Notes of Cardinal Faulhaber about a discussion with Papen, March 1, 1933

Source: L. Volk, ed., *Akten Kardinal Michael von Faulhabers, 1917-1945* [Faulhaber Papers] (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald-Verlag, 1975), vol. 1, pp. 651-654, entry no. 269

Translation from the German original:

He arrived very suddenly. Forcefully kissed my ring. At the end he asked for my blessing and again kissed my ring. At the beginning: In these difficult hours, which sometimes weigh overly heavy on his shoulders. His voice failed him and tears welled up in his eyes, as also at the end. Otherwise in the discussion he made a very strong impression.

How everything came to pass. He has had the trust of the Reich President. Schleicher had always said he would bring over a portion of the National Socialists and create a parliamentary majority. Then it turned out that Gregor Strasser did not have a single <em>Reichstag</em>member behind him, let alone 60. The President summoned him again: Is there no way out? Yes, if Hitler becomes Reich Chancellor. He figured the hour: between 11 and 12.

Hitler was very moderate in his demands. An authoritarian government, but Hitler wanted to know nothing of the Center Party, and nevertheless, if Kaas, instead of posing 13 questions, had said to him: Yes, but we will keep ourselves from withdrawing. The elections now had only one purpose, clarifying as a matter of intellectual history, not real elections.

I said: Never doubted his good will. Distrusted only Hugenberg, whether he would become too overbearing toward the Church. . .

The history of recent days: The fire in the Reich parliament building, 40 burn places. In Liebknecht’s house, where an underground passage was not discovered until now, there was evidence that the Center Party was befriending the [Independent] Social Democrats and was never well-intentioned. The Communist revolutionaries would not, like before, storm government buildings, but would wear down the people, setting fires simultaneously in a hundred places . . .