. Far from acting as a restraining influence, they even aided and abetted every aggressive war. Vansittart dismissed even the most courageous of the religious leaders. For instance, while Vansittart acknowledged that Pastor Niemöller was brave for defending his religion, he attacked him for being a nationalist at heart. It was, Vansittart complained, always "Germanity before Christianity."[52]

German culture was similarly berated. Vansittart acknowledged the great achievements of German music, but

German culture as a whole failed to have any political or moral effect upon the "real" Germany. Vansittart was glad to have deflated Germany's "inflated cultural pretensions" in good time as he thought they would again be used to obtain better peace terms for Germany.[53]

Vansittart also returned to a theme that he mentioned briefly in Roots of the Trouble: the theory of accidentalism. The former Permanent Under-Secretary also tried to demythologize it. He complained that

> we have shrunk from every manifestation of the German spirit and, clinging to Accidentalism, were always taken by surprise.[54]

But, Vansittart believed, it was possible to predict what was going to happen even more accurately from the German character than rearmament.[55] He ended, typically, on the following note: "We must hear no more of Accidentalism. This is its official funeral."[56] Like the other themes with which he was dealing in Lessons of my Life, Vansittart was trying to end the public controversy on these issues definitively and decisively in his favour.

Vansittart believed that one of the reasons for the falseness of accidentalism from the start was the German language. "Anyone who really listened to it," he said, "could have foretold these two wars."[57] Vansittart believed that the German language had become more inflammatory and intemperate. This corresponded directly to an increasingly aggressive German foreign policy. Thus, even the German

language was viewed in terms of aggression. In this case, he argued it was conducive to Germany's bellicosity.

In Lessons of My Life Vansittart also included the preface he wrote to G. Borsky's 1942 publication The Greatest Swindle in the World. Here Vansittart tried to demythologize the story of German reparations after World War I. He tried to show how the Germans succeeded in mitigating, evading, even profiting from Allied reparations. According to Vansittart, Germany succeeded in borrowing either six or ten times (depending on whether or not one included the amounts of the Dawes and Young loans) as much as she paid in cash.[58] Vansittart's motive in trying to debunk this story was to prepare the public for the same sort of inevitable "fuss" that the Germans would make at the end of the Second World War when the Allies intended to de-industrialize and deloot Germany. Vansittart earnestly hoped that the "fuss and fraud of the last time" would be well remembered.[59]

All of the former diplomat's attacks led to one inescapable conclusion. Vansittart viewed the indictment of the German nation as the greatest lesson of his life. It was, as he put it, "the sum total of all the political lessons, that I have learned -- the highest need and wisdom that can be transmitted to the coming world."[60]

In Lessons of My Life, Vansittart raised his previous estimate for the amount of time required to reeducate the Germans. He now said that reeducation was likely to require

two generations, or 50 years.[61] It was not surprising that this estimate should rise with the course of time. The Jewish "final solution" and the wholesale persecution of other nationalities by the Germans seemed to indicate that more thorough methods were needed.

In 1943 Vansittart believed that, for the most part, the reeducation of the Germans would have to be self-generated. He recognized, however, that there were certain categories in which the German would be unable to help himself:

> We have to teach him to be an individual, a privilege for which he has no aptitude. . . . He needs to be retaught the whole gamut of manners, private and public, to unlearn his idea that a place in the sun means not even a freckle for anyone else. He must be untaught that the weak are morally the prey of the strong. . . . He needs to be taught the equilibrium which has never been able to found itself in the German spirit. . . . In a word he must be taught happiness . . .[62]

At approximately the same time Lessons of My Life was published, the second element of Vansittart's program for Germany emerged. As we have seen, Vansittart was not too confident that his debunking of old myths and propagation of new ones was so successful that he could turn to other endeavours. He was insistent, however, that "we must not again find ourselves with victory in our grasp and not know what to do with it."[63] In June 1943 Vansittart thus laid down his 12 Point Peace Program for Germany. It consisted of:

(1) the unconditional surrender of Germany and of the other Axis and satellite powers.

(2) the occupation of Germany by an Allied army and an air force and the establishment of an inter-Allied council of control until it was no longer necessary.

(3) the arrest and trial of persons guilty of war crimes in the countries where they were committed.

(4) the demobilization and disarmament of all German Armed Forces.

(5) the police forces in Germany were to be regional, free from central control and demilitarized.

(6) the abolition of all military and semi-military training.

(7) the evacuation of all territories invaded by the Axis nations.

(8) compensation for loot, machinery and equipment removed or destroyed.

(9) the control and, where required, the closing down of Germany's war potential, including aviation in all its forms.

(10) no loans or assistance were to be permitted to Germany or to any of the other Axis powers without the approval of the Allies.

(11) the curriculum of schools and universities were to be under inter-Allied supervision and advice until the reeducation of the German people was assured.

(12) the German radio and all propaganda were to be under inter-Allied supervision for as long as was necessary.[64]

This comprised the Twelve Point Peace Charter of the "Win the Peace" Movement, the president of which was Vansittart. The former diplomat said, "There is nothing cruel or even unduly severe or hard in the twelve points."[65] They merely constituted the "rockbottom for security."[66] Even the Foreign Office described the Peace Charter as "less ebullient [than usual] and very sensible."[67] Furthermore, as reported by The Scotsman: "He [Vansittart] believed the Germans, when they saw the twelve points, would be secretly relieved at their moderation, although, of course, they would make the welkin ring by their complaints."[68]

It seems that Vansittart had long had in mind all of the points of the Peace Charter. Vansittart's initial peace aims were very general though they implied more specific points.[69] They became only more specific as the defeat of Germany became more apparent. One thing should be added to Vansittart's twelve points. This is the policy of what he described as "full larders, empty arsenals."[70]

Vansittart first publicly called for the decentralization of Germany on 19 September 1943.[71] On that day, Vansittart also called for the redistribution of Prussia within Germany. In late January 1944 Vansittart elaborated on the issue. "There is," he wrote to the editor of The Yorkshire Conservative Newspaper Company, "no prospect of maintaining peace, unless [the] German administration is decentralized." Decentralization, he believed, was inevitable in such Departments as Education and Police, and

there would be no safety unless it was also extended to Finance, Justice and Social Welfare. Vansittart believed that the Reich Government should be in charge of Foreign Affairs, Customs and Excise, Posts and Telegraphs, and Communications. According to the former Permanent Under-Secretary, Prussia was the most unnatural state in the world, comprising three-fifths of Germany's population and nearly all the mineral resources. She had no right to rule over Westphalia, the Rhineland, Hanover, Schleswig-Holstein, Hesse, and the old Hansa cities and territories. "Let Prussia be resolved into her original components of Brandenburg and Pomerania, and the rest of her regain autonomy as Reichs Provinces," he said. The details of the boundaries he wished to be left to the Germans to decide. Berlin was also to cease being the capital.[72] With such amputations the population of Prussia would be reduced from 39 million to approximately 13 million. "The other Reichs provinces," he continued,

> will be able to hold their own with a Prussia of 13 millions: they can never do, and have never done, so with a Prussia of 39 millions. A balanced Germany may become a sane Germany. This is therefore an indispensable condition of peace, and without it a new war will be only a question of time.[73]

Vansittart's views grew increasingly militant and his tone increasingly hysterical in the face of Germany's defeat.[74] This corresponded with what, in his view, was the beginning of the German attempt to win the peace. In an

address to the "Win the Peace" Movement of 23 January 1944 Vansittart declared that the Germans were interested in winning the peace now that they could not win the war. Vansittart stated that (1) the Germans would say that they were not responsible for the war and (2) waiting around the corner was the ideal German democracy and no harsh terms should be imposed upon it which would handicap it.[75] He also found it utterly incomprehensible and disgusting that the German refugees and the British "dupes" could maintain, in an age of total war, that the German people were not supporting their government. In addition, Vansittart had some very harsh words for the supposed German S.S. officers who allegedly seized Paris radio and broadcast to their comrades to turn against Hitler. As he wrote to the editor of The Daily Sketch:

> There, Sir, are just more pestiferous German rats leaving the sinking ship. If you give any publicity to their squeals, please emphasize that they are rats, and that rats carry plague -- if they escape.[76]

Vansittart's attitude toward the 20 July Putschists was also very uncharitable.[77] Yet given his earlier reaction to the German resistance when the 1940 offensives were launched, this was not surprising. Far from acknowledging the moral courage of the conspirators, Vansittart viewed them as irredeemable militarists and saw the attempted coup as an endeavour to escape inevitable defeat and begin preparing for a Third World War. As Vansittart stated in the House of Lords on 26 September 1944:

> I have no faith in the people who were hanged, though the method of their execution was a terrible one. . . . These men were militarists . . . [who] thought it better to wind up this unprofitable business and get a fresh run at it a third time.[78]

In view of what he saw as the similarity of the intentions of the generals in the years 1918 and 1944, Vansittart predicted the Third World War after a further interval of twenty years. He thus believed that unconditional surrender should be strictly carried out.[79]

The last few months of the war saw a proliferation of Vansittart literature. This corresponded directly to the impending defeat of the Germans and to the possibility, as Vansittart believed, that the Allies would lose the peace.

In March 1945, Bones of Contention was published. In this work, Vansittart was pessimistic about the prospects of winning the peace. "At present," he wrote,

> even at the end of five years of war, we are perhaps more likely to lose the peace than to win it; and we shall be still more likely to do so five, ten, fifteen years after the signature of the treaty, which every defeated German will strain every nerve to violate.[80]

This conviction revealed a fundamental lack of confidence in both the British government and the public regarding their determination to impose a harsh peace upon Germany and maintain a vigilant watch over her afterwards.

In Bones of Contention, Vansittart continued to debunk allegedly popular myths and propagate his own ideas. He resumed his bitter attack on the German Churches. He also

continued his efforts to demythologize the German resistance. By expecting sabotage and guerilla warfare on a par with resistance movements in German-occupied Europe, Vansittart revealed a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of resistance in Nazi Germany. Vansittart also continued to try to discredit his old enemy, the German émigrés, who, he believed, were working to preserve "not only Germany but greater Germany."[81]

Vansittart further devoted attention to some themes which he had hitherto not discussed extensively. For instance, he now inveighed at length against the German Communists in Britain. The former diplomat believed that "Communism plus militarism would lead back to Nazism."[82] Vansittart also did his best to destroy the illusion held in certain quarters that the Atlantic Charter precluded the territorial diminution of Germany and "that its relevant clauses were merely a self-denying ordinance on the part of the Allies." He in fact applauded the Soviet intention of detaching East Prussia.[83] Vansittart further found it necessary to discredit some explanations put forth by the Germans and pro-Germans to divert and distribute blame for the Second World War: capitalism, the Treaty of Versailles and economic causes. Vansittart acknowledged, grudgingly, that economic causes can contribute to, but not make, great wars. Otherwise, he dismissed all three factors. Vansittart typically ignored things that could in any way detract

from his old and favourite myth: that German militarism was the cause of all of Europe's miseries.[84]

Aside from debunking accepted myths and propagating new ones, Vansittart also elaborated and expanded on his Twelve Point Peace Program in Bones of Contention. In the face of the impending defeat of Germany and what Vansittart believed this might mean, it is not at all surprising that he did so. Specific, concrete proposals were needed for a broad range of questions if Germany was not to escape her due.[85] Vansittart also elaborated and expanded on his proposals for decentralization at this time, again for the same reason.[86]

In Bones of Contention Vansittart also discussed his attitude toward other European nations. Vansittart's attitude towards Austria was at variance with his views on Germany. As in the 1930s, he strongly upheld Austrian independence vis-à-vis Germany. He believed the Austrians had "sinned greatly", something which must never be forgotten. "But," as he said,

> our problem is to fit a free, independent democratic Austria into the defence system to be built up in Central and South Eastern Europe, in order to prevent any future German aggression. This is the overriding consideration . . . .[87]

Vansittart also hoped to see a revived and powerful France aligned against post-war Germany. The former diplomat stated that Britain's policy must be to have "as our nearest neighbour a France, friendly, contented and strong, a great Power again in fact, and as quickly as possible."[88]

Close ties with a powerful France was the only way Britain could remain a great power herself.

As in Lessons of My Life, in Bones of Contention Vansittart placed great stock in Britain's small allies and was very sensitive to their views. The reason for this was that, quite aside from humanitarian reasons, he saw that they would play a very important part in the post-war world. The occupation of Germany by the forces of all the smaller countries Germany had occupied was the only way to ensure that the Germans would learn humility. Vansittart drastically raised the period required for this humility to take root in Germany: to one century.[89] The length of the war and the horrific number of casualties and atrocities by 1945 no doubt contributed to this estimate. But such a high estimate also may have been due to his obsession with winning the peace and his perception of the immense efforts needed to achieve it. The Germans had to learn humility but they could never learn this from an occupation by the Big Three. "They will," he stated,

> only hate and intrigue until they have pried loose the corner-stones of peace, just as they succeeded in doing after the last war. They will do it again but for the mortar of the smaller powers hardened by suffering.[90]

The occupation of Germany by all the Allies would also enable the great Allies to maintain a smaller force in Germany (some 13,000 men each). Without the strong fear of the smaller states, Vansittart believed the Big Three might

relapse into their inter-war levity. The weaker Allies would, in his view, also prevent the possibility of a Soviet monopoly over Eastern Europe.[91] If Vansittart found any consolation in the Second World War, it was that "it has at last fulfilled my long-deferred desire of joining Britain to Europe in spite of herself."[92]

Shortly after the publication of Bones of Contention, Vansittart's second "Win the Peace" Pamphlet was published.[93] The German Octopus, as it was called, marks the final stage of Vansittart's debunking of old ideas and the propagation of new ones. In The German Octopus Vansittart attempted to demythologize Germany's industrial relations in the inter-war period. He also created a new myth: that cartels were one of the Third Reich's secret weapons. The first two sentences set the tone for the entire pamphlet:

> This is a story of crime, and as such it should be read, bearing always in mind that the story is true, though it may at times appear to be incredible. This is the story of the chief criminal department of Hunnery, next to the German General Staff.[94]

In the pamphlet Vansittart argued that cartels were basically designed to promote industries in Germany which were essential to total war and to inhibit them elsewhere. "The German aim," Vansittart said,

> was to accomplish this by bringing the control of new strategic industries under the control of organizations whose monopoly would depend on co-operation with German organizations. The latter then endeavoured, largely by means of patents, to prevent or control techno-

> logical developments in countries whose resources might be used against Germany when war came 'according to plan.' The Germans used all kinds of patents for this purpose; some were merely intended to be buried, others were vague enough to cover a whole industry.[95]

"In all this murderous policy," Vansittart said, "the great German banks and combines acted as the tentacles of the octopus whose body was the German State." Germany, the former Permanent Under-Secretary passionately believed, must never again enjoy this latitude; "the tentacles must be amputated and the body kept under Allied control."[96] At present, he warned, the "German Octopus" was not killed but only scotched. "If we do not finish it off, it will finish us."[97]

In the pamphlet Vansittart claimed that he had held these views of German industry and industrialists for years. While this may be true, it is doubtful that he realized the full magnitude of the problem as revealed by a series of American White Papers on the subject of cartels. Vansittart only briefly mentioned the problem of cartels in Bones of Contention.[98] It seems, then, that Vansittart really only discovered the problem very late. This might partially explain the hysterical tone of the pamphlet -- he is revealing a new and "horrible" story -- but this tone also fits into a larger pattern.

The policy advocated in The German Octopus is, in some respects, similar to Vansittart's "keep Germany lean" policy of the 1930s. In the pamphlet Vansittart to some extent

advocated weakening German export trade to safeguard the interests of British trade.[99] But The German Octopus was also a reaction against the "business as usual" crowd: those who thought first of their pockets and only secondly of international security. These "calculators of the Right" had to be watched vigilantly in the future. According to Vansittart, the reason that they had hitherto attracted so little attention was that they were biding their time and the Leftists were doing much of their work for them.[100]

In Vansittart's last wartime pamphlet, the author also discussed the subject of war criminals. In addition to the main criminals, Vansittart stated that he wanted to see all the guilty underlings punished, no matter what the figure. "There will," he said,

> be no peace in Germany, no security in Europe, unless we put out of action for ever the entire Gestapo, S.S., S.D., the Death's Head formations as a minimum, besides punishing the ordinary massacreurs of the German Army.[101]

This was clearly impractical. Vansittart was here pursuing his old habit of providing the diagnosis but no practical cure. Yet in this respect he had come a considerable way during the Second World War. He managed to lay down a constructive, detailed, even sensible peace plan for Germany.

During the Second World War Vansittart was reacting against what he believed was the popular conception of Germany as well as his own sense of the pervasiveness of

German propaganda. Unchecked, he feared these things would secure for Germany a lenient peace that would allow her to begin planning for a Third World War. Vansittart thus set out to counteract the supposed great effect of German propaganda and attempt to demythologize allegedly popularly held ideas about Germany. This meant attacking the "myth of accidentalism;" belief in "the other Germany;" the positive contributions of German culture, religion and liberalism; and perceptions of Germany's inter-war economic history. In place of these conceptions about the Reich, Vansittart sought to establish his own views: that Germany was and always had been a barbarous nation capable of the vilest actions; that the entire nation, not merely the Nazis, were guilty; and that Germany could only become reconciled to Europe after a long period of regeneration. In propagating these ideas Vansittart was trying to secure public support for what he expected would be a harsh government policy towards Germany. Though Vansittart was by no means convinced that his campaign of "enlightenment" was achieving considerable success, he felt he had to lay down peace terms to be ready for the day when Germany was defeated.

Vansittart's publications were an evil influence in terms of Anglo-German relations, both in the short and the long run. In rejecting the publication of Black Record as an educational text, A.J. Andrews of Sir Isaac Petman & Sons, Inc. perhaps came nearest the mark. "It has," he said, "[no] permanent value, and its effect . . . was to

exacerbate the relations between the two countries."[102] Vansittart's harsh views, in fact, even proved to be an irritant in the relations between Britain and Germany in the post-World War II period.[103]

It cannot be denied that Vansittart's ideas were crude. They were also one-sided: Vansittart saw everything in terms of German militarism and German militarism only. He characteristically derided his opponents as quacks and charlatans. Yet, in a sense, Vansittart turned himself into a quack. He was speaking authoritatively on some topics -- such as the German Churches -- about which he did not know very much. He even admitted as much in Lessons of My Life[104]. As a German expert, then, Vansittart has to be considered somewhat of a disappointment. His writings and utterances did not justify his much-vaunted sense of himself.

Below Vansittart's fierce rhetoric, however, there was a continuing humanitarian urge. In the words of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart: Vansittart "is ridiculously tender-hearted in all private matters and any German who comes to him with a hard-luck story gets helped."[105] This help usually took the form of financial assistance. The ultimate irony of this story is that while Vansittart inveighed bitterly against the "pan-Germans" employed by the British government, many of the Germans with whom Vansittart associated on a private basis were suspect in the eyes of the authorities.[106]

Vansittart's rhetoric, at the same time, also revealed a fundamental misconception about the British public's attitude towards Germany. He dwelled on such things as the shallowness of German liberalism and culture which the people were not about to take into consideration in their judgement of Germany. Yet if Vansittart's campaign of "enlightenment" underestimated both the common sense and martial stamina of the British populace then so did the Ministry of Information's "same old Hun" campaign.[107] Furthermore, Vansittart's belief that the public was also continually "swallowing" German propaganda was an obsession which certainly blurred, if not actually blinded, his vision of Germany.

While Vansittart's wartime views on Germany in many ways became more and more reductive, in some ways his prescriptions improved. By laying down a constructive and detailed peace plan for Germany, Vansittart managed to alleviate some of his shortcomings in the 1930s. It was not sufficient, as Alexander Cadogan mentioned, to merely cry "rearm, rearm." One needed a practical policy of implementation. In the 1930s, then, Vansittart provided extensive comment on the Germany that was, though provided only meagre comment on what to do with her in a practical sense. During the Second World War, Vansittart again tried to establish the Germany that was. Yet despite the nature of his Germanophobic rhetoric, this time Vansittart provided both a practical and sensible solution about how to deal with her.

CHAPTER 4

THE WAR OF WORDS (1940-1945)

The Vansittart debate, or "War of Words," was an important corollary to Vansittart's publications. The former Permanent Under-Secretary had to get his views of Germany accepted if, as he believed, the Reich was to be prevented from starting a Third World War. This meant battling his domestic opponents and debunking their notions of German history. The "War of Words" clarified the issues of the war for the public. It determined whether the German people, the Nazis or some combination of the two was responsible for the war. It also determined the preventative measures needed to be taken in accordance with this guilt if peace was to be maintained. The "War of Words" also reveals the diversity of political opinion in Britain during the Second World War.

The Vansittart debate was largely an ideological issue with conservatives pitted against socialists. Conservatives generally tended to be pro-Vansittartites while socialists tended to be anti-Vansittartites. Before I discuss the significance and diversity of these camps and provide examples of their rhetoric, however, I wish to discuss the general nature of the Vansittart debate.

The tone of the Vansittart controversy was by no means moderate. In the words of Aaron Goldman, "For the most part, the tone of the debate about Germany and the Nazis was high pitched, violently emotional and liable to hurt feelings on both sides."[1] This was not surprising when, as either side believed, the future of civilization was at stake.

Vansittart had no experience of debate. Sheltered behind the walls of the Foreign Office, he had never had to face the realities of public debate. It is thus not surprising that he was somewhat disgusted at the methods employed in journalism. He complained constantly that his views were being misrepresented: that others were putting words in his mouth and proceeding to discredit his views on that basis. "At a moment like this," Vansittart wrote, "we should be above calculated misrepresentation."[2] Vansittart was accused of advocating the policy of "the best German is a dead German" and the "extermination" of all Germans. He was additionally charged with wishing to hold down Germany "indefinitely". Vansittart's typical reaction to such mendacities were, as he scribbled at the top of one issue of the New Statesman and Nation: "More stupid misrepresentation."[3] Vansittart countered every aspersion. He found himself constantly rebuking the editors and journalists of various newspapers. His reproaches would end, typically, on the following note: "I did not realise that such a method could be adopted in really high English journalism."[4]

Yet Vansittart's journalistic manner was not totally gentlemanly either. Vansittart and his supporters, in turn, distorted and misrepresented the views of his opponents. If possible, Vansittart also tried to get in the last word. Moreover, he showed great gusto in attacking his adversaries. But Vansittart became the victim of his own polemical thrust. The unrestrained, often violent, nature of his language played into his opponents' hands and provided them with a considerable amount of ammunition.[5] Vansittart's conceit, at the same time, led him to attack the credentials of others. As he wrote in the 27 February 1943 issue of Time and Tide:

> This is a free country, and everyone is entitled to a say; but cannot those who speak without any real credentials in international affairs induce themselves to speak also with less presumption to their opponents?[6]

Given the emotional and personal nature of the Vansittart debate, it was perhaps inevitable that it would sometimes lead to attacks on Vansittart's character as well as the policy he pursued at the Foreign Office in the 1930s. The former diplomat's detractors wanted to know why, if Vansittart had opposed appeasement, he had not resigned. Vansittart was very sensitive about such attacks. In the second half of 1941 he brought a libel suit against Time Incorporated. Time inferred that Vansittart was an appeaser and its account of his career, he said, "represents me as the diametrical opposite to everything I have ever

stood for."[7] Vansittart was not interested in any kind of financial compensation. He merely wanted his name cleared: a public apology and a correct stating of his case. He got both.[8]

Vansittart was also very sensitive about the charge that he was prolonging the war. As he said: "I take this very seriously because I feel the sufferings of my fellow human beings very seriously, and to suggest that I am prolonging the slaughter unnecessarily is a foul and wicked thing to say."[9] Vansittart toyed with the idea of bringing libel suits against several individuals who said he was doing more than any other person to prolong the war. He thought of prosecuting "rags" like the Tribune as well.[10] By the end of 1942, however, Vansittart said that he no longer even expected apologies. As he wrote: "I have outgrown that expectation in a controversy where the lives of hundreds of millions are at stake."[11] Yet demands were made and occasional apologies were forthcoming.[12]

Arising from the debate emerged a new term of political jargon: "Vansittartism". As Vansittart said: "I did not invent the word. My opponents did. I should not have been vain enough to credit myself with a doctrine. . . . It is not a doctrine: it is common sense, based on professional knowledge . . . ."[13] During the Second World War the term was popularly applied to all those who held a harsh, uncompromising attitude toward Germany. There was, however, often a grave difference between Vansittart's views and

"Vansittartism". The latter included mistaken perceptions of his views and the views of those whose outlook was similar, though not identical, to Vansittart's.

Pro- and anti-Vansittartism was fueled by a basic defence of political concepts that were dear to the hearts of socialists, pacifists, conservatives and others. In siding either with or against Vansittart, Britons were upholding their own political convictions, be they left, right or centre. Reactions to Vansittart's views revealed the diverse nature of these convictions. An examination of the Vansittart debate is, in fact, nothing less than a cross-section of British political opinion during the Second World War.

The anti-Vansittartite camp was a very diverse group. It comprised the whole range of the political spectrum from the extreme left to the extreme right. Yet it consisted predominantly of left-wing socialists. All the factions of the anti-Vansittartite camp were moved to action by a serious Vansittartian challenge to their respective political convictions. They believed Vansittart's views were extremely dangerous and had to be combatted. They certainly all came to hate the former Permanent Under-Secretary. But there were other links between the various elements of the anti-Vansittartite camp as well. Several left-wing socialists were also pacifists. The pacifists, in turn, had a tentative connection with the pro-Germans.

The most important group in the anti-Vansittartite camp was the left-wing international and intellectual socialists. This group included Harold Laski, Victor Gollancz, Kingsley Martin, H.N. Brailsford and Aneurin Bevan, Labour's chief parliamentary dissenter. A second faction of the Vansittartite camp I shall call the socialist journalists. This included writers such as Michael Foot, Frank Owen and H.G. Atkins. The third and final group of left-wing socialists was known as the Parliamentary Peace Aims Group, a group of pacifist MPs in the Labour party which included the rump of the Independent Labour Party. The chairman of the group, Richard Stokes, was Labour MP for Ipswich.[14] The anti-Vansittartite ranks also included other pacifists such as Professor C.E.M. Joad and Lord Ponsonby. It also included the British communists. Another faction of the anti-Vansittartite camp was the German socialist émigrés in Britain. There was also a pro-German fascist faction headed by the Duke of Bedford. The final group of adherents to the anti-Vansittartite banner was what may be called the humanitarians. This included George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, and the independent MP Eleanor Rathbone.

It seems that with the exception of the pro-Germans all the anti-Vansittartites were strong anti-Nazis in the 1930s. The group as a whole believed that Vansittart was a gift to Goebbels and was prolonging the war. They further believed that he was undermining British propaganda to Germany, his history was wrong and it was an error to indict a nation.

To the intellectual socialists, and indeed probably to all left-wing socialists, Vansittart posed an even more important danger. The socialists yearned for an international order in which nationalist rivalries would be superseded and economic equality established for all.[15] They saw the causes of the Second World War, and every war, primarily in terms of economic relationships and in human bellicosity in general. No one nation had a monopoly on aggression. "Vansittartism," the socialists argued, obscured and ignored these fundamental tenets. At the same time, they feared that Vansittart's views would shorten the peace by "hampering the necessary work of reconciliation and by sowing fresh seeds of hatred and desire for revenge."[16] If Vansittart's theory of "hate" held sway, it would mean World War III in a matter of years. In attacking Vansittart, then, the socialists were defending their fundamental political beliefs and were trying to secure an enduring peace for the future.

The intellectual socialists maintained a massive offensive against Vansittart's "evil propaganda" throughout 1941 and 1942. In a series of pamphlets and articles, they tried to point out the bankruptcy of "Vansittartism". They also formulated elaborate socialist theories to explain German aggressiveness. For instance, according to H.N. Brailsford, Germany's self-assertion and bellicosity as evinced in her recent history was due to the Germans' former

social structure and the belated survival of a feudal class with the morals and manners of earlier times. Secondly, he said, it was due to their memories of national impotence and humiliation. Finally, Brailsford argued, it was due to the Germans' economic environment, and their heavy industry in particular.[17]

All of the intellectual socialists believed that, first of all, the Nazi war machine had to be completely and utterly defeated. But it was also their business, as Harold Laski stated, "to make . . . [German] history the parent of those qualities in Germans which they possess in the same degree as other nations and can use for the common purposes of mankind."[18]

There were several reasons why, according to the intellectual socialists, Vansittart was so popular. One was that most of the public lacked Vansittart's opportunities for making a realistic assessment of the situation.[19] Another was that "Vansittartism" was much more than an anti-German phenomenon. Aneurin Bevan believed the former diplomat was popular in certain organs of the press not because he was anti-German but because his attitude was anti-revolutionary (he was making war against the workers of Europe).[20] A similar and blunter attack was made by Kingsley Martin: "Scratch a Vansittartite and you are apt to find not so much an anti-German as an anti-Bolshevik."[21]

The second faction of socialists, the journalists, were not theorizers. They very likely agreed with the theories

of the intellectual heavyweights but did not propound them themselves. They were interested in more specific tasks: attacking Vansittart's views and defending the Labour party from assaults. This approach was perhaps best exemplified by Frank Owen's caustic article "This Man Makes More Nazis" in the 24 February 1942 issue of the Evening Standard. Owen claimed that the Vansittart line of not making a distinction between the Nazis and the German people, as opposed to the Soviet one, merely "brings back to Hitler's side thousands who were leaving it." Owen also accused Vansittart of being a racist, a kind of "Nazi inside out," a variant of a charge also taken up by the intellectual faction.[22] The two factions were also akin in their belief that the logical conclusion of Vansittart's words should have been the extermination of the German people.[23]

A further illustration of the activities of the socialist journalist faction during the war was the bitter debate Michael Foot got into with Vansittart in November 1944. In the 14 November issue of the Times Vansittart deprecated the fact that in the interwar years the government's rearmament program was insufficient and the opposition parties were opposed to rearmament. Foot immediately jumped to the defence of the Labour party. The opposition, he said, was not opposed to rearmament. It was opposed to a fatal foreign policy. He also criticized Vansittart's views on the German resistance. The debate evolved into a mud-slinging match. Vansittart, who associated every attack on

him with Germanophilia, even stooped to saying that Foot's "smokescreen" was designed to cover his advocacy of the German Left.[24]

The third group of the left-wing socialist camp was the pacifistic Parliamentary Peace Aims Group. Stokes, the chairman of the group, came forward as Lloyd George's lieutenant and attempted to involve his organization in a series of compromise peace moves from 1939 to 1942. The group constantly sought to arrange an armistice and was always on the lookout for what might be the start of negotiations.[25] The group's main concern with Vansittart, not surprisingly, was that the diplomat was preventing peace and prolonging the war by uniting all the Germans behind Hitler. On 13 February 1941 Stokes led the attack in the House of Commons in trying, unsuccessfully, to get Black Record withdrawn from circulation.[26] Within two months he was even asking for the dismissal of Vansittart and the appointment of another diplomatic advisor in his place.[27]

As late as 1944 the Parliamentary Peace Aims Group was actively countering Vansittart. At this juncture the group attacked Vansittart's history of Germany as revealed in Black Record: by now an old and well-worn idea. The group was hoping to make the "truth" known to all those whom Vansittart had tried to indoctrinate. If such was achieved, it argued, there would be "far more hope for the future of Anglo-American policy and for a peaceful settlement of Europe."[28]

Other pacifists normally not associated with the Parliamentary Peace Aims Group also attacked Vansittart on the grounds that he prolonged the war. For instance, Lord Ponsonby, a socialist and pacifist, laid down a motion in the 18 February 1941 session of the House of Lords to the effect that as Vansittart's broadcasts were uniting the Germans and strengthening their determination to prolong the war, stricter supervision should henceforth be exercised over all official broadcasts which did not reflect the policy of the British government. Furthermore, Ponsonby, like Stokes, in effect called for Vansittart's dismissal.[29]

The pacifists also had a connection with the pro-Germans. Stokes and an uneasy alliance of neo-fascists and pacifists belonged to the British Council for Christian Settlement in Europe. The chairman of this organization was, in early 1940, the Marquis of Tavistock, one of the leaders of the pro-German anti-Vansittartite faction.[30] This group strongly believed that the German nation was not "bad" and its territorial demands were reasonable. Tavistock, who had already gone on record in 1938 with pro-German statements, strongly advocated a compromise peace with Germany after the outbreak of war.[31] On occasion he debated against Vansittart in the House of Lords. For instance, in May 1942 (by which time he had become the Duke of Bedford), he disagreed with Vansittart's interpretation of inter-war history. He believed the cause of World War I was imperialism in general. He also defended German policy

in the 1930s and referred to World War II as "the most disastrous and unnecessary war which irresponsible politicians ever landed a country in." By this he meant British politicians. He added that if Britain lost the war Vansittart would be more responsible than any other for not negotiating a peace.[32]

Another faction of the anti-Vansittartite camp was the German Social Democrats in exile. It seems that they also did not indulge in socialist theorizing about "Vansittartism". The German Social Democrats were more concerned with specific issues. Considering themselves as representatives of the German masses, they upheld the idea that the German people hated the Nazis and were subjected to an enormously powerful oppressive machinery designed to keep internal unrest at bay. These German émigrés attempted to correct what they believed to be Vansittart's mistaken conception of the German nation and people. Their views were exemplified well in Heinrich Fraenkel's Fabian tract Vansittart's Gift for Goebbels.

Fraenkel disputed what Vansittart took for granted: that with the exception of a few well-meaning but utterly impotent individuals, Hitler had the entire German people, body and soul, behind him. Fraenkel pointed to the election results of the early 1930s to show that there were millions of people who did not vote for Hitler. He also argued vehemently that there was a strong German resistance and there was much proof of its existence.[33]

Fraenkel accused Vansittart of not knowing the German people. The ruling class was all he knew. From this, Fraenkel said, Vansittart implied that the whole of Germany (as a national entity) had to be destroyed. It was up to the Allies, Fraenkel stated -- for the good of the future new and just Order -- to convince the German people that they would not sink or swim with their German rulers. But, he added, publications such as Black Record had quite the opposite effect. They were merely grist for a propaganda mill operating on the principle "strength through fear".[34]

The final faction of anti-Vansittartites was the humanitarians. George Bell, the Bishop of Chichester, was Vansittart's most persistent detractor in the House of Lords. The Bishop, who had contacts with several religious leaders in the German resistance, was a strong advocate of the "other Germany" and believed that it was solely the Nazi gangsters who were responsible for all the atrocities committed in Germany's name. He also deplored the indiscriminate Allied bombing of German cities. The advocacy of this attitude towards Germany constantly brought him into conflict with Vansittart. One of their most famous duels occurred on 10 March 1943 in a debate about whether the British government should differentiate between the Nazi rulers and the German people. The Bishop of Chichester advocated the Soviet official policy of making a distinction between the two and asked whether the British government did the same. The chief blame for Germany's evils, he added,

lay with certain forces in military and industrial circles and Germany should not be totally destroyed on their account. This led to a bitter rejoinder by Vansittart. The former diplomat said that he agreed with the Bishop in not wishing to crush Germany but he wished to destroy her, utterly and forever, as a military power. Reliance on good Germans, he said, had nearly twice caused civilization to vanish. There was, Vansittart added, a storehouse of material to disprove the official Soviet division between Hitlerite and non-Hitlerite Germany. There were, he maintained, no illusions in the Soviet Union with regard to Germany.[35]

The other important humanitarian in the anti-Vansittartite camp was the social reformer Eleanor Rathbone. Extremely sensitive to human suffering,[36] she earnestly desired to see a quick end to the war. She thus deplored the Vansittart line of lumping all Germans together which, she believed, had the effect of prolonging the war. She also sympathized with the German resistance. In the summer of 1944 she took part in a controversy on the matter in the July and August 1944 issues of the Spectator. Shortly before the 20 July coup Rathbone initiated the debate by emphasizing the difficulty of resistance in Nazi Germany. She asked her readers to place themselves in the Germans' shoes and honestly ask themselves how they would have reacted in similar circumstances. By saying this, Vansittart argued, "Miss Rathbone, in fact, shows unwittingly why

there never has been an effective underground movement in Germany." Vansittart also countered Rathbone's charge that he was a "gift to Goebbels". The real gifts to Hunnery, the former diplomat said, were its "dupes," by which he meant Rathbone (among others).[37]

The year 1944, in fact, was the year in which the Vansittart debate focussed on more constructive issues. Hitherto either side in the debate had been concerned largely with attacking its enemies and had focussed little on the specific issues of the projected peace and precautions for the future. The debate focussed now on such questions as the adequacy of Vansittart's twelve points,[38] the applicability of the Atlantic Charter,[39] the question of reprisals,[40] and the reeducation, occupation and disarmament of Germany. It also focussed on other issues such as reparations, decentralization, the control of German industry and war inventions, war criminals, and the possibility of territorial changes.[41] While Vansittart did not initiate all the debates over these issues, he did initiate many of them. He succeeded in impressing upon the public the importance of these issues. He also managed to retain some control over the debate. It is thus not surprising that the "War of Words" reflected the moral progress of Vansittart's own campaign of "enlightenment." It moved from a debunking stage to a more constructive stage.

The pro-Vansittartite camp was less diverse than its opponents. It consisted largely of conservatives. Their

views about the "German menace" were much more uniform and simplistic than their detractors. For most British people, in fact, "Vansittartism" was common sense. To them it seemed that Vansittart was merely preaching an historical truth: that not merely the Nazis but the German people as a whole were imbued with militarism and were responsible for the war.

Pro-Vansittartism was fueled by a basic defence of political concepts that were espoused, in particular, by the conservatives. Conservatives were strongly in favour of maintaining the status quo and were averse to fundamental changes in society. In battling the left-wing socialists they remained true to their convictions. The Vansittart debate was, in some ways, just another part of the battle. But pro-Vansittartism was motivated at least as much by reaction than by conviction. Pro-Vansittartism was to a considerable extent a reaction to the policy of appeasement of the 1930s which had been advocated by the conservatives as well as other parties. Some of the strongest advocates of appeasement were now the strongest proponents of "Vansittartism." Lords Beaverbrook and Kemsley were good examples of this change of face. Their respective papers, the Sunday Express and Sunday Times, which had formerly endorsed Prime Minister Chamberlain's policy of appeasement, now took an extremely anti-German line.[42] Such characters were allied with many of the anti-appeasers of the 1930s to comprise a curious pro-Vansittartite camp.

Some pro-Vansittartites associated very closely with the former Permanent Under-Secretary. They joined the organizations with which he was affiliated: the "Never Again" Association, The Prisoners of War Relations Association and the "Win the Peace" Movement. Another pro-Vansittartist group was the "Fight For Freedom" Editorial and Publishing Services Ltd.

Most pro-Vansittartites, however, were not associated with Vansittart's organizations. This group included the top members of the government (as we have seen). It also included such eminent historians as Lewis Namier, E.L. Woodward and the young scholars A.L. Rowse and A.J.P. Taylor. The classicist Gilbert Murray was also a Vansittartite.[43] Other important pro-Vansittartite personalities were the previously mentioned newspaper proprietors Lords Beaverbrook and, at least initially, Kemsley. Lord Rothermere, another newspaper proprietor, was also a pro-Vansittartite as were the politician/journalist Harold Nicolson and, until mid-1943, the writer H.G. Wells. The pro-Vansittartite camp also included the majority of the less famous but far more numerous rank and file of the British populace. A final pro-Vansittartite group was the ultra- or super-Vansittartites.

There were numerous newspapers and journals which propagated pro-Vansittartite views and opened up their columns to the former diplomat. They included the Sunday Times (for a while),[44] the Sunday Express, the Sunday

Dispatch, the Daily Telegraph and the journal the Nineteenth Century and After. The Spectator also generally agreed with Vansittart's thesis even though the paper felt the former diplomat often overstated his case in regard to the treatment of Germany.[45] Furthermore, the Times and New York Times rarely editorialized on the Vansittart issue, but they provided much coverage of the debate.

The pro-Vansittartites broadly believed that the German nation, as opposed to merely the Nazis, was guilty. Aside from defending their political views and reacting to appeasement, the pro-Vansittartites felt that they had to attack the anti-Vansittartites because the latter were obscuring this extremely important issue and would, ultimately, secure lenient treatment for Germany. This, they feared, would only allow Germany another chance to rearm and attempt her third world war.

In time, Vansittart came to be recognized as the leader of the anti-German movement in Britain and was not without influence. The massive correspondence during the war which he maintained indicated that he had extensive help in becoming such. Vansittart's private intelligence agency aided the former diplomat in his efforts to battle his opponents and win the peace. There were also those who spied for Vansittart and kept him informed about even secretive meetings of his detractors.[46] Furthermore, members of the various organizations with which Vansittart was associated and others sympathetic to his cause were

constantly bringing things to his attention. For instance, they would send him newspaper clippings relevant to the debate he initiated.[47] This enabled him to closely watch developments in all parts of the country.

Vansittart tried to influence those who might hold views similar to his own. Vansittart was particularly keen on influencing members of parliament. He often invited MPs to meet him and tried to induce them to join his anti-German organizations.[48]

These organizations served as forums for the dissemination of Vansittart's views. The "Never Again" Association, whose aim was "to organize public opinion in this country to such effect that no outbreak of sentimentality shall rob the victims of German atrocities of justice and retribution,"[49] originally served as such a forum. Later, after September 1943, the "Win the Peace" Movement developed into his main platform for storming the country.[50] The movement propagated Vansittart's twelve point peace charter and intended to be ever vigilant after the defeat of Germany.[51] From its inception, Vansittart, the president of the organization, tried to make the movement nationwide.[52] In doing so, Vansittart contradicted himself. In effect, he created a whole movement of non-experts. Allied with the supposed number one German expert this was a strange combination indeed. Yet the fact that most of his supporters had no credentials in international affairs did not bother him. This only mattered in the case of his opponents.

It is impossible to estimate the exact numerical strength of the "Win the Peace" movement. One source claimed that in Bristol alone Vansittart had more than 10,000 members. In the words of Norman Rose: "Exaggerated though this figure may be, there is little doubt that Vansittart's campaign enjoyed a considerable measure of popular support throughout the country."[53]

Vansittart also collaborated with the "Fight For Freedom" Group.[54] Walter Loeb, former President of the State Bank of Thuringia, founded this group "to provide more complete and accurate knowledge of the historical events in Germany which [had led] Europe again into war."[55] Leading British Trade Union members and well-known emigrants from almost all of the occupied countries joined this group. The group deliberately courted publicity and hastened to follow Vansittart's lead. It believed that the German nation as a whole was responsible for causing the war and disagreed with the vague theorizing of the intellectual socialists.

What separated Loeb and other German members of this group such as Bernhard Menne and Curt Geyer from their compatriots was their left-wing political convictions. Loeb was a left-wing member of the German Social Democratic Party and Geyer was one of the leaders of the German Independent Socialists. Both political groups had always fought militarism and rearmament. The fact that they were German, however, was very important for Vansittart. German support

for his views gave otherwise extremely crude ideas more credibility.

The German Vansittartites eagerly attacked Vansittart's opponents. In April 1942 Loeb and Curt Geyer wrote a critique of Victor Gollancz's Shall Our Children Live or Die? A Reply to Lord Vansittart on the German Problem. The authors deprecated the fact that all of Gollancz's observations revolved around the problem of a revolution in Germany. In Gollancz's view, they said, the fate of Europe and of the world depended on it. Yet, according to the authors, "no responsible politician can regard the hope of a revolution -- particularly a revolution in a foreign country -- as a reliable factor in his calculations."[56] There was, they said, no evidence available to indicate that a pre-revolutionary situation existed in Germany. The basic problem, according to the authors, was that Gollancz overlooked aggressive German nationalism, the most powerful political factor amongst the German people.[57] Germany, they believed, had to be crushed both militarily and spiritually.

The "Fight For Freedom" Group continued to propagate its anti-German ideas. The main aim of the group, in fact, was, as Trevor Burridge says, "to persuade the British Labour movement that the responsibility for the war lay not merely with the Nazi Party but, even more, with the Germans."[58] The group found many sympathizers within the Labour Party. Throughout 1942 and 1943 the international socialists within the party tried to abate the growing

prominence of the group. During the 1943 Labour party annual conference Stokes laid down a motion to condemn the "anti-socialist" propaganda of "Fight For Freedom." This prompted a counter-motion that the "good" Germans were in a very small minority and that the great majority of people supported Hitler. The counter-motion was agreed to by more than two-thirds of the delegates.[59] Henceforth the official policy of the Labour party was anti-German. Until that time, as Burridge says, "the distinction between Nazis and Germans remained a cardinal tenet of all official Labour party pronouncements."[60] Unofficially, the distinction was not as clear-cut. Nevertheless, this was a very important development. The German masses lost their last stronghold of official British support. The change in Labour policy actually may have been one of the greatest by-products of "Vansittartism."

Loeb also played a considerable part in discrediting the SPD in the eyes of the British. Loeb argued that the future SPD "must wholly subordinate itself to the military power of the victorious Allies and must be founded solely on it." Loeb and his friends argued increasingly that the SPD had been very nationalistic and should now simply fulfill Allied policies. This led the Social Democratic leadership to demand independence from the Allies even more strongly. Loeb's thesis thus seemed to be proved. The SPD's desire for continued independence conflicted with the Labour

party's view of that organization. By March 1942 the Labour party accepted an anti-SPD attitude as official policy.[61]

Despite Loeb's apparent influence, by far the majority, and certainly the most eminent, pro-Vansittartites were to be found outside the ranks of the organizations with which the former diplomat closely associated. The Oxford historian, A.J.P. Taylor, was a strong proponent of the Vansittart thesis. Hitler was no accident, he said. The Führer was the product of a long militaristic tradition reaching back to the time of Frederick the Great.[62] It is not surprising to find him siding with Vansittart against the socialists Kingsley Martin and Barbara Ward in the late 1944 BBC series "What Shall We Do With Germany?" which was broadcast over the Home Service.[63]

Other leading historians were strong pro-Vansittartites. Lewis Namier filled the columns of the Spectator and Time and Tide with pro-Vansittartite articles in the first half of 1941. Behind the Nazi façade, he said, "there is indeed 'another Germany,' less crude, less hysterical, but even more dangerous." That force was the German nation and it had to be broken.[64]

Not only was E.L. Woodward a pro-Vansittartite but his convictions, like Vansittart's, stemmed from his first visit as a student to Germany.[65] A.L. Rowse, his younger contemporary, was a staunch pro-Vansittartite and was very bitter toward the former diplomat's opponents. He stated that

> One has to be either very clever or very silly not to be able to see that there is something dangerously wrong with the Germans. . . . [Only the] illusionists on the Left in this country are unable to see the facts that stare everybody else in the face.[66]

Thus, many of those who were experts on what Vansittart was preaching agreed with him at least in fundamentals.

One of Vansittart's most eminent part-time supporters was the, by now, elderly writer H.G. Wells. In the 4 September 1942 issue of the Tribune, Wells defended Vansittart's view of Germany and deprecated the fact that the former diplomat's views had been misrepresented by the Tribune. Wells said that he did not personally agree with the "hate" theory of fighting but agreed with Vansittart that the German people needed to be disillusioned and reeducated politically. The only way to do this, he said, was by military means.[67]

By May 1943, however, Wells' confidence in Vansittart was gone. In the 14 May issue of the Tribune Wells admitted that his "confidence in Vansittart's progressive statesmanship has vanished." Wells was hoping that after Vansittart's excellent pamphlet Black Record, the former diplomat would proceed to broaden his discussion to a discovery of world reeducation and rearmament. But in Lessons of My Life, he said, Vansittart "is not going on; he is going back; he just knows German hostility acutely -- and that's the limit."[68]

While various newspapers and their proprietors were pro-Vansittartite, the British press in general did not display extreme anti-German sentiment. The prime exception was Beaverbrook's Sunday Express. For instance, on 7 March 1943 a headline above a feature story in that paper read "Why all this bosh about being gentle with the Germans after we have beaten them when ALL GERMANS ARE GUILTY!"[69]

Another element of the pro-Vansittartite front was the super- or ultra-Vansittartites. They even outdid Vansittart in "Vansittartism." This, in turn, led to attacks on Vansittart. While the ultra-Vansittartites might be classified as anti-Vansittartites, then, their extreme conservative views must have made them detest Vansittart's left-wing enemies even more than they came to hate the former diplomat.[70]

The last and most important group in the pro-Vansittartite camp was the majority of the general public. While Vansittart's speeches and broadcasts were having considerable success, the fact that they were doing so was due less to any particular influence of Vansittart than to the natural course of the war. As the war developed both the higher officials and the public became more hostile towards the Germans. Public opinion polls indicated that Vansittart was stating an attitude that was shared by the majority of the British people. In the spring of 1943, 43 per cent of the people that Mass Observation questioned either despised or had no sympathy for the German people. By February 1945

this figure had increased to 54 per cent. Furthermore, in eight surveys between 1940 and 1944, Mass Observation found consistently that when asked what was to be done with Germany after the war, one-third based their ideas on revenge and another third felt that Germany should be prevented from ever making war again. Polls taken in 1944 by the British Institute of Public Opinion also indicated that considerable majorities of the British public were in favour of exacting reparations from Germany, of compelling her to rebuild those areas she had devastated, separating the Ruhr and dismembering her into several smaller states.[71]

Throughout the Second World War, the pro- and anti-Vansittartites were locked in bitter debate. This debate reached its peak in 1942 with both sides trying desperately to show up the other. The gulf between the two camps was what they feared in each other, but this gulf was immense. Each side had to battle the other to prevent a Third World War and also to defend deeply held political convictions. In fact, an examination of the long and exhausting controversy that proceeded provides an excellent sample of British political opinion during the Second World War.

Vansittart was at the forefront of the violent domestic debate that raged in Britain. Being pugnacious, egotistical and having a huge sense of intellectual superiority, Vansittart set out to convince an allegedly reluctant British population of an idea that was vital to the winning of the

peace. Despite his numerous doubts about the effectiveness of his campaign of "enlightenment" during World War II, Vansittart believed he had triumphed in the end. Shortly after the end of the war he wrote proudly that he had "taken a considerable part in exposing the facts."[72] Vansittart was correct in believing his crusade for a clear understanding of the German threat was ultimately successful but not for the reasons he assumed (i.e. his own efforts). Public hostility towards Germany and disbelief in the "good" German theory increased naturally as a result of the progress of the war. After five-and-a-half years of war -- the "Blitz," the bloody campaigns on the continent, the V-weapon onslaught -- "Vansittartism" was common sense and had been absorbed into the mainstream of public opinion. At best, Vansittart only hardened an already firm anti-German attitude.

Though Vansittart did not appreciably affect the anti-Germanism of the British masses, he did impress upon them the importance of most of the issues of the Second World War. These issues revolved around the question of whether the Germans or the Nazis were the guilty party and what measures needed to be taken in accordance with this guilt: occupation, the control of German industry, reprisals, disarmament, decentralization, and so on. Vansittart was all too aware that peace had to be prepared both politically and psychologically. By retaining a considerable

degree of control over the debate, he thus ensured that the relevant questions were being discussed.

Either side in the "War of Words" had both strengths and weaknesses. The anti-Vansittartites, and the socialists in particular, were guilty of magnifying the importance of the former Permanent Under-Secretary. They were also deficient when it came to laying down constructive and specific plans. This did nothing to help them in their struggle with the pro-Vansittartites. At the same time, however, they were correct in believing Vansittart was a gift for Goebbels. They were also trying to look beyond the present disaster in Europe and striving to create a juster, freer, and more egalitarian world order.

The pro-Vansittartites, in turn, were guilty of magnifying the importance of the left-wing intellectuals. The Vansittartite caricature of the ideas of the British left was simplistic. Yet this very simplicity was closer to the public mind than the socialist theories of the anti-Vansittartites. The public, then, could identify with Vansittart's views, but for the most part did not do so directly by joining the organizations with which he was affiliated.

Vansittart's views, at the same time, also fit into another war of words: the academic historiographical debate about German militarism. Vansittart's views fit in with the contemporary historiographical trend in Britain which stressed the uniqueness of German militarism and its

continuity in German history. Vansittart's sense of the continuity of German history is even shared by some of the present-day writers in West Germany, though they, unlike Vansittart, believe the roots of this continuity are to be found in the socio-economic power structure of Prusso-Germany.[73]

CHAPTER 5

EPILOGUE

One week before the end of the Second World War, Vansittart wrote:

> At last, at long and painful last, we have reached an end to which I say frankly I have given a great part of my thinking and working life -- the perdition of Germany, not as a people but as a Power, the power of darkness.[1]

Once the war was over, Vansittart attempted to put pressure on the British government by having the "Win the Peace" movement monitor events in Germany and maintain a vigilant watch over that country for any revival of Nazism.[2] While Vansittart must have approved of the prolonged Allied occupation of Germany, the decentralization of the German government, the eclipse of Prussian domination, even the partition of Germany,[3] he found cause to complain about the slipshod process of denazification and the idea that German industry ought to be rehabilitated for the welfare of Europe.[4] Vansittart believed that two devastating wars were more than sufficient "welfare" for the continent.[5]

Vansittart also complained about the lenient treatment for defendants in the 1946 war crimes trials. Vansittart, who had always advocated very harsh treatment for war criminals, had no doubts about the moral and historical value of the Nuremburg trials. He believed that putting the

leaders of Nazi Germany on public trial and exposing their evil record to the world would help prevent another German war. Vansittart thus viewed the application of Joachim von Ribbentrop, the former German foreign minister, to call him as a character witness on his behalf as an intolerable provocation. Ribbentrop was somehow hoping that Vansittart would explain to the tribunal that the German minister had not favoured an aggressive war. Vansittart, unsurprisingly, refused to testify. There was, in any case, an abundance of damning material already at hand, and Ribbentrop was hanged in October 1946.[6]

By the turn of the decade, however, Vansittart believed that the Soviet Union had emerged as Britain's number one enemy. Vansittart, accordingly, set out to enlighten his compatriots about this new danger. Vansittart's anti-Communist crusade was one of the two main themes he developed in his post-1945 public career. The other theme, which was closely connected with the first, was his ardent desire for the economic and political integration of Western Europe.[7]

Vansittart's suspicions of the Soviet Union were traditional and deep-rooted. His acceptance of that country as an ally during the war was merely an act of expediency. Vansittart first publicly attacked Soviet policy during the Warsaw uprising of August-September 1944.[8] His suspicions hardened over the course of the next few years as the Soviets established puppet regimes throughout Eastern Europe. Vansittart inveighed continuously against the

Soviet Union's contempt toward the small East European nations and its repeated violation of human rights. He also attacked the puppet governments of these east-bloc countries.[9]

As with the unwelcome German visitors in Britain during the Second World War, Vansittart was obsessed by, and inveighed against, the communists in Britain. They were, Vansittart alleged, conducting subversive activities. Instead of a German infiltration of the public service, there was, the former Permanent Under-Secretary now argued, a communist one. Vansittart's motions in the Lords calling for vigilance in the face of this danger were successful.[10] But his attacks opened him up to the same sort of criticisms, and largely from the same quarters, as in World War II. The New Statesman and Nation and Tribune abused him. Reynolds News referred to him as "Lord Van Witchhunt," and the Soviet press, as the Germans before them, tried to make the best of his utterances. For instance, Pravda alluded to "the senile yelpings of the half-drunken Lord Vansittart."[11]

Vansittart's basic political philosophy was motivated by a deep-seated belief that there could be no compromise at all between western democracy and totalitarianism, whether of the Hitlerite or the Stalinist type. To emphasize the ideological affinity between the Nazis and Communists, he even coined a new term: "Communazi."[12] The only difference between Nazi Germany and the Soviet state, Vansittart believed, was that it was colder in the latter.[13] The former

diplomat, however, viewed Stalin as significantly more dangerous than Hitler. Whereas Hitler had been defeated, Stalin had been victorious and had come to dominate half of Europe. The West could do little to reverse the situation, but Vansittart argued vigorously that it had to remain constantly on the alert to prevent the complete Soviet domination of Europe.[14] As in the 1930s, Vansittart furnished numerous warnings about the Soviet danger. In fact, in his 1949 publication Even Now, Vansittart tried to show how all pre-war manifestations of Nazism applied to Communism. He reproduced several of his warnings about the Nazi menace in the 1930s, instructing his readers to "substitute throughout for the words German, National Socialist, Nazi, the words Russian, Muscovite, Communist." He, however, felt it necessary in some cases to add some comment "to point the moral or emphasize the analogy."[15]

The Communist coup of 1948 in Czechoslovakia convinced Vansittart that Stalin would court the risk of a European war as recklessly as Hitler had during the preceding decade. Only the United States, Vansittart believed, was acting as a restraining influence on the Soviet dictator.[16]

Yet Vansittart was not totally pessimistic regarding the future. He believed that peace could be maintained if six conditions were observed: there was to be no great reliance on Soviet treaties; there was to be no rapid disarmament, nor a new ten-year rule; Western union was to be encouraged; extremely close relations were to be maintained

with the United States; a long-term policy was to be established which would be "uncompromisingly anti-totalitarian" and opposed to "reactionary expansionism;" and it was necessary to counter constantly "all totalitarian myths and libels" abusing the West.[17]

The key to Vansittart's scheme lay in an integrated western policy which would be able to stand up to, even repulse, the Soviet Union. "Once again," Vansittart's biographer states,

> he was haunted by his memories of the 1930s. Hitler's bloodless victories of those years were made possible only because his victims had refused to combine and to act decisively against him. There must be no repetition of this fatal mistake.[18]

Having been rebuffed by the government three times since the end of the war to introduce a motion in the House of Lords calling for Western integration, Vansittart finally succeeded in January 1946. Vansittart's projected union consisted of the states of Western Europe (including Switzerland but excluding Spain and Portugal until they had democratic forms of government) and the Scandinavian countries. While he was prepared to admit Italy, he was not about to do so in the case of Germany.[19] Vansittart saw that a union between these countries would bring considerable benefits: political cooperation, economic prosperity and military power. In an age of superpowers, Vansittart believed that anything but integration would be, as stated by the Dutch historian Pieter Geyl, "tantamount to disappearance from the

international scene and the ultimate loss of the remnants of our independence."[20]

By July 1946 Vansittart was advocating an Anglo-French alliance as the first step towards, and cornerstone of, Western European unity. As a result of Vansittart's prompting, the House of Lords was debating the question of the coordination of Western Europe by December of that year. By this date, too, Vansittart was also toying with the idea of including West Germany in his projected scheme of Western unity. That such was the case was due both to his realism and appreciation of the Soviet danger. West Germany could not be a pariah indefinitely. In fact, Vansittart believed that the longer she continued to be such, the greater the chances of her falling under Soviet influence. Vansittart, it should be noted, explored this idea tentatively and with many qualifications. But it marked the beginning of more explicit statements about the return of Germany to the European family of nations.[21]

Vansittart viewed the prospect of German rearmament, even on an extremely limited scale, with extreme disquiet, believing as he did that there had been no national change of heart to warrant such a step.[22] Yet by 1954 he stated: "My lifelong antipathy to Germany is known, yet for once in all the blue moons of existence I acknowledge a German Government and tendency which might perhaps be turned to the account of Christian civilization."[23] For such an astonishing volte face to have occurred, however, required

much more than just a liberal German regime. It required a Soviet government bent, in his view, on imminent European, if not world, hegemony. The Soviets had replaced the Germans as the prime threat to Britain and all the political and military power of the non-communist world, including, by 1954, even that of Germany, had to be marshalled against them.

Vansittart was to remain extremely hostile toward the Soviets during the last few years of his life. He also continued to be politically active until his final days. On 14 February 1957, at the age of seventy-five, Vansittart died in his home at Denham.

In his autobiography Vansittart claimed that his was "a story of failure."[24] Taking a negative view of society and the world as a whole, Vansittart typically also took a very pessimistic view of his own career. In some ways Vansittart was a failure. He certainly failed to satisfy his ambitions. Vansittart, an egotist par excellence, believed that the honours that had been showered upon him bore no relation to his true merit. He felt that he had been cheated and remained bitter against those who had not appreciated his ability.[25]

Vansittart was also a failure in his role as Permanent Under-Secretary. One of the prime responsibilities of this post was to advise practically on what to do about the various diplomatic predicaments Britain found herself in.

It was insufficient to merely bombard the Cabinet with forceful minutes about impending dangers.

Vansittart also failed to get his warnings heeded. While this was due to the times, it was also due to the manner in which he stated his case. Vansittart's manner of presentation (though not necessarily the substance of his ideas) was alien to Britons. The situation was perhaps best summed up by Harold Nicolson. Writing in 1942, the journalist stated:

> Lord Vansittart, it must be admitted, has presented his facts in an un-English way. He has arranged his material and arguments with natty precision as if he were setting out knives and forks and plates and spoons upon a deal table; one can hear them rattle as he lays them down. The English do not like this sort of thing. They do not like their information or ideas to have the sharp shine of cutlery; they like them to possess the soft dimness of bluebells in a wood. The logic of Lord Vansittart's doctrine is irresistible, and when an Englishman becomes logical he is at once regarded by his countrymen as eccentric and unsound . . . .[26]

In both the 1930s and 1940s, then, Vansittart's manner of presentation caused him to gain few adherents to his banner.

One of the reasons for his alien manner may have been due to his Europeanism. Vansittart's mentality and his approach to world politics was almost wholly European-oriented. His mastery of the major European languages also provided him with an insight into problems besetting the continental powers which many of his contemporaries lacked. Vansittart was susceptible to the fears, needs and views of

these powers. This "cultural gap" served as a serious hindrance to smooth relations between Vansittart and his political chiefs[27] and did nothing to bring him closer to the rest of his compatriots. Vansittart actually may not have understood his fellow Britons as well as continental Europeans.

Vansittart's final failure occurred, ironically, in an area in which he thought he had been successful. He believed that it was largely through his own efforts that a clear understanding of the German threat was ultimately successful. It was due, however, much more to the natural progress of the war.

Despite these failures, Vansittart achieved a considerable measure of success. For instance, few men of Vansittart's generation perceived with greater clarity the major threat of the times through which he lived.[28] The various dangers Vansittart faced prompted him to enlighten British opinion about these threats from 1930 to the mid-1950s. His method in each instance was the same. It consisted of showing up the "true" enemy. Only the targets differed. In the 1930s it was primarily the British government. During the Second World War it was largely the British populace. In the post-war years it was probably both. In this last period, Vansittart assumed the role of a Cold War warrior, being perhaps one of the first Britons to become so.

Furthermore, Vansittart's claim that there was "no major issue"[29] on which his advice was taken was downright false. In the words of Norman Rose:

> From 1930 to 1935 he stood in the front row of British foreign policy decision-makers and his influence, though lessened, remained formidable until the last months of 1937. The politicians listened to him, at least as much as they listened to any civil servant, though with a mounting degree of incredulity and alarm.[30]

Vansittart was also a success in the sense that most of his warnings during the 1930s proved to be true. His advocacy of rearmament during that decade also met with some success. Britain may have been even more unprepared for war in 1939 than she was had it not been for his efforts.

During the Second World War Vansittart was also able to steer his anti-German rhetoric to a peace platform. In the process, he managed to overcome his main weakness as Permanent Under-Secretary. Vansittart's twelve point peace charter was a constructive, realistic and sensible response to the projected peace and represented a dramatic change from his contributions during the 1930s.

Even though he did not appreciably harden anti-German feelings in Britain during the Second World War, Vansittart ensured that the relevant issues of the anticipated peace were being discussed. He impressed upon the public an awareness of the complexity and gravity of these issues which might otherwise have eluded them.[31] In doing so, he

helped prepare the public both politically and psychologically for the peace.

After his retirement Vansittart was also somewhat successful in getting the government to go in the direction he wanted. Some of Vansittart's motions in the House of Lords prompted the government to follow directly in his footsteps. Even in other instances where government policy remained unchanged, however, Vansittart's enquiries and motions in the Lords may have actually reinforced the government's convictions vis-à-vis its own policy. In both the direct and indirect sense, then, Vansittart's attempt to guide or check up on the government was helpful in the formulation of war aims. Vansittart's activities during the Second World War thus contributed to Allied policy, both in terms of carrying on the war to the ultimate defeat of Germany and to the imposition of a harsh peace.

NOTES

Chapter 1

[1] Warren F. Kimball, Sword or Ploughshares? The Morgenthau Plan for Defeated Nazi Germany, 1943-1946 (Philadelphia, 1976), p. 137; and Aaron Goldman, "Germans and Nazis: The Controversy Over 'Vansittartism' in Britain during the Second World War," Journal of Contemporary History, 14 (1979), p. 163.

[2] See Lord Vansittart, "The Nuremberg Trial," Sunday Dispatch, 2.12.45., page unknown, in PRO, U10442/16/73, FO 371/51008. (Hereinafter the abbreviation PRO [Public Record Office] before the respective Foreign Office [FO] files will be omitted.)

[3] Goldman, p. 157.

[4] See Volker R. Berghahn, Militarism: The History of an International Debate 1861-1979 (Cambridge, 1984), p. 52.

[5] Hans Jaeger, "Vansittart and Vansittartism: A Survey of Controversial Literature," The Wiener Library Bulletin, February (1957), pp. 14-15.

[6] Norman Rose, Vansittart: Study of a Diplomat (London, 1978).

[7] See note one for the full bibliographic reference. The inclusive paging of the article is 155-91.

[8] Hermann Fromm, Deutschland in der öffentlichen Kriegszieldiskussion Grossbritanniens 1939-1945 (Frankfurt am Main, 1982).

[9] Sir Robert Vansittart, Black Record: Germans Past and Present (London, 1941), p. 34.

[10] Goldman, p. 158.

[11] Black Record, p. 1.

[12] In his writings, Vansittart tried constantly to associate himself with Crowe's views and activities. For instance, Vansittart said on many occasions that both he and his chief had warned about Germany in the pre-World War I period.

[13] Rose, p. 41. See also Lord Vansittart, The Mist Procession: The Autobiography of Lord Vansittart (London, 1958), p. 136.

[14] Rose, p. 42.

[15] Ibid., pp. 52-64.

[16] Mist Procession, p. 419.

[17] Vansittart memorandum, "The Future of Germany," 7.4.34., Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939, edited by E.L. Woodward et al., 2nd ser., vol. VI, app. III (London, 1946), p. 975. (Hereinafter cited as DBFP.)

[18] Mist Procession, p. 418.

[19] Ibid., p. 366.

[20] Charles Cruickshank, The Fourth Arm: Psychological Warfare (London, 1977), p. 9.

[21] Rose, p. 83.

[22] Rose wrongly believes that Vansittart's memoranda were largely incomprehensible. See ibid., p. 82.

[23] Cadogan minute, 29.12.45., L3751/-/402, FO 370/1195.

[24] R.H. Bruce Lockhart, Comes the Reckoning (London, 1947), p. 43.

[25] See T.P. Conwell-Evans, None So Blind: A Study of the Crisis Years, 1930-1939 Based on the Private Papers of Group-Captain M.G. Christie (London, 1947), passim; Wesley K. Wark, The Ultimate Enemy: British Intelligence and Nazi Germany, 1933-1939 (Ithaca, New York, 1985), passim; and F.H. Hinsley et al., British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations (London, 1979), pp. 47-8.

[26] Hinsley, p. 48.

[27] Andrew Boyle, Poor, Dear Brendan: The Quest for Brendan Bracken (London, 1974), p. 209.

[28] Ben Pimlott, Hugh Dalton (London, 1985), pp. 255-6.

[29] Kenneth Young, ed., The Diaries of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, vol. I (London, 1973), entry for 6.9.35., p. 327. (Hereinafter cited as Bruce Lockhart Diaries.)

[30] Despite their later disagreements, it is clear Vansittart concurred in O'Malley's appointment. He also concurred in the even more disastrous appointment of Sir Nevile Henderson to Berlin in 1937. Donald Boadle, "Vansittart's Administration of the Foreign Office in the 1930s," in Diplomacy and Intelligence during the Second World War: Essays in Honour of F.H. Hinsley, edited by Richard Langhorne (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 79-82.

[31] Ibid., p. 83.

[32] Mist Procession, p. 399.

[33] Harold Nicolson MS diary, 31.6.38., quoted in Boadle, p. 83.

[34] Earl of Avon, The Eden Memoirs: Facing the Dictators (London, 1962), p. 242; Boadle, p. 83.

[35] See the following Vansittart memoranda: "An Aspect of International Relations in 1930," 1.5.30., C3358/3358/62, FO 371/14350; "An Aspect of International Relations in 1931," 1.5.31., Vansittart 1/4, Sir Robert Vansittart Papers, Churchill College Archives, Cambridge (hereinafter cited as Vnst.); and "The United Kingdom and Europe," 1.1.32., C.P.4 (32), Cab 24/227.

[36] Vansittart minute, 18.6.31., FO 371, file 15209, fos. 133-6, quoted in F.L. Carsten, Britain and the Weimer Republic: The British Documents (London, 1984), p. 248. Within a few years, however, Vansittart turned bitterly against Brüning. See Vansittart memorandum, "The Future of Germany," 7.4.34., DBFP, II, vi, app. III, p. 975. See also Lord Vansittart, Lessons of My Life (London, 1943), pp. 9-10; and copy of letter to the editor of the Daily Sketch 30.6.44., Vnst. 4/7.

[37] Rose, p. 10.

[38] Vansittart memorandum, "An Aspect of International Relations in 1930," 1.5.30., C3358/3358/62, FO 371/14350.

[39] Rose, p. 94.

[40] Vansittart minute, 6.5.33., Vnst. 2/3.

[41] Lord Vansittart, Bones of Contention (London, 1945), p. 44.

[42] As early as May 1931 Vansittart saw Hitlerism as being "in large part a symptom of an economic disease." Vansittart memorandum, "An Aspect of International Relations in 1931," 1.5.31., Vnst. 1/4.

[43] Vansittart memorandum, "The Present and Future Position in Europe," 28.8.33., DBFP, II, v, pp. 551-2.

[44] Vansittart memorandum, "The Foreign Policy of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom," 19.5.33., Vnst. 1/7; and Vansittart minute, 28.5.33., Vnst. 2/5.

[45] Rose, p. 95.

[46] Vansittart minute, 2.7.34., Vnst. 2/15. See also his minutes of 10.7.34. and 11.7.34., Vnst. 2/19, Vnst. 2/17.

[47] Rose, p. 95.

[48] Ibid., p. 96.

[49] Vansittart memorandum, "An Aspect of International Relations in 1931," 1.5.31., Vnst. 1/4.

[50] Mist Procession, pp. 222-3; Rose, p. 47.

[51] Rose, p. 47.

[52] Ibid., pp. 47-8.

[53] Ibid., p. 47.

[54] Ibid., p. 90.

[55] Vansittart minute, 11.7.33., Vnst. 2/14, quoted in Rose, p. 96.

[56] Goldman has suggested that Vansittart's uncompromising attacks on Germans and his vehement denunciations of the appeasers during the Second World War reflected a desire to "compensate for his earlier advocacy of accommodation with the Hitler regime." Goldman, p. 159. As has been pointed out, Vansittart only advocated a policy of accommodation under strictly defined conditions. Furthermore, Vansittart's views on the aggressive German militaristic spirit in the 1930s and 1940s were consistent. See Vansittart memorandum, "The Future of Germany," 7.4.34., DBFP, II, vi, app. III.

[57] Rose, p. 191.

[58] The reason for this, it seems, was that he held the general view that it was merely a technical, limiting agreement desired, in particular, by the Admiralty to ward off the Japanese menace. Ibid., p. 117.

[59] See ibid., pp. 122-53.

[60] Ibid., pp. 176-8.

[61] John Colville, The Fringes of Power: Downing Street Diaries 1939-1955 (London, 1985), entry for 3.2.41., p. 350. (Hereinafter referred to as Colville Diaries.)

[62] By this stage, there were very few of "Van's men" left at the Foreign Office. Allen Leeper and Ralph Wigram had died. Their replacement by somewhat less sympathetic figures and the advent of Nevile Henderson in Berlin marked the end of Vansittart's hopes of retaining close control over relations with Germany. Boadle, pp. 82-3.

[63] Valentine Lawford, Bound for Diplomacy (London, 1963), p. 271. For the text of Vansittart's "promotion" see Vnst. 4/1.

[64] N.d., Vnst. 4/1.

[65] David Dilks, ed., The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan O.M., 1938-1945 (New York, 1972), entry for 21.1.38., p. 40. (Hereinafter referred to as Cadogan Diaries.) See also ibid., entry for 25.4.38., p. 71.

[66] At one time or another it was considered sending him to the British embassies in Rome, Paris and Washington. He was also considered for the post of the Director of the B.B.C. Cadogan Diaries, entries for 1.3.38., 20.5.38., and 15.6.38., pp. 57, 78, 82. As of early 1938, Vansittart also chaired a small committee for the co-ordination of British Publicity Abroad. See Philip M. Taylor, The Projection of Britain: British Overseas publicity and propaganda 1919-1939 (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 216-59.

[67] Cadogan Diaries, entry for 2.4.38., p. 67.

[68] Rose, p. 221.

[69] Ibid., pp. 223-5.

[70] Ibid., pp. 226-8.

[71] See Vansittart to Halifax, 13.3.39., C3234/15/18, FO 371/22966; and Vansittart minute, 15.3.39., Vnst. 2/43.

[72] Vansittart minute, 15.3.39., Vnst. 2/43.

[73] See Vansittart minutes, 4.5.39., and 16.5.39., Vnst. 2/43; and Vansittart to Halifax, 17.5.39., C7253/15/18, FO 371/22972.

Chapter 2

[1] Rose, p. 76.

[2] Ben Pimlott, ed., The Second World War Diary of Hugh Dalton 1940-45 (London, 1986), entry for 17.11.40., pp. 103-4. (Hereinafter cited as Dalton Diaries.)

[3] See, for instance, ibid., entry for 18.12.40., pp. 124-5.

[4] Rose, p. 76.

[5] Cadogan Diaries, entry for 31.10.40., p. 333. See also passim.

[6] Dalton Diaries, entry for 17.11.40., pp. 103-4.

[7] Ibid., entry for 7.7.40., quoted in Rose, p. 243.

[8] Ibid., entry for 25.2.41., pp. 165-6. See also entries for 28.8.40. and 16.11.40., pp. 76, 102-3.

[9] See, for instance, Vansittart to Christie, 30.11.42., Vansittart II 1/14, Sir Robert Vansittart II Papers, Churchill College Archives, Cambridge. (Hereinafter cited as Vnst. II.)

[10] Dalton Diaries, 27.5.41., pp. 215-6.

[11] Vansittart minute, 20.9.39., Vnst. 2/43.

[12] See Nigel Nicolson, ed., Harold Nicolson: Diaries and Letters 1939-45, (London, 1967), entry for 15.9.39., p. 33. (Hereinafter cited as Nicolson Diaries.)

[13] See Vansittart to Halifax, 10.10.39., C16404/15/18, FO 371/22985; Vansittart minute, 23.10.39., C17161/90/17, FO 371/22913; Vansittart to Halifax, 30.10.39., C17695/53/18, FO 371/23011; and Vansittart memorandum, "Origins of Germany's Fifth War," 28.11.39., C19495/15/18, FO 371/22986.

[14] The first four wars were the Danish War of 1864, the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 and the First World War.

[15] Cmd. 6115, "Final Report by the Right Honourable Sir Nevile Henderson on the Circumstances Leading to the Termination of his Mission to Berlin," 20.9.39., (London, 1939), Germany No. 1.

[16] Vansittart memorandum, "Origins of Germany's Fifth War," 28.11.39., C19495/15/18, FO 371/22986.

[17] See the minutes by Kirkpatrick, 6.12.39., Strang, 8.12.39., and Cadogan, 9.12.39., ibid.

[18] Lothar Kettenacker, "Die britische Haltung zum deutschen Widerstand während des Zweiten Weltkriegs," in Das "Andere Deutschland" im Zweiten Weltkrieg: Emigration und Widerstand in internationaler Perspektive, edited by Lothar Kettenacker (Stuttgart, 1977), p. 56.

[19] See Peter Ludlow, "The Unwinding of Appeasement," in ibid., pp. 25-35.

[20] Besides providing information on the German resistance, Vansittart's intelligence network supplied intelligence on such topics as the morale of the German people, German material preparedness for war, the position of Mussolini, German plans for attacking Britain, and the dates of the projected western offensive. In some instances these reports spurred Vansittart to action. Some of them also formed the basis for his minutes addressed to Halifax. See documents 180/1/16, 18, 30, 33, 35 and 37 for the period September 1939 to October 1940, Malcolm Grahame Christie Private Papers, Churchill College Archives, Cambridge. (Hereinafter cited as CHRS.)

[21] Vansittart to Halifax, 1.11.39., C17753/13005/18, FO 371/23099. Vansittart did not consider there was the least possibility of a lasting peace until the Nazi party was exterminated (which the Germans might do for themselves though not until the war had lasted some time longer) and the power of the Prussian military caste had been destroyed. Neither of these ideas had been put forward in the German proposals.

[22] Ibid.

[23] See, for instance, Cadogan Diaries, entry for 13.11.39., p. 231; John Harvey, ed., The Diplomatic Diaries of Oliver Harvey 1937-1940, (London, 1970), entry for 1.11.39., pp. 326-7; and Colville Diaries, entry for 2.11.39, p. 46. See also Vansittart to Halifax, 26.10.39., C17419/13005/18, FO 371/23099.

[24] This group consisted of Prince Hohenlohe, Dr. Wirth, Fritz Thyssen, Hermann Rauschning and The Knight.

[25] Christie memorandum, "Germany," 19.2.40., C3439/6/18, FO 371/24389; Vansittart minute, 20.1.40., C19495/15/18, FO 371/22986. Vansittart was in total agreement with the "South German group" except over their desire to retain the Sudetenland.

[26] Dr. Wirth, a former German chancellor, was an intermediary between the British and the German resistance. He had asked the British to state that "an internal revolution would not be used to damage Germany militarily." Gerhard Ritter, The German Resistance: Carl Goerdeler's Struggle Against Tyranny, trans. R.T. Clark (London, 1958), p. 158.

[27] Ludlow, p. 38.

[28] See Christie to Vansittart, 16.3.40., CHRS 180/1/35. See also Ritter, p. 158; and Peter Hoffmann, The History of the German Resistance 1933-1945, trans. Richard Barry, 3rd. ed. (1st Engl. ed.) (London, 1977), p. 154.

[29] Hoffmann, p. 154.

[30] Vansittart minute, 11.3.40., C3439/6/18, FO 371/24389.

[31] Hoffmann, p. 169.

[32] See Vansittart to Halifax, 6.9.40., C9598/89/18, FO 371/24408; and Vansittart minutes, 10.9.40. and 11.9.40., C9635/89/18, ibid.

[33] This had been a concern of his ever since the beginning of the war.

[34] Vansittart to Halifax, 15.3.40. and 18.3.40., N3616/2/63, FO 371/24815.

[35] Kettenacker, p. 75.

[36] Vansittart minute, 11.3.40., C4012/267/12, FO 371/24363. See also A.J.P. Taylor, Beaverbrook (London, 1972), pp. 403-5.

[37] Vansittart memorandum, "The Nature of the Beast," 14.3.40., C4229/6/18, FO 371/24389.

[38] This was the only occasion during the war in which Vansittart advocated that Germany be broken up.

[39] Vansittart to Halifax, 9.4.40., C5304/1285/18, FO 371/24418.

[40] Colville Diaries, editorial note, p. 162.

[41] Dalton Diaries, entry for 31.5.40., pp. 30-1. While Vansittart had very little power as Chief Diplomatic Advisor, he was not above abusing even its limited privileges. For instance, in 1940 Vansittart succeeded in getting the Canadian authorities to take in Otto Strasser, one of

Hitler's former right-hand men, for the duration of the war. He succeeded in doing so by saying that his request should be regarded as coming from the British government. The government, however, had given him no authorization to say this. See "The Future of Otto Strasser," 27.11.44., C16418/712/18, FO 371/39120.

[42] See Anthony Glees, Exile Politics During the Second World War: The German Social Democrats in Britain (Oxford, 1982), p. 49; and Bernard Wasserstein, Britain and the Jews of Europe 1939-1945 (Oxford, 1979), p. 88.

[43] Martin Gilbert, Winston S. Churchill, vol. VI (London, 1983), p. 558.

[44] Colville Diaries, entry for 16.6.40., p. 159.

[45] Vansittart to Halifax, 17.6.40., C7031/65/17, FO 371/24311.

[46] Colville Diaries, entry for 17.6.40., pp. 161-3. The message, however, does not seem to have been approved. See ibid.; and Cadogan note, 18.6.40., C7031/65/17, FO 371/24311.

[47] Colville Diaries, entry for 19.6.40., p. 166.

[48] Gilbert, vol. VI, p. 572.

[49] Rose, p. 242. See also Vansittart's poem "1904-1940," Times (London), 29.6.40., p. 7.

[50] Vansittart to Armstrong, 21.6.40., Vnst. II 1/8. If there was a consolation it was that Vansittart believed that he had at least lived to be Public Enemy No. 1 in Germany. Ibid. Vansittart was actually third or fourth on the Nazi black list for Britain. See Adolf Hitler, Hitler's Table Talk 1941-44: His Private Conversations, 2nd ed., trans. Norman Cameron and R.H. Stevens with an intro. by H.R. Trevor-Roper (London, 1973), entries for 18.10.41. and 2.2.42., pp. 72, 276.

[51] Vansittart to Halifax, 6.9.40., C9598/89/18, FO 371/24408.

[52] See "Committee on French Resistance," C7456/7389/17 and C7785/7389/17, FO 371/24349.

[53] Dalton Diaries, entry for 28.6.40., p. 49.

[54] See Colville Diaries, entry for 31.7.40., p. 205; extract from 9.2.41. issue of the Sunday Times in Z923/92/17, FO 371/28346; and "Vansittart: Broadcasting to France," 18.8. 41., Z7250/244/17, FO 371/28432.

[55] Dalton Diaries, entries for 16.7.40. and 17.7.40., pp. 60-1; Hugh Dalton, The Fateful Years: Memoirs 1931-1945 (London, 1957), p. 368.

[56] Dalton Diaries, editorial note, pp. 51-2.

[57] See, for instance, ibid., entries for 22.8.40., 4.9.40. and 5.2.41., pp. 76, 81, 152-3.

[58] See, for example, ibid., entry for 15.9.40., p. 82.

[59] Ibid., entry for 26.3.41., p. 175.

[60] Ibid., entry for 9.4.41., p. 183.

[61] Note to Vansittart dated 5.9.40. B.B.C. acc. no. 48722, cited in Fromm, p. 71.

[62] Rose, p. 245.

[63] Wace to the Ministry of Information, 13.11.40., B.B.C. acc. no. 48722, cited in Fromm, p. 71.

[64] Internal communication dated 5.12.40., B.B.C. acc. no. 48722, cited in ibid., p. 73.

[65] Ian McLaine, Ministry of Morale: Home Front Morale and the Ministry of Information in World War II (London, 1979), p. 155.

[66] Rose, p. 247.

[67] Cadogan Diaries, entry for 29.11.40., pp. 337-8.

[68] Colville Diaries, entry for 6.1.41., p. 329.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Goldman, p. 161. See, in particular, Parliamentary Debates (Commons), 5th ser., vol. 368 (1940-41), cols. 417-8; and Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 118 (1940- 41), cols. 388-410.

[71] Chamberlain apparently also offered Vansittart a peerage but Sir Robert declined. Dalton Diaries, entry for 25.2.41., pp. 165-6.

[72] Vansittart, it seems, was hoping for renewed influence once war broke out. It would, after all, have proved that he had been right from the very beginning. Vansittart to Eden, 8.4.41., Vnst. II 1/9.

[73] Vansittart to Eden, 10.2.41., Vnst. II 1/9.

[74] Vansittart to Churchill, 25.2.41., ibid.; Dalton Diaries, entry for 25.2.41., pp. 165-6.

[75] Vansittart to Eden, 8.4.41., Vnst. II 1/9. The final reason for resigning, Vansittart said, was that he was never once consulted nor shown any papers during Eden's absence.

[76] Eden, in fact, was planning to retire Vansittart as early as January 1941. See Dalton Diaries, entry for 27.1.41., p. 145.

[77] Ibid., entry for 18.4.41., p. 184. Churchill was still trying to fit Vansittart in even after he retired. The Prime Minister considered sending Vansittart as the diplomatic representative to the Badoglio Government in Italy in September 1943. John Harvey, ed., The War Diaries of Oliver Harvey (London, 1978), entry for 25.9.43., p. 301.

[78] Dalton Diaries, entry for 19.4.41., p. 185.

[79] Vansittart to Eden, 22.4.41., Vnst. II 1/9.

[80] Vansittart to Dalton, 23.5.41., ibid.

[81] "Sir R. Vansittart to Retire: Barony to be Conferred," Times (London), 22.5.41., p. 4.

[82] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 119 (1940-41), col. 789. According to the American journalist Walter Littlefield, when Vansittart was made a peer Churchill allegedly told the former head of the Foreign Office to "tell the British public in articles what you told my predecessors in reports." This statement, however, is neither substantiated by the British government documents nor by Vansittart's private papers. See Walter Littlefield, letter to the editor, "Chamberlain Was Warned: Vansittart's Articles on the Germans based on Secret Reports," New York Times, 26.9.43., sec. IV, p. 12.

[83] Cranborne to Vansittart, 6.8.44., C9295/14/62, FO 371/38998.

[84] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 131 (1943-44), cols. 427-49; "Proposal to set up a panel of scientists to consider the treatment of German industry," 24.5.44., U4858/4858/70, FO 371/40812; and "Proposed permanent Inter-Allied Committee of Scientists," 17.5.45., U3819/20/70, FO 371/50763.

[85] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 133, (1943-44) cols. 409-34; and "Peace Settlement," 10.10.44., U7826/104/70, FO 371/40670.

[86] Glees, p. 134. See Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 122 (1941-42), cols. 301-44.

[87] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 134 (1944-45), cols. 927-44.

[88] Ibid., vol. 132 (1943-44), cols. 930-4.

[89] See "Prevention of German war criminals finding asylum in neutral countries: Motion by Lord Vansittart," 11.5.43., C5679/31/18, FO 371/34366; and Simon to Eden, 2.7.43., C7824/31/62, FO 371/34368.

[90] See, for instance, Vansittart to Cranborne, 4.8.44., C9295/14/62, FO 371/38998.

[91] See "Broadcasting to Sudeten Germans," 16.6.42., C6447/326/12, FO 371/30834; "Treatment of that section of Germans who have in mind a peace incompatible with British interests," 17.5.43., C5756/278/18, FO 371/34458; "German Penetration in the United Kingdom: Victor Schiff and Herr Schacht," 19.6.43., C7146/279/18, FO 371/34459; "Enquiry regarding alleged Foreign Office encouragement of Frau Schreiber and the Free German Movement," 28.9.43., C11390/29/18, FO 371/34415; "Position of Poles deported into Soviet Union from Eastern Poland since 1939," 28.1.44., C1452/222/55, FO 371/39462; "London Büro of Austrian Socialists," 5.7.44., C9118/30/3, FO 371/38829; and "Allied intention to maintain styles and classifications introduced by the Nazis in Austria," 9.4.45., C1625/205/3, FO 371/46614.

[92] Eden note, 30.1.44., C1452/222/55, FO 371/39462.

[93] See "Desire of Lord Vansittart to publish memoranda written in the Foreign Office," 6.8.41., L2090/185/405, FO 370/643; "Publication of documents concerning Germany by Lord Vansittart," 30.11.45., L3751/-/402, FO 370/1195; Sargent to Vansittart, 6.9.46., Vnst. II 1/9; Sargent to Vansittart, 30.10.46., Vnst. 4/9; and Vansittart to Sargent, 2.11.46., ibid.

[94] See "Broadcasting to Sudeten Germans," 16.6.42., C6447/326/12, FO 371/30834; and "Treatment of that section of Germans who have in mind a peace incompatible with British interests," 17.5.43., C5756/278/18, FO 371/34458.

[95] Harrison minute, 27.5.43., C5756/278/18, FO 371/34458; and "Current trends in German emigré opinion in the United Kingdom," 10.7.43., C8000/29/18, FO 371/34414. The MI5 report indicated that Vansittart's fears were exaggerated.

[96] See the two documents entitled "Asylum for War Criminals in the Vatican," 13.9.44., C12169/14/62, FO 371/39001; and 21.9.44., C12799/14/62, FO 371/39002.

[97] See, for instance, the following correspondence in Vnst. II 1/17: Vansittart to Morrison, 26.6.42.; Vansittart to Morrison, 12.10.42.; Morrison to Vansittart, 26.10.42.; and Vansittart to Morrison, 30.10.42.

[98] Extract of Vansittart's broadcast to the United States on the C.B.S. regarding the future of Italy and France, Manchester Guardian, 6.8.43., in Z8654/77/17, FO 371/36036; and "His Majesty's Government's and the United States' Government's Policy to Italy: Lord Vansittart's Broadcast," 3.8.43., R7099/5880/22, FO 371/37288.

[99] Eden note, n.d. (early August 1943?), R7099/5880/22, FO 371/37288.

[100] Churchill note, 6.8.43., R7409/5880/22, ibid.

[101] "Lord Vansittart's broadcast on Italy," 25.8.43., R8272/5880/22, FO 371/37289. Part of the projected reply to Hull ran as follows: "As the State Department know, Lord Vansittart's outspoken and somewhat critical views on foreign policy have on occasion been a source of political embarrassment to His Majesty's Government themselves. We have, of course, no means of silencing him." Telegram to Halifax, 8.8.43., R7099/5880/22, FO 371/37288. As Hull's irritation quickly subsided, the reply was not sent.

[102] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 125 (1942-43), col. 192.

[103] Rose, p. 275, n. 31.

[104] Halifax to Eden, 27.12.43., AN116/116/45, FO 371/38597.

[105] Makins minute, 3.4.45., AN1576/38/45, FO 371/44577.

[106] Francis Evans (British Consulate General in New York) to Makins (British Embassy, Washington), 11.5.45., AN1635/38/45, ibid.

[107] See section crossed out on telegram to Halifax, 8.8.43., R7099/5880/22, FO 371/37288.

[108] "Greatest U.S. Aid Seen Only in A.E.F.: Vansittart, 'Speaking Plainly' on His Retirement, Asserts our Army is Needed," New York Times, 16.7.41., p. 6.

[109] "Vansittart Retorts to Senator Critics: Americans Should Stop 'Lecturing the British,' he writes," New York Times, 17.10.43., p. 27.

[110] Goldman, p. 161; Asa Briggs, The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom, vol. III, the War of Words (London, 1970), p. 172.

[111] Briggs, p. 172.

[112] Strang minute, 16.11.41., C647/118/18, FO 371/30928.

[113] Jebb minute, 11.1.43., C13125/118/18, ibid.

[114] See "Propaganda to Germany," 10.7.41., C7782/154/18, FO 371/26532; "Propaganda to Germany: distinction between Nazis and the German people," 7.11.41., C647/118/18, FO 371/30928; "His Majesty's Government's policy towards the distinction between Nazis and the German People," 4.3.42., C2429/118/18, ibid.; "Germany: Propaganda to," 4.11.42., C10942/118/18, ibid.; "H.M. Government's policy towards Germany: differentiation between Hitler and the German people," 29.12.42., C13125/118/18, ibid.; and "H.M. Government's policy towards Germany: differentiation between Nazis and the German people," 9.1.43., C1410/1410/18, FO 371/34476.

[115] Harrison minute, 9.1.43., C1410/1410/18, FO 371/34476.

[116] Cadogan minute, 11.7.41., C7782/154/18, FO 371/26532.

[117] Eden minute, 12.7.41., ibid.

[118] See Bruce Lockhart Diaries II, entry for 29.4.42., p. 160.

[119] Ibid., entry for 21.11.42., p. 207.

[120] See, for instance, Vansittart to Bracken, 9.9.41., Vnst. II 1/12.

[121] Christie to Vansittart, n.d. (early July 1942?), Vnst. II 1/14.

[122] See, for instance, Christie to Vansittart, 20.7.42., ibid.; and Vansittart to Christie, 22.7.42., ibid.

[123] Bruce Lockhart Diaries II, entry for 15.1.42., p. 135.

[124] Louis Lochner, ed., The Goebbels Diaries 1942-1943 (Garden City, New York, 1948), entry for 24.4.43., pp. 342-

3. For other examples of the utilization of Vansittart's views by German propaganda see ibid., entries for 20.2.42., 21.3.42., 26.3.42., and 23.5.42., pp. 43-4, 139, 144, 227. See also Willi A. Boelcke, ed. The Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels: The Nazi Propaganda War 1939-43, trans. Ewald Osers (New York, 1970), entry for 26.3.42., p. 219; Gert Sudholt, ed., Helmut Sundermann: Tagesparolen: Deutsche Presseweisungen 1939-1945, Hitlers Propaganda und Kriegsführung (Leoni am Starnberger See, 1973), (T.P.) entries for 19.2.42., 31.8.44., 27.9.44., and 20.10.44., pp. 64, 283-4, 292, 295; and Ernest K. Bramsted, Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda 1925-1945 (Michigan, 1965), pp. 325, 425-6. For Hitler's views of Vansittart see the entries in Hitler's Table Talk listed in note 50 as well as the entry for 31.8.42., pp. 667-8 in the same volume.

125 See, for instance, "Lord Vansittart's speech on Enemy Aliens and Propaganda: Reactions of German Propaganda," 25.3.42., C3219/118/18, FO 371/30928.

126 Cadogan note, 4.11.42., C10942/118/18, ibid.

127 Harrison note, 31.3.42., C3219/118/18, ibid.

128 Bruce Lockhart Diaries II, entry for 21.5.42., p. 166.

129 An exception was Hugh Dalton. Dalton Diaries, entry for 5.6.40., pp. 35-6. For Dalton's views on Germany see his Hitler's War: Before and After (Harmondsworth, England, 1940) and Pimlott, Hugh Dalton, passim.

130 See, for instance, his article "Second Front 'Urged': Hatred for Germans," Times (London), 22.6.42., p. 2.

131 See Harrison minute, 2.3.42., C2429/118/18, FO 371/30928.

132 See, for instance, "Complete Victory Essential: Mr. Arthur Greenwood on Germany's Future," Times (London), 19.12.42., p. 2.

133 See "Mr. Duff Cooper on the destruction of the German nation," 7.3.43., C2580/279/18, FO 371/34456.

134 Boyle, p. 289; Goldman, p. 165.

135 Gilbert, vol. VI, pp. 943-4; Goldman, p. 165.

136 Gilbert, vol. VI, p. 1070.

137 Ibid., vol. VII, pp. 839-41.

[138] Kimball, p. 95.

[139] A.J.P. Taylor, The Trouble Makers: Dissent Over Foreign Policy 1792-1939 (London, 1985).

Chapter 3

[1] Goldman, p. 159.

[2] Vansittart to Baldwin, n.d., Stanley Baldwin Papers, Cambridge University, cited in Goldman, p. 159.

[3] Vansittart to Eden, 22.4.41., Vnst. II 1/9.

[4] Vansittart to Müller, 30.6.41., Vnst. II 1/9.

[5] Lessons of My Life, p. 203.

[6] Jaeger, p. 14.

[7] Goldman, p. 168.

[8] Lord Vansittart's Foreword to Henryk Sienkiewicz, The Teutonic Knights (London, 1943), p. 3.

[9] Vansittart Interview with Mann, n.d. (Oct. 1941?), Vnst. II 1/17.

[10] Black Record, p. 16.

[11] Ibid., p. iv.

[12] Ibid., p. 12.

[13] Ibid., pp. iv, 4, 16, 54.

[14] Ibid., pp. 16-17.

[15] Ibid., p. 14.

[16] Ibid., p. 46.

[17] Ibid., p. 53.

[18] Ibid. See also p. 15.

[19] Rose, p. 246. The views expressed in the pamphlet formed the substance upon which all of Vansittart's future writings and utterances were based. Many of the things which he touched upon now were to become the themes of entire chapters in his later works.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., p. 248. Vansittart's other publications were also written in a like manner.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Black Record, however, was disapproved of by Ireland and was not published in the United States until 1944. Bones of Contention, p. 140.

[24] Excerpts appeared in the 1 and 8 December 1940 issues of the Sunday Times.

[25] Hamish Hamilton to Vansittart, 30.4.42., Vnst. II 1/16; and "Anti-German Propaganda in Iceland," 3.5.41., N2123/34/15, FO 371/29310.

[26] Bones of Contention, p. 71. See also the cover of Lord Vansittart's Roots of the Trouble (London, 1941).

[27] See Bones of Contention, pp. 123-7.

[28] Black Record, p. 19; see also Mist Procession, p. 25.

[29] Bones of Contention, p. 124. See also his article "Vansittartism," The Nineteenth Century and After, 131 (May 1942), p. 206.

[30] Vansittart Interview with Mann, n.d. (Oct. 1941?), Vnst. II 1/17.

[31] See Vansittart's Foreword to W.W. Coole and M.F. Potter, eds., Thus Spake Germany (London, 1941), pp. xiv, xxiv.

[32] Ibid., p. xxv.

[33] Vansittart interview with Mann, n.d. (Oct. 1941?), Vnst. II 1/7. There is a strange passage on p. xxi of Thus Spake Germany in which Vansittart instructed his readers ". . . you do not need my company. Go on by yourselves, but go slowly." Vansittart, however, had every intention of going on. At this stage Vansittart's faith in the populace may have been fairly strong. See also ibid., p. xxv.

[34] Ibid., p. xxii. Vansittart repeated this message in a broadcast on the night of 1.9.42. commemorating the third anniversary of the invasion of Poland. Excerpts of the broadcast were published in Vansittart's article "If Nazis Held Britain," Daily Telegraph, 2.9.42., p. 3. For the full text see his "'Never in History'. . . Lord Vansittart on the attempted extermination of the Poles," Listener, 10.9.42., pp. 325-6.

[35] Foreword to Thus Spake Germany, p. xi.

[36] Lord Vansittart, Black Record: Germans Past and Present, library edition (London, 1941), p. viii, cited in Fromm, p. 75.

[37] Two months later Vansittart again spoke on the subject. He was vague about the exact length of time required for regeneration, but given the evolution of his thinking on the issue to date and afterwards, it could have been no less than his shortest estimate: at least one generation. "'Vansittartism' and the Myth of the 'Two Germanys'," Manchester Guardian, 19.2.42., p. 6; "Reeducating Germany: Lord Vansittart on 'Vansittartism'," Times (London), 19.2.42., p. 2.

[38] Roots of the Trouble, p. 3.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid., p. 4.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid., pp. 9, 31.

[43] The principles and the conclusion first appeared in a shorter form in the Sunday Times between 17.8.41 and 2.11.41. Fromm, p. 283, n. 69.

[44] Roots of the Trouble, p. 24.

[45] Ibid., p. 29.

[46] Ibid., p. 32.

[47] Lessons of My Life, p. 17. See also Lord Vansittart, "White-Washing Germany," Times (London), 17.6.42., p. 2.

[48] Lessons of My Life, pp. 5, 165.

[49] Ibid., p. 236.

[50] Ibid., p. 168.

[51] See Ibid., pp. 60-74. See also Lord Vansittart, "Vansittart's 'Twelve Points' for Germany," New York Times Magazine, 16.1.44., sec. VI, p. 5.

[52] Lessons of My Life, pp. 158, 162.

[53] Ibid., p. 147.

[54] Ibid., p. 184.

[55] Ibid., p. 185.

[56] Ibid., p. 187.

[57] Ibid., p. 201.

[58] Ibid., pp. 124-5.

[59] Ibid., p. 132.

[60] Ibid., p. 216.

[61] Ibid., pp. 73-4.

[62] Ibid., pp. 201-2.

[63] "Securing Europe from Germany: Danger of Using Ideological Spectacles: Lord Vansittart on Peace Aims," Scotsman, 12.6.43., page unknown, in C7110/279/18, FO 371/34459.

[64] Ibid. See also "Vansittart's 'Twelve Points' for Germany," pp. 5, 36-7.

[65] "Securing Europe from Germany."

[66] "Vansittart's 'Twelve Points' for Germany," p. 5.

[67] Jebb? note, 20.6.43., C7110/279/18, FO 371/34459.

[68] "Securing Europe from Germany."

[69] See Rose, p. 260; and interview with Mann, n.d., (Oct. 1941?), Vnst. II 1/17.

[70] Lessons of My Life, p. 14. See also "Vansittart Would Disarm But Feed Post-War Reich," New York Times, 12.4.43., p. 9.

[71] "Lord Vansittart on the German Menace: The Win the Peace Movement," Manchester Guardian, 20.9.43., p. 3.

[72] Vansittart was thus furious at the idea of the Allied Control Commission taking up its headquarters in that city. As Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart noted in his diary: "He [Vansittart] points out - quite rightly - that by making Berlin their headquarters the Control Commission will ipso facto be re-establishing Berlin as the capital. He is determined to stump the country on this question . . . ." Bruce Lockhart Diaries II, entry for 23.8.44., pp. 345-6.

[73] Copy of letter to the Yorkshire Conservative Newspaper Company, Vnst. 4/7.

[74] Rose, p. 273.

[75] "Germans Now Try to Win Peace, Vansittart Warns," New York Times, 24.1.44., p. 4. See also copy of letter to the Daily Mail, 19.8.44., Vnst. 4/7.

[76] Draft of letter to the Daily Sketch, n.d., Vnst. 4/7.

[77] In 1943 Vansittart had twice predicted that Hitler would be murdered by the German generals: on 11.4.43. and 14.11.43. On the latter occasion he said: "To fall for that would be giving the Germans the chance to start another war." See "Vansittart Would Disarm But Feed Post-War Reich," New York Times, 12.4.43., p. 9; and "Vansittart Warns Britain of German Army Coup," New York Times, 15.11.43., p. 2.

[78] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 133 (1943-44), col. 168.

[79] Fromm, p. 166.

[80] Bones of Contention, p. 8.

[81] Ibid., p. 21.

[82] Ibid., p. 97.

[83] Ibid., pp. 97-102; Rose, pp. 272 and 277, n. 64.

[84] Bones of Contention, pp. 47-8.

[85] See ibid., pp. 48-61.

[86] See ibid., pp. 62-8.

[87] Ibid., pp. 86-7. See also "Hopes for a New Austria: Vansittart Calls on People to Determine own Future Role," New York Times, 13.3.45., p. 3.

[88] Bones of Contention, p. 105. See also Lord Vansittart, "Vansittart Denies France Has Gone," New York Times, 2.1.44., p. 5 and Lord Vansittart, "The Story of the Entente," Listener, 20.4.44., pp. 439-40.

[89] Bones of Contention, p. 73.

[90] Ibid., p. 74.

[91] Ibid., pp. 75-6.

92 Ibid., p. 83.

93 The first one was published in December 1944 under the title of The Leopard and the Spots. It was a reprint of the six most important chapters of Lessons of My Life.

94 Lord Vansittart, The German Octopus (London, 1945), p. 3.

95 Ibid., p. 26.

96 Ibid., p. 8.

97 Ibid., p. 44.

98 Bones of Contention, p. 54.

99 The German Octopus, p. 43; Fromm, p. 84.

100 Lord Vansittart, "Vansittartism," pp. 207-8; The German Octopus, p. 44.

101 The German Octopus, p. 40. On 27.3.45 Vansittart said the Allies had only two problems in deciding the fate of those responsible for the present conflict: "the location of the gallows and the length of the drop." Vansittart said he could imagine nothing more ridiculous than trying the "big shots" with cumbrous machinery. "'Drop' for War Criminals Vansittart's Only Worry," New York Times, 28.3.45., p. 3.

102 A.J. Andrews to P.F. Wiener, 12.2.41., Vnst. II 1/10.

103 Jaeger, p. 15.

104 Lessons of My Life, p. 148.

105 Bruce Lockhart Diaries II, entry for 23.8.44., pp. 345-6.

106 See ibid.

107 See McLaine, p. 170.

Chapter 4

1 Goldman, p. 176.

2 Lord Vansittart, "Vansittartism," p. 203.

3 See editorial, "Bitter Enders," New Statesman and Nation, 28.3.42., pp. 203-4, Vnst. II 1/22.

[4] Vansittart to Geoffrey Crowther, editor of the Economist, 10.2.42., Vnst. II 1/22.

[5] Rose, p. 257.

[6] Lord Vansittart, "The Re-education of Germany," Time and Tide, 27.2.43., page unknown, Vnst. II 1/22.

[7] Vansittart to Charles Russell, his solicitor, 18.8.41., Vnst. 4/6.

[8] See court case Vansittart vs. Time Incorporated, Vnst. 4/6.

[9] Vansittart to Charles Russell, 27.10.41., Vnst. 4/6.

[10] See ibid.; and Vansittart to Digby D'Avigdor of the "Never Again" Association, 14.5.42., Vnst. II 1/15.

[11] N.d. (late 1942?), Vnst. II 1/22.

[12] See, for instance, editorial note, "Black Record," New Statesman and Nation, 3.10.42., p. 214; and Albert Guerard, "Apologies to Vansittart," Nation, Vol. 161, 4.8.45., pp. 111-12.

[13] Lord Vansittart, "Vansittartism," p. 203.

[14] Paul Addison, "Lloyd George and Compromise Peace in the Second World War," in Lloyd George: Twelve Essays, edited by A.J.P. Taylor (London, 1971), p. 370.

[15] Kingsley Martin, "A London Diary," New Statesman and Nation, 15.3.41., p. 265.

[16] L.T. Minchin, for the Declaration Secretary, letter to the editor, "We and the Germans," Tribune, 9.7.43., p. 13.

[17] H.N. Brailsford, Germans and Nazis: A Reply to "Black Record" (London, 1944), pp. 13-14.

[18] Harold Laski, The Germans - Are They Human? A Reply to Sir Robert Vansittart (London, 1941), p. 8.

[19] Editorial, "The Small Voice," New Statesman and Nation, 22.11.41., p. 435.

[20] Editorial, "Vansittart's Spring Offensive," Tribune, 27.3.42., p. 2.

[21] In this instance the reference to anti-Bolshevism also carried definite anti-Soviet overtones. Kingsley

Martin, "A London Diary," New Statesman and Nation, 13.6. 42., p. 381.

[22] Frank Owen, "This Man Makes More Nazis," Evening Standard, 24.2.42., p. 2. See also Harold Laski, "The Politics of Hate," New Statesman and Nation, 21.2.42., pp. 119-20; Kingsley Martin, "The Problem of Germany," ibid., 7.3.42., p. 166; and H.G. Atkins, "Vansittartitis," The Contemporary Review, 161 (March 1942), p. 148.

[23] Atkins, p. 146; editorial, "Vansittartism," New Statesman and Nation, 18.7.42., p. 36.

[24] See the following letters to the editor of the Times (London): Lord Vansittart, "Party and Nation," 14.11.44., p. 5; Michael Foot, "Foreign Affairs: Parties and the Nation: Government by Discussion," 16.11.44., p. 5; Lord Vansittart, "Foreign Affairs: Parties and the Nation: Lord Vansittart's Reply," 17.11.44., p. 5; Michael Foot, "Foreign Affairs," 18.11.44., p. 5; Lord Vansittart, "Foreign Affairs," 20.11.44., p. 5; and Lord Vansittart, "Foreign Affairs," 24.11.44., p. 8. See also other contributions to the debate in the above mentioned issues. Furthermore, see Vansittart to the editor of the Sunday Express, 3.1.44., Vnst. 4/7.

[25] Addison, pp. 371-6, 380; T.D. Burridge, British Labour and Hitler's War (London, 1976), p. 131.

[26] Parliamentary Debates (Commons), 5th ser., vol. 368 (1940-41), col. 1516.

[27] Ibid., vol. 370 (1940-41), cols. 1410-11.

[28] Parliamentary Peace Aims Group, Germany's Record: A Reply to Lord Vansittart (London, 1944), preface.

[29] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser. vol. 118 (1940-41), cols. 388-410.

[30] Addison, p. 371.

[31] Richard Griffiths, Fellow Travellers of the Right: British Enthusiasts for Nazi Germany 1933-9 (London, 1980), pp. 351, 371.

[32] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 122 (1941-42), cols. 1153-1162. Earlier, in March 1942, Vansittart had called for the imprisonment of Bedford for his anti-government and pro-German statements. Ibid., cols. 496-9.

[33] Heinrich Fraenkel, Vansittart's Gift for Goebbels: A German Exile's Answer to Black Record (London, 1941), pp. 4-5, 7-9.

[34] Ibid., pp. 13-16.

[35] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 126 (1942-43), cols. 535-45, 549-56.

[36] Dictionary of National Biography, 1941-50. Entry by Mary Stocks, p. 711.

[37] See the following letters to the editor of the Spectator: Eleanor Rathbone, "The German People," 7.7.44., Vnst. 4/7; Lord Vansittart, "The German People," 14.7.44., p. 36; Eleanor Rathbone, "The German People," 28.7.44., p. 80; Lord Vansittart, "The German Problem," 11.8.44., pp. 128-9; Lord Vansittart, "The German Problem," 25.8.44., p. 172. See also other contributions to the debate in the above-mentioned issues.

[38] See the following letters to the editor of the New York Times Magazine: Gertrude Wagner, "Vansittartism," and Frank C. Brown, "Vansittart's Program," 30.1.44., sec. vi, p. 37; John Y. Dunant, "Pity for Germany," 6.2.44., sec. vi, p. 2; Friedrich Stampfer, "German Liberals," 13.2.44., sec. vi, p. 40; and E.J. Harvey, "Germany Without Junkers," 20.2.44., sec. vi, p. 2.

[39] See the following letters to the editor of the Manchester Guardian: "Germany and the Atlantic Charter," 20.5.44., p. 4; and copy of Vansittart letter dated 1.6.44., Vnst. 4/7.

[40] See the following letters in the News Chronicle: "Reprisals?: Vansittart Says Yes: Dorothy Sayers Says No," 27.6.44.; "The Case for Reprisals," 6.7.44. See also the following letters to the editor of Time and Tide: copy of Vansittart letter dated 5.8.44.; A.A. Milne and Y.R.C. "A.A. Milne's 'Notes on the Way'," 19.8.44.; copy of Vansittart letter, n.d. (late August 1944?); A.A. Milne, "A.A. Milne's 'Notes on the Way'," 9.9.44. All the above references appear in Vnst. 4/7. The page numbers of the newspaper articles within their respective issues are unknown.

[41] See the "What Shall We Do With Germany?" debates between Lord Vansittart, Kingsley Martin, Barbara Ward and A.J.P. Taylor (in the chair) in the Listener, vol. 32, 19.10.44., pp. 423-4, 436; 26.10.44., pp. 459-60, 465; and 7.12.44., pp. 619-20, 632. These debates were broadcast over the Home Service of the BBC six days prior to their appearance in the Listener. See also Brailsford, pp. 15-16; and the following Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th series:

vol. 130 (1943-44), cols. 109-41; vol. 131 (1943-44), cols. 427-49; vol. 131 (1943-44), cols. 945-1000; vol. 132 (1943-44), cols. 916-34; vol. 133 (1943-44), cols. 119-68; vol. 133 (1943-44), cols. 409-34; vol. 135 (1944-45), cols. 761-83; and vol. 136 (1944-45), cols. 246-59. Furthermore, see "Vansittart Wants Reich Disarmed: Holds That Is Vital to World Peace - Dorothy Thompson Stresses Russian Relations," New York Times, 26.9.43., p. 27; "Vansittart, Dorothy Thompson Argue the Hard Peace Question," Newsweek, 9.10.44., pp. 21, 104, 106-11; and the following letters to the editor of Newsweek: Anna Rew Gross, A.L. Harper, Lewis Roberts, J.W. Carty, Amelia Harding and J. Myron Magnuson, "Vansittart-Thompson," 6.11.44., pp. 14, 18; and Margaret S. de Planelles, "Vansittarts of Sittart," 4.12.44., p. 8.

[42] For the policies of the Sunday Times and Sunday Express see Franklin Reid Gannon, The British Press and Germany, 1936-1939 (Oxford, 1971), passim.

[43] Goldman, p. 156.

[44] The Sunday Times only supported Vansittart from December 1940 to about the end of December 1941. Fromm, p. 217. In June 1941 Vansittart agreed to collaborate with Kemsley, contributing articles and advising in matters affecting policy. They ceased collaborating because, as Bruce Lockhart recorded in his diary, after "cuts" and "omissions" Vansittart's article "often read in the opposite sense to what he had intended. He had a row with Kemsley and stopped writing." Bruce Lockhart Diaries II, entry for 10.4.46., pp. 542-3. See also Vansittart to Kemsley, 6.6.41., Vnst. II 1/9.

[45] See, for instance, the following editorials in the Spectator: "A Spectator's Notebook," 21.11.41., p. 480; "News of the Week," 12.3.43., p. 234; and "Punishment of War Criminals," 10.12.43., p. 542.

[46] D'Avigdor to Vansittart, 8.5.42., Vnst. II 1/15.

[47] See, for instance, Vansittart to Sir James MacLeod, 8.6.42., Vnst. II 1/7.

[48] See, for instance, Vansittart to D'Avigdor, 4.6.42., Vnst. II 1/15.

[49] Hancock minute, 28.5.42., C5262/739/18, FO 371/30936.

[50] Rose, p. 261.

[51] See the objects of the "Win the Peace" Movement on the inside of the back cover of The German Octopus.

[52] Fromm, p. 83.

[53] Rose, p. 261. See also Bruce Lockhart Diaries II, entry for 23.8.44., pp. 345-6.

[54] At the height of their collaboration they met about once per week at which time Vansittart would conduct a sort of seminar on international affairs, enlightening his audience on the significance of current world events. Rose, p. 264.

[55] Burridge, p. 61.

[56] Curt Geyer and Walter Loeb, Gollancz in German Wonderland, a Fight For Freedom Publication, trans. E. Fitzgerald, foreword by James Walker MP (London, 1942), p. 8.

[57] Ibid., p. 12.

[58] Burridge, p. 61.

[59] Fromm, pp. 81-2.

[60] Burridge, p. 24. See also Glees, p. 107. Bevan was very bitter about the effect Loeb had on the Labour movement. See his editorial "The Case of Herr Loeb," Tribune, 2.7.43., p. 11. See also Hilda Monte "Labour and Vansittartism: The Enemy Within the Gates," Left, January 1943, pp. 1-5; G.R. Sandison, "Vansittart and the Labour Movement," Labour Monthly, March 1943, pp. 84-6; and Quaestor, "Can They Quench Volcanoes?", ibid., August 1943, pp. 239-43.

[61] Glees, pp. 108, 131, 133.

[62] A.J.P. Taylor, The Course of German History: A Survey of the Development of Germany since 1815 (London, 1945), pp. 7, 225.

[63] See the first part of note 41 on page 152.

[64] Lewis Namier, "Names and Realities," Time and Tide, 17.5.44., p. 394. See also the following by Namier: letter to the editor, "Germany as Aggressor," Spectator, 3.1.41., p. 12; "National Character," ibid., 28.2.41., pp. 224-5; and "Both Slaves and Masters," Time and Tide, 5.7.41., pp. 557-8.

[65] Woodward minute, 17.9.41., L2090/185/405, FO 370/643.

[66] A.L. Rowse, "Correspondence: Vansittartism," New Statesman and Nation, 31.10.42., pp. 289-90.

[67] H.G. Wells, "Correspondence: German Militarism," Tribune, 4.9.42., p. 15. Wells' defence of Vansittart sparked off a massive debate in the columns of the Tribune, a debate which later carried over into the New Statesman and Nation. See the following in the correspondence columns of the Tribune: George Bernard Shaw, "Vansittartitis," and Harold Laski "German Militarism," 11.9.42., p. 15; H.G. Wells, "Shaw and Vansittart," James Walker "'Fight For Freedom'," 18.9.42., p. 12; Prince Leopold Loewenstein-Wertheim, "'Fight for Freedom'," and Hilda Monte "Truth and Facts," 25.9.42., p. 12; Rennie Smith, "The Vansittart Complex," A. Caltabiano, "German Militarism," F.B. Czarnomski, "Shaw and Militarism," and Jeken Frank, "The Germans," 2.10.42., p. 12; Harold Laski, "The Hate Habit," and Luis Araquistain, "Shaw and the Empire," 9.10.42., p. 12; Rennie Smith, "Laski and the Germans," and retort by Laski, 23.10.42., p. 12. See also the following contibutors in the correspondence columns headed "Vansittartism" in the New Statesman and Nation: H.G. Wells and Harold Laski, 17.10.42., p. 257; H.G. Wells and Philip Jordan, 24.10.42., p. 272; Justin Steinfeld, Harold Laski, A.L. Rowse, I. Waveney Girvan and the editorial note on Rowse, 31.10.42., pp. 289-90; and Roth Williams and Herman Ould, 7.11.42., pp. 304-5.

[68] H.G. Wells, "The Limitations of Lord Vansittart," Tribune, 14.5.43., p. 9. This started another round of debate in the Tribune with several people coming to the defence of Vansittart. See the following in the correspondence columns of the Tribune: Lord Vansittart, "Lord Vansittart," 21.5.43., p. 13.; Lincoln Evans, "Wells and Vansittart," 4.6.43., page unknown; Frederick Jelinek, "Wells and Vansittart," 11.6.43., p. 13; and George Bruenner, "Vansittart's Advocate," 18.6.43., p. 14.

[69] Goldman, p. 188, n. 23.

[70] Mrs. Eleanora Tennant was the focal point of some of these ultra-Vansittartite activities. Tennant, the Vice Chairman of the "Never Again" Association, seems to have approached Walter Loeb with the proposal that the "Never Again" Association should become the Right Wing and the "Fight For Freedom" Group the Left Wing of the anti-German movement in Britain. Vansittart had informed her that he would only be willing to accept the presidency of the "Never Again" Association if the two groups united. But, on more than one occasion, Loeb told Tennant that he was not the right person to help her about such support. As the two groups could not come together, Vansittart decided not to become president. This very likely led Tennant to become violently anti-German, refusing to have anything further to do with German emigrés. It also led her to become a bitter anti-Vansittartite. See the following in the correspondence

columns of the New Statesman and Nation: Walter Loeb, "Conference Aftermath," 17.7.43., p. 41; and Walter Loeb, "Never Again," 31.7.43., pp. 73-4. See Tennant's public statement at the Wigmore Hall, 8.7.43. and her speech to the "Never Again" Association on 27.2.43. in "The 'Never Again' Association and Lord Vansittart," 22.5.44., C6962/6962/18, FO 371/39158. As the executive committee of the "Never Again" organization disapproved of such attacks on Vansittart, Tennant went out and founded her own group, the "Face the Facts" Association," which she used as a forum for the propagation of her views. See her speech to this organization on 1.10.44., in "Lord Vansittart's Participation in Framing British Foreign Policy," 2.10.44., C13672/6962/18, FO 371/39158. See also Fromm, p. 82.

[71] Goldman, pp. 156-7; and Angus Calder, The People's War: Britain 1939-45, (London, 1969), pp. 490-1. See also Hadley Cantril, ed., Public Opinion 1935-1946 (Princeton, 1951).

[72] Lord Vansittart, "Germany's Third Try," Atlantic Monthly, 176, no. 2 (August 1945), p. 44.

[73] Berghahn, pp. 52, 58-9.

Chapter 5

[1] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 136 (1944-45), col. 82.

[2] Goldman, p. 184. Vansittart and his movement were also vigilant regarding pro-anschluss inclinations in Austria. See "Dr. Renner and the Provisional Austrian Government: article of Lord Vansittart," 22.7.45., C4105/205/3, FO 371/46618.

[3] He, however, disliked the zone system of occupation. Vansittart believed that all of Germany should be occupied by all the Allies. As it was, the zone system, in Vansittart's view, was nullifying the prospect of homogeneous reeducation or reformation. Lord Vansittart, "Germany's Third Try," p. 46.

[4] Rose, p. 273.

[5] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 137 (1945-46), cols. 412-24, cited in Goldman, p. 184.

[6] Rose, p. 274. See also "Ribbentrop's request for witnesses outside Germany," 16.11.45., U9119/16/73, FO 371/50995; and "Interrogatory by Ribbentrop," 21.12.45., U10442/16/73, FO 371/51008.

[7] Rose, p. 278.

[8] See his letter to the Daily Mail dated 14.8.44. See also "Help for Warsaw," 4.9.33., C11943/1077/55, FO 371/39496.

[9] Rose, pp. 279-80.

[10] Ibid., pp. 280-1.

[11] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 168 (1950), col. 837, quoted in Rose, p. 281.

[12] Lord Vansittart, Even Now (London, 1949), p. 17.

[13] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 154 (1947-48), col. 353, cited in Rose, p. 281.

[14] Rose, p. 281.

[15] Even Now, p. 52.

[16] Rose, pp. 281-2.

[17] Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 5th ser., vol. 154 (1947-48), cols. 352-362, summarized by Rose, p. 282.

[18] Rose, p. 283.

[19] See ibid.; and Lord Vansittart, Events and Shadows: A Policy for the Remnants of a Century (London, 1947), p. 166.

[20] Events and Shadows, p. 167.

[21] Rose, p. 283.

[22] Ibid. See also his speech to the Gauge and Tool Makers' Association, 19.5.48., Vnst. 4/11.

[23] See his letter to the editor of the Times (London), "European Defence," 31.5.54., p. 7, quoted in Rose, p. 283.

[24] Mist Procession, p. 550.

[25] See, for instance, Harold Nicolson to his sons Benedict and Nigel, Nicolson Diaries, entry for 4.5.43., p. 292.

[26] Harold Nicolson, "Marginal Comment," Spectator, 8.5.42., p. 441.

[27] Rose, pp. 292-3.

[28] Ibid., p. 292.

[29] Mist Procession, p. 550.

[30] Rose, p. 293.

[31] Ibid.

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