

his American diary: 'Fritz was a Berliner, but in his way he was also an Englishman. One could describe his manner and appearance as Prusso-English. A tall thin figure with a Berliner's face but an English posture.'²

7

London

Christmas 1936, the first of their married life, was memorable for its mishaps. Muschi was depressed. The prospect of leaving Germany a few weeks later hung over her. She was pregnant and her natural instinct was to stay put, close to her family. She had tried to prepare a traditional Christmas but on Christmas Eve a candle fell off the Christmas tree and set the curtains alight. The fire was not serious but Muschi was very shocked and the Christmas room spoiled.

Fritz's mind was on winding up his affairs. A month later he was ready to leave, first for Amsterdam to acquaint himself with the Schicht empire and then to London. Muschi went to Reinbek where, in the familiar security of her family, the future without them seemed bleaker than ever. Fritz, in trying to reassure her, had to put his own difficulties to one side. Despite another unpleasant attack of boils which had incapacitated him during his first week away, he wrote, 'Nothing *can* happen, as long as you are well; and even if I keep thinking what a shame it is that we did not set foot on this island together yesterday, "in order to conquer her", it means nothing and I *never* feel sorry for myself.'

Muschi joined Fritz towards the end of February, ending his bachelor existence in the Cumberland Hotel in Marble Arch. They found rooms in Virginia Water and began to search for a house. She was cheered by the beautiful countryside and by the knowledge that there were still plenty of opportunities to visit Germany. She had arrived in England knowing that she

would be returning home at least twice in the next few months for the weddings of Fritz's brother Hermann and his sister Elisabeth.

In London they already had some friends from Germany Erwin Schüller among them, as well as numerous others who passed through so that hardly a weekend was spent without friends visiting Virginia Water. It was a lovely spring and summer and the scenery grew more beautiful with each day. Muschi, despite her swelling figure, played tennis with Fritz and they often walked in Windsor Great Park. Before the summer was far advanced they found a large house set in an attractive garden on St George's Hill in Weybridge. It was called Highclere and both knew at once that it was just what they wanted. Fritz described his feelings to his parents: 'No - to have it so good! We are just trying to earn it so that we can really enjoy it and at the same time live as simply and as modestly as possible in our big framework. I don't like great pretensions - and we won't assume any here. But one should enjoy what one has.'

Muschi had plenty of scope for entertaining, space for a maid and for the new baby. Peter Christian was born on August 27th, 1937, just eleven days after Fritz's twenty-sixth birthday. Fritz was overjoyed. No father could have been more full of wonder and admiration. 'A son is something wonderful,' he wrote ecstatically to his parents, 'the most civilized baby I have ever seen.' 'Compared to the other babies on the balcony he seems by far the most civilized.'

Muschi's delight was tinged with anxiety. Christian had a minor physical defect which required an immediate operation. Fritz spent no time in deliberating what he could afford but immediately engaged the top surgeon for the job, although it meant approaching Muschi's family for financial assistance. Towards Muschi he maintained an attitude of unshakeable delight and optimism. A week after her confinement he wrote to her, 'My dearest, as it is the first (week's) birthday of *our* son today, I am writing in red ink. I am incredibly pleased. This morning in bed it became quite clear to me that the chap can't help but become a magnificent fellow.'

Such optimism and positive attitude towards all mishaps never left Fritz throughout the trials that were to come his way

during his life. He was more aware of the evil and dangerous influences about in the world than most of his contemporaries and he considered that most people were less well equipped to combat them than he was, but he was still an idealist and believed that practical action, however small, was significant. His attempts to change the world through his world improvement plans did not rule out his own small gestures of compassion. His memory of hunger as a child made him respond at once to an article in the *Evening Standard* about a poverty-stricken family and send ten shillings, or, on a larger scale, take on the financial responsibility for a Jewish refugee. There was work for everyone, he wrote in a letter to the *Spectator*:

Man will never achieve the kingdom of God on this earth, but if he stops working for it and is satisfied with being shocked and blaming it on his predecessors for their failure to bring it about, if he sits back waiting for leadership from somebody else, then he will lose all possessions of culture and humaneness which he professes to treasure so highly.

Where are our ideals? ... Where are the men in this generation who are prepared to work as our fathers did and still do, who will keep on fighting for everything that is good and healthy and beautiful, no matter whether they succeed or not? Our generation will achieve Utopia no more than any previous generation did - but there is a tremendous (not an *appalling!*) amount of work to be done in small and in large ways ...

There is plenty of scope for all of us. It begins in our own heart and soul. Why are we here? What is expected of us? What are our responsibilities? What do we want? If Christianity does not offer us a solution, there are great philosophers, artists and statesmen we can consult and from whose sufferings and services we can learn. This is serious and not to be treated lightly. If we stop working and searching we are lost. Life is but a short spell and we shall have to account for what we have done with it. If 'orthodox religion has failed in its appeal to youth' has the example of Christ himself also failed in its appeal? *He did* give up his life for something greater. We shall not get out of all this so-called mess until we are prepared to give our life to *something*,

unless we live for something more than ourselves. We shall not find an answer to the most important problems of our life. There is no ready made solution - that is what may make us worthy of the culture, civilisation and humaneness which we have inherited. If we are lamenting that time is getting lost we are throwing it away ourselves ... If we cannot feel that we can bring about the kingdom of God, we can still defend the Kingdom of Man we have inherited, but we want men who are not too lazy to grasp what it is all about, and women who do not have 'fears that burn up half their energies'.

This is not the time for lamenting but for becoming active ... Let never the height of an ideal or the magnitude of a task be a deterrent to anybody to do his share of it, be it small or large. There is plenty of work for all of us, work on ourselves and work for others. There is need for help everywhere. We can make life worth living for the unfortunate, sometimes by very little things but these little things need all our heart and all the human understanding we are capable of. And when we can tell the good from the bad, let us work for the good wherever we can find it. Let us develop it, treasure it and fight an evil force with all our determination. A long and difficult path leads up to the ideals which shall give direction to our life; nobody will reach the top, but no man will refuse to walk upon it because of that.¹

This letter, responding to a pessimistic article in the *Spectator*, reflected the serious view Fritz had of life. He was searching for direction, trying to live out ideals expressed in hard and painstaking work, doing his duty however small. He was not a Christian, despite the Christian references, but he was a believer in the high ideals that had brought about Western culture and civilization. Christianity, he frequently told Muschi, could not stand up to rigorous investigation or logic. His inspiration came from philosophers like Schopenhauer and Nietzsche and writers like Goethe. Fritz's admiration of Nietzsche was open to considerable criticism and misunderstanding by many in England who saw Nazism as a logical development of Nietzsche's philosophy but Fritz vigorously denied this. He saw Nietzsche as a man who wanted peace

through persuasion, a man who had been grossly misunderstood, particularly over the idea of a new European race which according to Fritz 'sprang from innumerable intermarriages between the various peoples of Europe and the Jews,'² and not from the Nazi perversion of the Aryan superman.

Philosophy was child's play compared to the more troublesome details of everyday life. During one of his sister Edith's visits the car inexplicably refused to start. Fortunately Erwin Schüller was there and was able to tow it to the garage. The garage was unable to locate the fault and eventually it was Fritz who discovered the cause of the problem. Edith had backed the car into a pile of sand thereby blocking the exhaust pipe. A poke with a stick cleared it and the car started immediately. Some days later the garage sent Fritz a bill. He was most indignant and disputed it, pointing out that the actual problem had been solved by himself at no cost to the garage. A long correspondence developed in which Fritz at times resorted to veiled abuse and sarcasm until some nine months later a compromise was reached and he paid a much reduced sum.

On another occasion he corresponded with a young lady who had presented him with a bill after an accident to her bicycle. She claimed damages for inconvenience while her bicycle was being repaired. Fritz told her that this was quite unjustified as the accident had been her fault, but in the end he sent her ten shillings to show good will.

All these little administrative tasks were part of Fritz's new role as husband, father and householder. He avoided changing nappies but he liked to play with the baby in the evenings. He found new pleasure in the garden too and was delighted when a business acquaintance sent him a scythe to cut the long grass. But these were just distractions from the real issues that occupied his mind: Germany and his work.

His work at first filled him with the usual positive enthusiasm. He worked in an office in the City at 4, Winchester Street and advised George Schicht on his stocks and shares. He had a great deal of responsibility and studied the movements in the economy with care. He was very pleased with himself when he predicted the 'gold scare' of spring 1937 and hoped that such evidence of his skills would win his employer's confidence and

trust. But he continued to view his main aim as one of learning as much as possible and wrote hopefully to a friend in business in Germany, Harry Renkl, 'I consider it very fortunate that I have the opportunity of working in London at a time when the world economy is passing through all sorts of highly interesting changes of which very little is known at home.'

Unfortunately he was not able to sustain his enthusiasm. By May 1938 he was ready to admit his disappointment over his job to his parents 'which is increasingly appearing to me to be rather unnatural and pointless. I no longer have the feeling that I am adding enough to my knowledge and that is all that counts in these years.'

The frustration he felt at the seeming pointlessness of his work was increased by the unsatisfactory relationship he had with his employer. George Schicht found Fritz to be less of a financial whiz kid than he had hoped. Fritz did make him some gains but they were generally offset by his losses. Schicht cared more about an increasing bank balance than Fritz's understanding of the world economy, and Fritz was more interested in finding productive investments than in playing the stock market. He came up with one scheme after another for the use of Schicht's money, from the manufacture of dry-ice machines to that of vegetable-canning equipment. But most suggestions fell on stony ground. Despite this lack of encouragement and a steady deterioration in their relations, Fritz remained loyal to his task, eventually advising Schicht in March 1939 to take his money out of Europe altogether because he foresaw that a European war was imminent. In a long, carefully thought-out memo he suggested that Schicht should safeguard it in a country unlikely to be drawn into the coming conflict such as Argentina. Schicht's reply was brief: 'It is kind of you to bother your head but I don't think your suggestion is of any interest.'

Towards the end of his first year with Schicht Fritz began to look around for another job. He was still uncertain where his future really lay. Perhaps production, he thought. He wrote to Muschi, who was on a trip to Reinbek in the spring of 1938, 'I am longing to be directly concerned with the actual basis of the economy, namely production.' He toyed with the idea of suggesting to Harry Renkl, who had a small factory in Germany, that they should join forces. His disappointment with

work in England tempted him for a moment to put his career before his political and moral convictions. Oddly more trouble at work eventually restored his determination to stay in England.

After a few days with Muschi in Germany in the spring of 1938, he returned to find that a colleague had tried to stage a coup by telling George Schicht that Fritz was disloyal and was pursuing his own interests at Schicht's expense. Fritz was stunned and furious. Suddenly his future in England seemed utterly bleak. He wrote to Muschi asking her to make inquiries at once with his contacts at M. M. Warburg to see whether there would be any openings for him at the bank. The Warburgs were friends of the Petersens too. But he retained some caution: 'Tell them,' he instructed Muschi, 'that although things are going very well for us over here, I do wish one day to return to Hamburg because we belong there and I have the feeling that it will only really be possible to build up something solid and permanent in Germany.' For Muschi's ears only he added: 'However, this does not mean that I have made up my mind to break camp. On the contrary, my aim will be to stay here at all costs. But the wise man prepares the way ahead.'

After a few days the row blew over and the allegations were withdrawn. But Fritz became more wary. He told Muschi that mud always stuck somewhere when it was thrown and that as the colleague had not been discredited by his actions but was as firmly in favour as before, his own position was obviously less secure. Nevertheless he took Schicht's assurances of renewed confidence at their face value and resolved to work harder than ever to prove his worth and to stay in England. He knew now that that was what he really wanted and when six months later a tempting offer of a job came from Germany he had no hesitation in turning it down.

During this period of uncertainty Fritz took comfort from his friends in London who all believed, as he did, that to leave Germany was the only possible course of action. There was Erwin Schüller from the Syndicate who now worked at Lazard Brothers, highly intelligent, but with whom Fritz did not always see eye to eye in the approach to problems; Adolf Schlegel, a fellow Rhodes scholar who was set for Canada; a couple called the Hammelmans; a journalist called Johannes

Uhlig; there were English friends such as David Astor and Sonny Wax from his Oxford days, and new acquaintances such as Ivor Worsfold, a colleague who was becoming a close friend. There were others who, passing through London, would join the group and voice very different views. They argued against what they saw as an abandonment of the Fatherland in its hour of need. This point was most strongly made by Adam von Trott, whom Fritz had got to know in Oxford and who was a close friend of David Astor. Von Trott believed that Hitler had to be fought from the inside. He planned to work his way up in the German government, get to know the strengths and weaknesses of the régime and those who ran it and, when the time was right, to strike a fatal blow.

Fritz disagreed fundamentally with von Trott. He had long come to the conclusion that the effect of the Nazis was far more pernicious than the atrocities that signified the nature of the régime. Germany, he said later, was like a glass of water with a sediment of dirt, the Nazis had stirred up the mud and the whole glass had become cloudy. It would take more than the removal of the leadership to effect a cleansing process. He tried hard to get this point across to von Trott and dissuade him from his plan, which he did not consider heroic but foolhardy. Von Trott was trying to do more than any man could be expected to do. Not only was his plan dangerous, but it would not succeed in saving Germany. He would be risking his neck for a useless cause. Fritz failed to convince von Trott, whose commitment to his chosen path was almost fanatical. He was prepared to die for his cause and tragically did so when he was gruesomely executed for his part in the ill-fated plot to assassinate Hitler on July 20th, 1944.

Fritz's brother-in-law Werner Heisenberg, who was married to Elisabeth, was another patriot of the staying variety. He could not bring himself to leave Germany despite pressure from his colleagues, particularly in America. The attack by the Nazi press to which he had been subjected because of his support of Einstein made Heisenberg's decision to stay heroic too, though it was quite a different kind of heroism from von Trott's. Inevitably the Nazis would want to exploit his knowledge and abilities in their war efforts. He was a leading atomic physicist. For such a man to lie low and remain uninvolved

was extremely difficult. Heisenberg did not risk his life in the same way as von Trott, but he risked life-long stigma and suspicion that he had in fact been a Nazi supporter.

When Fritz first met Heisenberg in 1937 he had written to Muschi: 'He is a fine chap and seems also to be a good person, at any rate a man who embodies much of the best of Germany.' He did not alter his view of this brother-in-law but they had differences of opinion, which no amount of argument could settle. Men like Fritz believed that Germany no longer existed because it had in essence been destroyed by the Nazis; they believed that true patriotism was to disassociate oneself completely from the régime, and they left everything behind to begin again in surroundings that became increasingly hostile towards them, because they were German. The other view was that true patriotism meant staying in Germany, either underground as Adam von Trott or trying to live a clean, uncompromising life as Werner Heisenberg.

Both stands were in their way heroic and left their marks. Fritz said later, when discussing the question of German leadership in the years after the Second World War, that the problem for Germany was that all those who might have been suitable material for leadership had either been out of the country during the war, thus making themselves unacceptable to the German people, or had in some way been compromised by the Nazi régime. Another contemporary who had left at a similar time to Fritz was more extreme. He said that those who had left Germany were regarded by the Germans as either cowards or traitors. They were sentiments which were buried deeply, perhaps even unconscious, but which nevertheless existed and had their effect on post-war relationships. Many families were split down the middle and Fritz's and Muschi's were no exceptions.

While discussions with his friends reassured Fritz of the rightness of his course of action, particularly during the row with Schicht in May 1938, they did not remove the fact that his working arrangements were unsatisfactory. He wanted to get out of the stock exchange into production and saw his chance in a new scheme which Schicht had been asked to finance. It was a plan to produce and promote battery-driven electric delivery vehicles. The foundations of the idea had

already been laid by two men, Ivor Worsfold and Cecil Kny, and to Fritz's delight Schicht agreed to put some money into the company provided that Fritz was part of the management. Fritz threw himself into his new job heart and soul. It had many advantages, not least being that he no longer worked in the city but in a pleasant little office in Dean's Yard, just by Westminster Abbey. But it was the ideals behind the idea that inspired Fritz and renewed his motivation for hard work. Here was something real at last.

Battery-driven vehicles were a cause for which it was worth fighting. They were cheap to run and maintain, simple to construct, quiet, clean and most important of all in an unstable Europe, not dependent on the import of foreign fuel. Fritz and his colleagues conceived a broad plan. Besides manufacturing the cars they planned to set up a network of battery hiring, charging and vehicle service stations throughout England and various other parts of the world. Fritz had kept in touch with the Syndicate and he intended to make use of his contacts. Outlets were planned in North and South America. Fritz was absolutely confident of success and wrote airily to Harry Renkl: 'Running a business is somewhat like running a new car. As long as you have no experience it looks a very difficult thing. Once you sit at the steering wheel you move almost automatically.'

His confidence proved misplaced. Battery Traction Ltd, as it was called, did not run automatically: it never ran at all. Apart from obtaining a licence to manufacture, sell and service vehicles in the U.K. and Empire from a German manufacturer, Bleichert Transport Anlagen GmbH, a great deal of hard work on the part of Ivor Worsfold and Fritz produced little but paper. Unfortunately it was not just the ultimate failure of B.T.L. that made this an unhappy time for Fritz. Tension in international affairs was growing as German actions became more and more aggressive. As a German in England, Fritz had to face increasing hostility. After the invasion of Czechoslovakia in the autumn of 1938, he wrote to Rüdiger von der Goltz: 'The anti-German atmosphere has worsened here in the last few months, so that every one of us gets to feel it personally. However, one cannot praise the behaviour of the English highly enough. They know how to make distinctions.'

It was a struggle to prevent the tension and potential conflict from depressing him. A few months later he had to admit that life did have its hardships for him. He wrote to his parents:

The mood here, although not as depressed as last September, is all the more bitter. As I have been building up my life on the possibility of an Anglo-German friendship and co-operation, I have to submit to certain attacks which make me lose courage. But what is not possible in general can still be achieved in the particular.

The 'certain attacks' to which he referred were within the office. For the second time while working for Schicht he found himself facing a hostile colleague. Fortunately Fritz had a loyal friend in Ivor Worsfold who was also devoted to Muschi, and often spent the weekend with them at Highclere.

Throughout the beginning of 1939 the pressure built up. Fritz and his friends, now certain that war was imminent, spent many evenings discussing the political situation and the problem of Germany. Inevitably the discussion turned towards the future. How would such a situation be prevented from happening again and again in Europe? What had caused the present situation? All the Germans around the table agreed that a root cause was the settlement after the First World War. It had been imposed on Germany without any consideration for the German mentality or Germany's needs and wishes. Post-war German history amply demonstrated this folly and Fritz and his friends believed that it was essential that any future settlement after the war that now seemed inevitable must ensure that Germany had a say in planning her own destiny. It was too late to prevent war but they could not begin too early in planning for a longer-term future in a peaceful Europe.

Fritz had his own ideas about the basis for peace. He had argued all along that the basis for peace must be economic and this was a train of thought which he was to develop further in the next few years. Erwin Schüller had other ideas and wrote papers to leading politicians and men of influence urging them to think ahead. Schüller wanted to form discussion groups of experts - economic, political, social, military and all other

relevant subjects – to consider what kind of settlement should follow the war that was coming. He believed that if young Germans such as those who belonged to his group of friends, all with expertise and with a deep love for their country, but without any taint of Hitler and Nazism on their characters, could get together with international experts then the mistakes of the First World War could be avoided. These discussion groups, Erwin Schüller believed, should be part of the International Institute at Chatham House. He won the support of Thomas Jones (then assistant secretary to the Cabinet) through whom he hoped to get to Members of Parliament, and he had several discussions with Lord Astor, whose backing would have been invaluable.

Politically, however, the plan was ill conceived. For eminent British experts to be seen discussing the future of Germany with Germans as war was about to break out would have been unacceptable to both Parliament and people. Fritz felt very uneasy about the whole idea although he agreed in principle. He also had his own ideas so that when Erwin approached him formally to lend support, much to Erwin's aggrieved bewilderment, he declined.

In the summer of 1939 Fritz had quite enough to occupy him without trying at the same time to solve Europe's political and economic problems. Muschi and Christian went to Reinbek on holiday. Fritz viewed these trips with mixed feelings. He hated to be alone and missed Muschi and Christian dreadfully, but he enjoyed the days of quiet where he could do exactly as he wanted. This time he hoped to concentrate on his own studies and anticipated the pleasures of a bed to himself where he could stretch his long legs out fully and give himself up to the philosophy of Nietzsche and Schopenhauer without disturbance. But he was too tense to indulge himself as he had hoped. His nerves were jarred and his anxiety about the political tension crowded in upon him at night depriving him of rest. The days were marred further by the antagonistic atmosphere at the office. Then uncertainty reached unbearable proportions when his labour permit expired. With that his residence permit also expired and the threat of being forced to leave England became a nightmare. Men were being called up in Germany. To return at this juncture would be the cruellest

blow. He knew that Schicht was indifferent to his fate: relations were not ideal between the two, and Schicht indeed quibbled about applying for another permit for Fritz. Fritz responded by writing the letter to the Home Office for Schicht: all that was required was his employer's signature. In the end Schicht agreed but before the new permit was issued Fritz found himself in an even worse predicament. In the middle of July during a night of fitful sleep he suddenly awoke to a searing pain. In his restlessness he had turned and inexplicably broken his right shoulder. The pain was excruciating but worse still was the numbing effect of the painkillers on the functioning of his brain. Pathetically he wrote to Muschi with his left hand in the script of a small child. Apart from the numbing effect of the painkillers, he assured Muschi, he was all right. He could manage without her. But his handwriting alone was enough to convince her that she must return to nurse him. Leaving Christian with her mother in Reinbek she returned to Weybridge. It was the end of July.

Then it was August. Hitler was negotiating with Stalin, then with the Italians. He was planning to move into Poland at the end of the month but he was keeping very quiet about it; no one quite knew what he was up to. All Fritz knew was that Europe was on the brink of war and that the family was divided; Christian in Germany and he and Muschi in England. It was too risky for him to leave England now. Germany needed all the manpower there was and he could not rely on his broken shoulder to save him from call-up indefinitely. Muschi would have to make the journey to fetch Christian alone, and at once.

The trip to Germany, her last for seven years, was a nightmare. It was a journey full of pain and anxiety. Muschi knew it would be the last occasion to see her parents for some time and that the separation would be real. She had survived the last three years in England because she knew that there would be a frequent exchange of letters, telephone calls and even visits to sustain and maintain her closeness to her parents. Now, as she travelled to Germany she was faced with the consequence of her choice of a life with Fritz. Fritz had chosen England in 1936 and had turned his back on Germany. She had accepted his decision without questioning his wisdom, but

it was not without a heavy heart. His decision had been and was still based on moral issues and with those she could not argue. Yet as she was called upon to face the final justification and confrontation with her parents she must have felt torn in half. Fritz had questioned Germany as his home in 1935 when he had written to her asking, 'what is one's homeland?' She knew the answer as she sat in Reinbek with the people she loved: her parents, her brothers and sister. There was never any doubt in Muschi's mind where her home really was and would always be. It was there in that spot, in Reinbek. Yet she could not protest and submit to her feelings for she believed that Fritz was right in his stand. Instead of leaving with memories of fond farewells she had to leave with memories of anger and grief. In his last attempts to make Muschi see what he believed was sense, her father had been very angry and forceful and she knew she was leaving without his blessing.

As she came to the German border to cross for the last time, before the outbreak of war closed it, Muschi could only feel numbed with fear and sorrow. She was afraid, for she knew that the border police would want to know why she was returning to England. Sure enough the angry questions came: 'Why are you leaving? Where is your husband? When are you coming back?' She knew it was essential not to give the impression that she was fleeing the country. Through the haze of anxiety and distress she heard the border guard's unfriendly voice: 'If you don't return with your husband, your family will know of it.'

Muschi was panic-stricken. Her family endangered by her action! It was essential that no undue attention should be thrown upon them for they were vulnerable too. Her paternal grandmother had been a Jewess. She bluffed her way through as best she could and, emotionally and physically exhausted, arrived in Weybridge to put the problem before Fritz.

Fritz suspected that the threat had been a bluff on the part of the border guard but he knew that there was a risk that retribution could be carried out on the Petersen family. He had to do something. Throughout his stay in England since 1937 he had been careful not to give the impression in the letters he had written to his parents that his move to England was a rejection of Germany. His parents always believed that in the

event of war he would return to fight for Germany. The Petersens had been given to believe the same. He therefore knew that his sincerity would not necessarily be doubted if he seemed to be making efforts to return to Germany. Banking on the fact that with war so close the German embassy in London would be in complete confusion, he sent a messenger to the embassy urgently requesting that a new passport be issued. The messenger was instructed to get a receipt for the letter of request. With this evidence of his apparently genuine attempt to obtain a passport for his return home, Fritz dispatched the letter of receipt to the authorities in Germany complaining that he was trying to return, as the enclosed receipt showed, but that the embassy was proving very tardy in providing him with the necessary documentation. It was a calculated risk.

A few days later, on September 3rd, 1939, war broke out, frontiers were closed and all communication ceased with Germany. There was no way of telling whether their actions had endangered Muschi's family or whether Fritz's ruse had been effective. It was to be more than five years before they were able to communicate directly with their families again.

Now began a tension in Fritz's life that was never quite to leave him. He was confident that he was on the side of right. He was relieved and thankful that no sudden quirk of fate had removed him from his chosen path of leaving Germany permanently. He could not, would not return until Hitler had been removed and all traces of his régime destroyed. Yet now that war had been declared and only a total victory over Hitler could achieve the removal of his influence, Fritz and Muschi were in the impossible and heartrending position of having their beloved families as enemies. Throughout the war they would have to suffer the agony of hearing the rejoicing of their friends in England as yet another bombing raid had successfully devastated a German city that they knew, and that perhaps contained members of their own family. They could not rejoice under such circumstances. Yet how else could Germany be defeated and the Germans released from the tyranny of Nazism?

At least, it was assumed, the war would be short. Fritz and Muschi hoped that eventually the German people would themselves come to see that the cause they were fighting was that of

the devil. That surely would sap the strength of their ferocity. The fact that this turned out not to be the case made their dilemma all the more painful. It became clear as the war progressed that it was a war to the death. It was difficult to distinguish German from Nazi and required an effort to do so. Hitler could not achieve his astonishing successes without the passionate support of his people, people whose strength stemmed from a belief in their cause.



A Change in Lifestyles

It was not easy for Fritz to escape the pain that Germany's fate caused him. Quoting Goethe he noted down, 'My heart is full of affection for Germany. I have often felt bitter grief at the thought that the German people so estimable individually should be so despicable in the mass.'¹ But he had little time to reflect on his grief. His own life was taking a critical turn. He had only one cause to rejoice: the outbreak of war in September 1939 finally resolved the anxiety of whether or not he would be forced to return to Germany. With closed borders his only option was to stay in England.

In England he and Muschi were now in a new situation. They were no longer merely subject to the varying intensity of anti-German feeling; they had become enemy aliens. As such they had no idea what might be in store for them. They could not but feel very insecure, Muschi again living through anxiety during her second pregnancy and afraid that the emotions she was experiencing might adversely affect her baby.

More shocks were in store. Fritz, facing one disappointment after another as potential investors withdrew, finally decided to take action over the discord in the office. He did not trust one of his senior colleagues, whose position at B.T.L. was such that it was impossible to work properly without his loyal and reliable support. Fritz believed it was his duty to inform Schicht of his doubts. It was a mistake; Fritz had overestimated Schicht's loyalty to himself. A new row exploded over him. With accusations of slander flying through the air, Fritz,