

Broadcast from the past

Ivan Margolius has sent the *Review* the transcript of a broadcast made by Jan Masaryk at the height of the Munich Crisis in 1938. Given the events that followed, it makes for uncomfortable reading.

This is a copy of an address by Jan Masaryk made over the Columbia network tonight (Friday, September 23, 1938) between 11:00 and 11:18 pm. Mr Masaryk was heard during the course of an interview between E E Murrow, CBS European Director in London and H V Kaltenborn, veteran commentator in New York. Mr Masaryk spoke from London during the broadcast and the full text of the Czechoslovak minister to England follows:

"It is for me quite an unexpected pleasure to visualise millions of the citizens of the great American democracy listening to me. At the same time it is an unexpected responsibility, believe me. It has been a very long day for me. It's four o'clock in the morning in London and I have not overslept myself lately.

Today, my beloved little country ordered a general mobilisation. We have definitely decided to resist aggression and I can tell you that this move was not made without the knowledge of France and Great Britain. Quite the contrary. In a very few words, the history of the last few weeks and days has been about as follows: Lord Runciman came to Prague as a mediator. We welcomed him. The Sudeten Germans welcomed him and gave him on both sides all the facilities to learn the real facts of the situation.

Before he was quite able to finish his task, Mr Chamberlain in a definitely honest endeavour to save the peace of the world, went to Berchtesgaden to discuss the fate of my country with Herr Hitler. The visit of the French statesmen in London followed and my government was suddenly, without in any way having been consulted, faced with a plan which meant to say the least a permanent crippling of my country.

After terribly painful, hard and tearful deliberation we accepted this plan in full, in toto, as they

say in Latin, and in full confidence that this time France and England will not forsake us. And there the matter stands at the minute. Mr Chamberlain is again visiting Herr Hitler and at this moment he is being handed a memorandum containing Mr Hitler's considered and final opinion of the Sudeten-German question. He will deliver it to us tomorrow.

What the memorandum

contains I have no idea. Just as I had no idea what the Anglo-French plan was till twenty-four hours after it had been decided upon. I hope and pray that it will be acceptable to us and that neighbourly relations will at last be established worthy of such proud peoples as the Germans on one side and the Czechoslovaks on the other.

My people have gone further in self restraint, discipline, international solidarity in these last few days than anyone could have expected and I am more proud than I ever was to be a citizen of Czechoslovakia. We shall study

Mr Hitler's proposal with good will and that same conciliation which made us swallow many little pills and bitter pills in the last few days. But I solemnly declare that we shall not give in on the fundamental issues. We believe in democracy, humanitarianism, freedom of religion and speech and the importance of the individual. I personally insist upon reading the Bible and reading the poems by Heine.

shocking propaganda from across the border, we and our Sudeten Germans, among whom I have hundreds of personal friends, would have settled our differences with dignity and without bloodshed.

My father was buried just a year ago. My united nation is assembled around his simple village grave, firmly resolved to safeguard the principles he laid down for us and we are convinced that truth, decency, freedom and love will triumph in the end. We shall defend it to our last breath. I tell you, Americans, our powder is dry. As one who has spent many years in America, who knows and loves it, who earned his first dollar in New York City when he was nineteen years old, as one whose mother was an American, and as a citizen of a small country, where St Wenceslas and Jan Hus are our two native heroes and patrons, I greet you, brother democrats, and may God give us peace. May He replace hatred by love and deliver us from evil.

Good night to you all. There is one more thought I have in my head. I know there are many of my countrymen who are listening in at the moment, people who perhaps fought in the last war to allow Bohemia and Slovakia to be free, will you majority allow me to speak to this minority in their own tongue and tell them something?"

Then Mr Masaryk greeted his fellow compatriots in America in the Czech and Slovak languages and said: "Truth must triumph and will triumph, I salute you, brother democrats. Bratři, nebojíme se a nedáme se, bratia nedáme sa a neznadáme vás, demokraciu ani americkú, ani československú nedáme, děkuji vám ještě dneska za to, že jste mému otcovi pomáhali za tamté války. Prosím vás pěkně jsem malým synem velkého otce, pomozte mně trochu, abychom zase vyhráli a abychom mohli říct, že pravda vítězí, zvítězí a musí zvítězit, dej vám Pánbůh všem dobrou noc."



Whether

Heine was a Jew or not does not interest me in the least. He's the author of Lorelei, the most beautiful German poem I know.

And now I want to tell you that my country has not been perfect always. We have made mistakes. We are young and inexperienced but we are proud to be a democracy where a mistake can be acknowledged and where it can be rectified. But please know this and I am speaking in a very serious mood tonight. Our German minority was treated better than any other in Europe and if it would not have been for the