

1938

Hitler - The Man & His Story Leach & Diermeier

The German Empire 1870-1918 Sturmer

The Ailing Empire - Haffner

The life & Death of A.H. - Payne

1938

Duray

*Put in file for 1938,
Over used for '39 it's to
be moved in its category*

THE NUREMBERG INTERVIEWS

*for
seen
that is, '39 '40 '41, etc*

Conducted by Leon Goldensohn

*Gelly thought Norman
would be interested*

in some of the
Edited and Introduced by *Theological*
Robert Gellately *positions taken*

*by some of these
defendants -
Love from us -
Gene Gally*



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2004

*Between the cover
page & p 272
one or several pages
are to be removed*

Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski

1899-1972

Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, Higher SS police leader, SS general, and police general from 1941, was appointed chief of antipartisan units in Russia in 1943. Sentenced by a Munich de-Nazification court to ten years' "special labor," he was retried in 1962 in Nuremberg and sentenced to life imprisonment.



February 14, 1946

This forty-seven-year-old man, Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, was born in Berlin on March 1, 1899. He is rather stout, tall, with regular features and blue-gray eyes. His manner is ingratiating but pompous, and his attitude is of wanting to be sincere, a fact which he repeats so often during the interview that it begins to lose its conviction.

Previous Illnesses: He states that he had the usual childhood illnesses, but has always been constipated, even as a child; however, his constipation was aggravated in 1918 when he was gassed in the First World War. In 1942, he had "paralysis of the intestines" while serving in Russia, which he attributes to the cold climate. He spent four months in the hospital at that time and required six months of convalescence thereafter.

He has been wounded slightly in the head and right shoulder; both wounds were incurred during the First World War and were slight. He received a life pension after that war because of the gas poisoning in 1918, as well as because of the paralysis of the intestines at that time. He is quite interested in this intestinal complaint and goes into great detail about it, although he stresses that he has no such difficulties at the present time and has never felt better in his life than he does now in prison.

told me to join up with the Nazis and that after a few years, things would quiet down and there would be good times among the ruling classes.

"After that, my career was fast and my rise was rapid — too rapid — so that I could not quit without endangering my family."

Dr. T. comment "Even today, looking back, when I ask myself what I should have done, I must answer that it was for the best that a few decent fellows like myself were influential in the SS and thus staved off bad things."

Bach-Zelewski looks particularly smug and hypocritical as he makes this latter statement. I asked him quite directly what he had ever "staved off." He said, "In Warsaw alone I saved a thousand people at least in 1944. And I told you about at least ten thousand Jews that I saved by sending them to the Pripet Marshes."

I have heard from many people here in this prison that you were one of the most severe and influential SS generals and that many mass executions took place under your direct supervision. "I know some of these people whom I have spoken against will say that, but all I can do is testify to the truth. I saved a thousand lives in Warsaw — known Jews, I mean — in 1944, and ten thousand Jews by sending them to the marshes." And therefore, you feel that it was worthwhile for you to be a member of the SS, of which Himmler was chief, because you saved, or claimed that you saved, ten thousand Jews, when the SS has admittedly exterminated between 5 and 6 million Jews? "Yes, but I was just a small man, and ten thousand Jews saved is ten thousand. What more could one man do?" Well, you seem to blame one man, namely Himmler, for the death of the remaining 5 million Jews and the murder of many innocent Poles and Russians. "Yes, but Himmler was a man who had much more power than I did. Besides, I didn't say that Himmler alone was responsible. The whole crowd — Hitler, Himmler, Goering, Frank, Rosenberg, just to mention those who were responsible in the East alone — have blood on their hands. But I have none."

"The reason Goering calls me a traitor is that I have said these things in interrogations and before the tribunal. And I say again that I know personally that Himmler planned the systematic extermination — the cold-blooded murder — of 30 million Slavs. That is the reason Goering calls me a traitor. If I had stayed in Silesia, the Jews there would still be alive." Why didn't you stay in Silesia? "I was ordered out." Well, what good did you do when you were there? "I have told you repeatedly that I saved a thousand women and children who were ordered to be shot in

Warsaw, that I saved examples, for example

Therefore, you must be responsible for deep guilt for joining retrospect you thought yourself to be in the can't compare me respect — in trying to God made me join

Do you think it was your own decision. I fully thought out: you decided to "drive" say that it was not influenced by God.

Do you mean that can be excused on the much in God." That killed in gas chambers That I believe was temporarily got the up and the SS — included within the SS. I believe which the war ended of the will of God.

"If I ever get out about my experience *Lucifer's Angel*." I only by comparison were devils. Lucifer Lucifer's angel war

"Looking at it I lives that this war the Allies now succeeded while. But if it is not

During all of this of a preacher or war idea which he believed

Warsaw, that I saved many Jews in Russia, and I could give you other examples, for example, how I saved Bialystok."

Therefore, you feel justified in becoming a Nazi SS man? "No. I must be responsible for everything I did in my life. This doesn't excuse my deep guilt for joining the party." Yes, but a moment ago you said that in retrospect you thought it was a good idea for a few decent fellows like yourself to be in the party and in the SS. "No, what I meant is that one can't compare me with the rest of them. What I mean is that in retrospect — in trying to look backward over the past — fate and the act of God made me join the SS and the party."

Do you think it was fate and the act of God, or do you think that it was your own decision, which, as you told me a few minutes ago, was carefully thought out and discussed with your brothers-in-law at the time you decided to "drift with the stream"? "God is over all. I don't mean to say that it was not my own free will. But all the free will of people is influenced by God."

Do you mean that anything that happens in this world, good or evil, can be excused on the basis that God so wanted it? "Yes, yes, I believe so much in God." Then you believe that God wanted 5 or 6 million Jews killed in gas chambers and in pits? "No, that I don't believe God wanted. That I believe was the devil, who was fighting against God and who temporarily got the upper hand, using such people as Himmler and Hitler and the SS — including such good influences as myself and a few others within the SS. I believe so much in God — and it is proven by the way in which the war ended. If Germany had won, it would have been the victory of the will of the devil.

"If I ever get out of here, and I want to help people, I will write a book about my experiences as an SS leader and the name of the book will be *Lucifer's Angel*." Do you mean in your book that you are an angel? "No, only by comparison. Hitler and Himmler were fallen angels, that is, they were devils. Lucifer's angel would be the SS. In the Catholic religion, Lucifer's angel wanted to be like God and was cursed by God.

"Looking at it from a religious viewpoint and summing up all of the lives that this war lost — Jews, Germans, Allies — if this is the last war, if the Allies now succeed in bringing about eternal peace, then it is worthwhile. But if it is not the last war, it is not worthwhile."

During all of this time Bach-Zelewski has the pious, pompous bearing of a preacher or well-fed schoolteacher who has a rather platitudinous idea which he believes to be of great depth.

Do you think that this has been the last war? "I believe it is the last war because if it isn't, it means the end of humanity. If this has not been the last war, I would just as soon have seen Himmler gas me and my family some time ago.

"I have regretted my step a hundred times. I have seen my children gassed and done away with in my imagination, and I have lived through horrible times. Right now, I feel almost in Paradise because I know that the kind Americans won't hurt my family. In the Bible, there is only one man who is ready to give his son to God, and that was Abraham."

Family History: Father died at fifty-two of rheumatism when the subject was ten years of age. The father was an insurance agent who had a small income of about a hundred marks a month. He was always in poor circumstances.

Mother: Died in 1935 at the age of seventy-one after her daughter had emigrated to South America. She died of cancer.

Siblings: The subject is the fifth of seven children. He has four sisters and two brothers: (1) Carola, who is married to a teacher in East Prussia; (2) sister in Rio de Janeiro, married to a Jew; (3) another sister, also in Rio for the same reason; (4) brother Kurt, also in Rio; (5) the subject; (6) Eva, married in Leipzig, where her husband is a barber (How did it happen that your sister should make such a lowly marriage? "We were always very poor, and the 'von' in front of my name doesn't mean that we are rich"); (7) Victor, the youngest brother, whose fate was mentioned above.

After your father's death, how did your mother earn a living? "She was supported by my older sisters and later by me. Our home was in Berlin, where my mother lived until her death."

Can you tell me something about your early family life and your childhood? "Well I was brought up by another family from the age of six to ten years. After that, from the age of ten to fifteen, I lived in the gymnasium that I attended. I never really had a family life. It was only after I married that I found a home with my wife and children." Why were you brought up by another family and why did you spend so little time with your own people as a child? On this point, Bach-Zelewski was definitely evasive and answered in generalizations, which seemed to be evasions. "We were poor and my father died when I was ten, and the other family that brought me up took a liking to me."

Marital History: He states that he was married at the age of twenty-

two, at which time he was a lieutenant, to a girl one year his junior. He states that his marriage has been happy, although of necessity during the last six years of war he has not had as much time with his wife and children as he would have liked. He has six children. The oldest is a girl of twenty, who recently married in Vienna. The other children are a girl of seventeen, another of twelve, another of seven, and two boys, ages eight and six years. Regarding his wife's personality, he resorts to the cliché that she was always quiet, good-natured, a faithful wife and devoted mother.

Religion and Religious Education: In view of the subject's frequent references to God and his pious attitude, I inquired as to his religion and religious education. He said, "Of course, during the time of my being in the SS, from 1930 or thereabouts, until the end of the war in 1945, I could not practice my religion. I have to admit I did a thing which was morally not very good. What I did was write a certificate and present it to the SS when I joined, which stated that I had left the Lutheran Church. My wife is a Lutheran, but you see it was a trick because I was a Catholic, and although I did not practice my religion for several years before, I had actually never left the church."

Did you become religious here, or before coming here? "As an SS leader I had to deny religion. If I went to mass, I could go only secretly, that is, anonymously, and in civilian clothes. It was absolutely impossible for me to attend church in my SS uniform, which I had to wear on all occasions because I was an active general. For example, when I was stationed in Breslau, I could not go to church. I have found out here in this prison from the Catholic chaplain that I am still a Catholic and have always been a Catholic officially. The Catholic Church only recognizes leaving the church if one requests it of his priest. And I have never requested it. This is confidential, and I only tell it to you. I don't want to bring it up to the court — as far as the church is concerned, the Catholic chaplain tells me that I am a good Catholic. In the eyes of the state, I had left the church. In the eyes of the Catholic Church, I find I had not left it." If Germany had won the war, would you be back in the Catholic Church now? "That goes much deeper. Germany could not win this war because it was in league with the devil. This war would not have ended without revolution."

D. T.

HITLER'S YOUTH

paradise to the Hitler children, but one cannot help feeling surprised that a gregarious town-dweller like Alois Hitler should have chosen such solitude for his retirement. His longing for a house and some land of his own, noticed by Emanuel Lugert, must have been powerful indeed.

After some trouble I succeeded in obtaining a copy of the relevant extract from the Land Register and this reveals the date of purchase (already given), the place, namely Wels, and the fact that the property was registered in the joint names of Alois and Klara Hitler. The actual Deeds of Sale and Purchase were unfortunately unobtainable, having presumably been confiscated by the Nazis, and a rough idea of the purchase price must therefore be obtained from similar transactions concluded at that time. These suggest that Alois Hitler must have paid not less than 5000 gulden for the estate (about £440), of which four-fifths was probably in cash. How did he raise the money? Presumably from his wife's dowries. Carefully invested, these would have supplied almost the whole of the sum required.

Suitable though it was, no doubt, for apiculture, the nine-acre property could hardly thrive, or pay its way, on bee-keeping alone. In fact, to make a profit from the land, as he intended, Alois would have needed long experience of farming and a considerable capital. But he possessed neither, and so from the start lost money. Within two years, however, his business sense triumphed and, though it meant the end of his long-cherished dream of landed proprietorship, he decided to sell, finding a purchaser in the spring of 1897 and concluding the sale of the freehold on 21st June in that year. The Land Register records that the new owner was a Dr. Conrad Ritter von Zdekauer. Thereafter the estate changed hands no less than eleven times in twenty years, until ultimately, in 1938, the ownership was vested in Martin Bormann as trustee of the National Socialist Party.

In a letter dated 29th December 1901, addressed to his former neighbour in Hafeld, a wood-pulp supplier by the name of Wührer, Alois Hitler wrote:

"A mention in passing in 1938
"You have no idea, my Führer, how much this means to me," said Bormann

ALOIS SCHICKLGRUBER/HITLER AND HIS FAMILY 49

"... I have heard that Frau von Zdekauer is proposing to sell the Rausbergut again—to yet another party from Vienna. It provides a pleasant change for such people for a year or two and they are the richer by one lesson at any rate, namely that everything has got to be learnt. But she will not find it easy to sell in the winter-time. Should the lady, as I believe, no longer be keeping bees, but still retain the empty hives, among them two three-tier hives which I made in Hafeld from poplar wood, you might buy them back for me, just as a memento of my activities there."

In early July 1897 the Hitler family moved into lodgings in Lambach, at first to the Schmiedmühle, so called, and then, as soon as they could find better accommodation, to a flat in the centre of the town. In those pleasant and, at that time, prosperous surroundings, they lived for eighteen months. But Alois Hitler had not lost the desire for a house of his own, nor did he overlook the fact that real property was the safest form of investment.

The sole surviving documents in Alois Hitler's own hand

The following letter was addressed to the Board of Inland Revenue in Linz and dated 19th September 1895. The handwriting is even and accurate. The grammar, spelling and syntax of the German original are beyond reproach. A glance at the original, or a photostat copy, is enough to disprove the tenacious legend that Alois Hitler drank too much; obviously a man of fifty-eight who could write so neatly cannot have been a drunkard. The text reads:

"The most respectfully undersigned was transferred to permanent retirement by order Z 931/F.Pr. of 25th June 1895.

As the undersigned was not an official accountant, he takes the liberty of requesting approval for the release and return of his caution money which is the property of Johann Murauer, householder of No. 7, Theatergasse, Braunau-on-Inn.

D

A speechless handwriting trustee.

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I feel like
no ordinary
trustee.

The Swarm

a future that goes further and further back ever since the world began. And, for the sake of this future, each one renounces more than half of her rights and her joys. The queen bids farewell to freedom, the light of day, and the calyx of flowers; the workers give five or six years of their life, and shall never know love, or the joys of maternity. The queen's brain turns to pulp, that the reproductive organs may profit; in the workers these organs atrophy, to the benefit of their intelligence. Nor would it be fair to allege that the will plays no part in all these renouncements. We have seen that each worker's larva can be transformed into a queen if lodged and fed on the royal plan; and similarly could each royal larva be turned into worker if her food were changed and her cell reduced. These mysterious elections take place every day in the golden

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MBF

Wolbach
officers
1939

2 xerography
here

that accompanied the application as
 Georg Hiedler — Johann Nepomuk Hiedler

Alois Hitler

Johanna Hiedler
 married Pözl

Klara Pözl

the Episcopate declared itself not competent to issue
 sanction and forwarded the application to Rome
 was granted by papal decree.

Hitler's marriage with Klara was described by var-
 ious intimates as very happy, which was presumably
 the submissive and accommodating nature of the
 wife she said to me in this respect, "What I hoped
 of as a young girl has not been fulfilled in my
 life and added resignedly, "But does such a thing
 exist?"

of the children in quick succession was a heavy
 moral and physical burden for the frail woman: in
 1886 Gustav was born, in 1886 a daughter, Ida, who only
 two years, in 1887 another son, Otto, who only
 days, and on April 20, 1889, again a son, Adolf.
 suffering is hidden behind these bare figures!
 what care the sorely tried mother must have
 for this fourth child! She told me once that Adolf
 weak child and that she always lived in fear
 of him, too.

the early death of the three children was due to
 the parents were blood relations. I leave it to
 you to give the final verdict. But in this connection
 to draw attention to one point to which, in my
 view, the most importance should be attached.

was good. Death to be seen
 in his intimate. The reader
 could represent Klara's
 thoughts.

PORTRAIT OF HIS MOTHER

The most outstanding trait in my friend's character was,
 as I had experienced myself, the unparalleled consistency in
 everything that he said and did. There was in his nature
 something firm inflexible immovable, obstinately rigid,
 which manifested itself in his profound seriousness and was
 at the bottom of all his other characteristics. Adolf simply
 could not change his mind or his nature. Everything that
 lay in these rigid precincts of his being remained unaltered
 for ever. How often did I experience this! I remember what
 he said to me when we met again in 1938 after an interval
 of thirty years. "You haven't changed, Kubizek, you have
 only grown older." If this was true of me, how much more
 was it of him! He never changed.

I have tried to find an explanation for this fundamental
 trait in his character. Influence of surroundings and educa-
 tion can hardly account for it, but I could imagine — al-
 though a complete layman in the field of genetics — that the
 biological effect of the intermarriage in the family was to
 fix certain spheres and that those "arrested complexes" have
 produced that particular type of character. It was just this
 inflexibility that was responsible for Adolf Hitler's causing
 such innumerable sorrows to his mother.

Once more the mother's heart was sorely tried by destiny.
 Five years after Adolf's birth, on March 24, 1894, she gave
 birth to a fifth child, a son, Edmund, who also died young,
 on June 29, 1900, in Leonding. Although Adolf had no
 recollection of the first three children in Braunau, and never
 spoke of them, he could clearly remember his brother Ed-
 mund, at the time of whose death he was already eleven years
 old. He told me once that Edmund had died of diphtheria.
 The youngest child, a girl called Paula, born on January 21,
 1896, survived.

Thus, an early death had deprived Klara Hitler of four
 of her six children. Perhaps her mother's heart was broken
 by these terrible trials. Only one thing remained, the care

D.T.: the D.K. is not without his own variety
 of mortal choice. Death is much more in his
 power than in ours. We can encourage habits
 that lead to disaster, but the D.K. can infuse
 the cure. He also chooses.

1938 1900 1933

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* D.T.
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 of a meeting
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 Of course, being

Don't move to 1938 Pre 1889

1900

1902

1900

there is no sex w/ K (Lau)

after

death

Albin

complaining

in the

lives

twelve to fourteen being admitted as visitors. Married women, too, were not unusually frequenters of these places. The "pretty ones (Hübschlerinnen)," it may be said, enjoyed a certain social standing. There was none of the modern "Tartufferie" that rewards these martyrs of society with contempt. At the official receptions of royalties they appeared corporatively, for (as we have seen) they were just as definitely organized as any other trade. They kept a strict control, too, over the unauthorized traffic of "Böndchen" — maidservants, barmaids, and middle-class girls — but their chief complaint was against the unfair competition of the convents — nun and whore being almost synonymous in the language of the day. On one occasion, when scandal concerning a Franconian convent waxed so high that the Pope ordered an investigation, the commissioner who was sent reported that he had found almost all the nuns in a state of pregnancy. The monasteries were also frequently the scene of orgies, and homosexuality was widespread among the members of the orders of both sexes.

One strange custom was that of the "trial-night," when the girl permitted her lover to take every sort of liberty without giving himself to him. By this means both parties were able to convince themselves of their partner's qualities, and the result was by no means always marriage, which was declined quite as often by the girl as by the man. There is a certain resemblance to this practice in the "Fensterln" or "Gasseln" that is to be found here and there on the country-side even today — but the point is that then it was an established custom, not amongst boors merely, but in every circle, even the highest. It was no rarity, indeed, for a husband to let a guest lie with his wife "on honour and faith." Frequently, married men not only had their official concubines, but brought up their bastards with their legitimate children.

In matters of sex, then, there was an utter absence of restraint. Indecent and licentious songs were common at public dances (as they still are amongst peasants), and kisses and embraces were the official form of gallantry. When a spa visitor wished to show his respect for a woman (whose acquaintance perhaps he had only just made), he simply thrust his hand into her bosom. Men and women undressed in front of one another in the calmest manner, not only at the baths, but on every occasion. When Louis XI en-

tered Paris, the prettiest all kinds of pastels mentioned that there were. We have, of course, continued to be done a very fact that such is symptomatic of the times.

The whole spirit of the thing was the clothing of the body of form and colour of costume. Women had their breasts naked — so as to appear fuller, skin-tight nether garment much as possible, and tight, cod-pieces. In came the grotesque of the face altogether, the diversity lay in the model like pages, while men of egg, and even pig breasts. Where bear either forked or quilted threads and twisted fumed, and were of colour, which at other had become the favorite given a rakish upw. knees perhaps and he wore enormous train to the ground; slashed doublets, fringed or long, scalloped with gold, pearls, precious clouds, triangles, sn were bright and arre

Franyula - Givis shepherds of their children of the world

the monkey of the gay border
Tavern

monks
must

A. He could have the experience of a trial night too. A hit on his head and body odor. D.T.: That was a little for him? on a chiller, real.

1938

HITLER'S YOUTH

there could have been only one possible reaction: hatred of his blood relations, particularly of his father, and an intensification of his already pathological hatred and persecution of the Jews, with the personal element reinforcing the political. Hermann Rauschning, whose *Hitler Speaks* was published some years later, gave it as his opinion that Hitler's hatred of the Jews had a personal foundation.

Finally, there is a curious fact which may be interpreted as bearing out Frank's story. Not two months after Hitler invaded Austria, in May 1938, an order was issued to the Land Registries concerned to carry out a survey of Dollersheim (Alois Hitler's birthplace) and neighbourhood with a view to their suitability as a battle training area for the Wehrmacht. In the following year the inhabitants of Dollersheim were forcibly evacuated and the village together with the surrounding countryside was blasted and withered by German artillery and infantry weapons. The birthplace of Hitler's father and the site of his grandmother's grave were alike rendered unrecognizable, and today this whole tract of what was once fertile and flourishing country is an arid desert sown with unexploded shells. But an area so closely associated with Hitler's family could not have been used for battle training without his knowledge and permission. Then why did he give it? Or did Hitler himself initiate the order for the destruction of Dollersheim out of insane hatred of his father and the desire to erase the 'shame' of his Jewish blood?

Alois Schicklgruber's stepfather (Johann Georg Hiedler)

We have seen that Alois Hitler was the natural son of Marianne Schicklgruber and that his father was possibly a Jew. He was born in 1837. After a while Marianne's father relented, and his daughter and infant grandson went to live with him in his home.

Five years later, in 1842, Marianne married. The entry in the marriage register at Dollersheim reads:

1842. Married by Johann Oppolzer, incumbent; the bridegroom, Georg Hiedler, Journeyman-miller lodging in Durnthal, parish of Fels, born Spital in parish

this convinces HH
* HH sees this as an attempt to
insinuate AH's anti-semitism.

→ ~~secret~~ ~~Hitler's~~ ~~lost~~ ~~of a~~ ~~thesis~~ ~~Note: (Hitler's)~~

→ The hatred toward Jews could turn to a xenophobia against A.H.

Alois Hitler (nee Schicklgruber) and
Klara Pichler (nee Schicklgruber) 1844
of Spital, at present residing at Strones No. 22 in this parish, legitimate son of Martin Hiedler, former in Spital, Councillor, aged 50, bachelor.
The bride, Anna Schicklgruber, residing in her parents' home, legitimate daughter of Johann Schicklgruber still living, retired, of Strones No. 22 in the manor of Waldreich in this parish, and Theresia Pfeisinger of Dietreichs, Catholic, aged 47, spinster. Witnesses: Ernst Prinz, school master in Dollersheim, and Josef Zauner, householder, in Dollersheim.

Johann Georg Hiedler, to give him his full name, thus became Alois Schicklgruber's stepfather. He was not a good match for many reasons. Firstly, he had falsely claimed to be a bachelor. In fact he was a widower, having been previously married for three years to a woman named Anna Maria Bauer. Though he had learnt the trade of miller, he was neither working nor had he a permanent place of abode at the time of his marriage. That he was 'at present residing' with the bride's father shows that he had lost no time in drawing solid benefits from his alliance with the Schicklgrubers.

From his marriage until his death, fifteen years later, there is no evidence in any official record that Alois' stepfather worked for his living, and throughout the five years of her married life Marianne became steadily more impoverished until finally it is said that she and her husband no longer even possessed a bed and had to sleep in a feeding trough for cattle.

Alois Schicklgruber's foster-father

But meanwhile, Johann Georg's former brother, Johann Nepomuk Hiedler, who was fifteen years younger than he, had come from his home in Spital to visit the newly married couple in Dollersheim. His chief concern seems to have been for the five-year-old Alois, for rather than leave him with his feckless brother, Johann Nepomuk took the child with him when he returned to Spital and from then on acted as his foster-father. For Alois this was an unmitigated blessing. He grew up at the farmhouse with Johann Nepomuk's daughters, who were about the same age as himself, and no doubt came to think of Nepomuk as his real father. Five years later the death of his mother perhaps hardly touched him.

Death of Alois
Alois Schicklgruber

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twelve to fourteen being admitted as visitors. Married women, too, were not unusually frequenters of these places. The "pretty ones (*Hübschlerinnen*)," it may be said, enjoyed a certain social standing. There was none of the modern "Tartufferie" that rewards these martyrs of society with contempt. At the official receptions of royalties they appeared corporatively, for (as we have seen) they were just as definitely organized as any other trade. They kept a strict control, too, over the unauthorized traffic of "*Böndchen*" — maidservants, barmaids, and middle-class girls — but their chief complaint was against the unfair competition of the convents — nun and whore being almost synonymous in the language of the day. On one occasion, when scandal concerning a Franconian convent waxed so high that the Pope ordered an investigation, the commissioner who was sent reported that he had found almost all the nuns in a state of pregnancy. The monasteries were also frequently the scene of orgies, and homosexuality was widespread among the members of the orders of both sexes.

One strange custom was that of the "trial-night" when the girl permitted her lover to take every sort of liberty without giving herself to him. By this means both parties were able to convince themselves of their partner's qualities, and the result was by no means always marriage, which was declined quite as often by the girl as by the man. There is a certain resemblance to this practice in the "*Fensterln*" or "*Gasseln*" that is to be found here and there on the country-side even today — but the point is that then it was an established custom, not amongst boors merely, but in every circle, even the highest. It was no rarity, indeed, for a husband to let a guest lie with his wife "on honour and faith." Frequently, married men not only had their official concubines, but brought up their bastards with their legitimate children.

In matters of sex, then, there was an utter absence of restraint. Indecent and licentious songs were common at public dances (as they still are amongst peasants), and kisses and embraces were the official form of gallantry. When a spa visitor wished to show his respect for a woman (whose acquaintance perhaps he had only just made), he simply thrust his hand into her bosom. Men and women undressed in front of one another in the calmest manner, not only at the baths, but on every occasion. When Louis XI en-

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Fair-haired, blue-eyed, with a rippling laugh and a quietly determined manner, she resembled even in her movements the dead Geli Raubal but was quieter and less moody. She had no ambition to be a singer, or indeed to be anything at all except his mistress. She was self-effacing and discreet, but she did not always obey Hitler's order that she divorce herself completely from politics, for she sometimes interceded with him on behalf of Jews she had known. Her difficult task was to be his mistress while remaining invisible, and she succeeded so well that very few people outside Hitler's immediate circle knew of her existence.

Twice at least she broke under the strain. In November, 1932, she attempted to shoot herself, and in May, 1935, she attempted suicide with an overdose of sleeping pills. Both attempts were due to her belief that Hitler was having affairs with other women. Later she accepted the fact that she could live with him only on his own terms. In March, 1936, he gave her a small villa at 12 Wasserburgerstrasse in Munich, where she installed herself with one of her sisters, and a Mercedes-Benz, which she never learned to drive. It was during this period that Hitler's house, the Berghof at Obersalzberg, was being rebuilt. Soon she had an apartment at the Reich Chancellery and another in the Berghof. She was an agreeable and expensive luxury.

Many of Eva Braun's letters, the diary she wrote before her second suicide attempt, and her home movies have survived. All together there are four and a half hours of her home movies in the possession of the Library of Congress. We see her swimming and exercising on the parallel bars, climbing mountains, playing with animals, or strolling along forest pathways. We see her standing with Hitler on the balcony of the Berghof, gazing at the distant mountains, or walking by his side. What is strange is that there is nothing strange in these movies. She might be any young woman endowed with an athletic body, quick to smile, and conscious that she is admired. In her presence Hitler completely loses his daimonic quality and might be taken for any small-business man taking a holiday in the Bavarian mountains. It was not that he had changed his character. It was simply that in her presence he no longer needed to wear the iron mask of authority.

In May, 1938, he wrote a will and placed her first in the list of beneficiaries after leaving the greater part of his estate to the party. He appointed Franz Xavier Schwarz, the party treasurer, as his executor. There seems to have been no particular reason why he should have written the will at this time. Such a will was long overdue, and he had long ago accepted the fact that he was living dangerously and might be assassinated. The will began in the customary way, with instructions for the disposal of his body. He asked that it should be brought to Munich, and the lying in state should be in the Feldherrn Hall, and that

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The Life & Death of A. H. - Poyner

1938

Gerlach in which he said that, despite any possible misgivings he had, the option of cooperation with France should be kept open "because one cannot play chess when sixteen squares out of sixty-four are blocked off by the house." Now he accepted this restriction as inevitable—a terrible handicap, come to think of it.

For the rest, Bismarck's policies called for many painful concessions, to wit:

1. Renunciation of all territorial expansion in Europe.
2. In connection with that, renunciation of all expansionist efforts in Germany, particularly Greater German aspirations.
3. The disavowal of all claims to the incorporation of the "unliberated" Germans excluded from the newly formed Reich, in particular of Austrian and Baltic Germans.
4. Nonparticipation in the colonial ventures of the other European powers, in the hope that this policy would focus these powers on the outside, "the periphery," and keep them from forming coalitions against the European center.
5. If necessary, active prevention of inner-European wars, even if the German Reich was not directly involved or affected. In view of the tendency of European wars to

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by the "nightmare of the coalitions . . . that the polar direction of millions of bayonets is the center of Europe, that we stand in the center of Europe, and as a result of our geographic situation and moreover as a result of all of European history, we are the preferred targets of the coalitions of other powers" (Reichstag speech, 1882). Somebody said to him, "You have the nightmare of the coalitions," and he replied: "This nightmare will remain a very logical one for a German minister for a long time, and perhaps forever."

It is, however, doubtful that Bismarck's justified fear of hostile coalitions really had only geographic and historical causes. Rather, there is every reason to believe that they were grounded in his foreign policy. Let us be clear about the vast changes Bismarck had wrought with the founding of the Reich in 1870-71, which Disraeli even then had called the German revolution. Before that time the European area inhabited by Germans was a collection of many small and medium-sized states, and two big states loosely allied with one another (and with other European powers), none of which their neighbors had much reason to fear. The German Confederation of the years from 1815 to 1866 was not threatened by any possible coalitions of European big powers and their satellites. Then suddenly that confederation was replaced by a united, big, powerful, militarized state. In place of a huge sponge or a large amorphous synthetic layer gently cushioning central Europe against the

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1942

surrounding powers, there crete—a fear-inspiring bl rels. And this transformat German nationalists but a velopment as far as the r cerned—had come about ir which the new German g enormous strength as wel The Franco-Prussian War o ducted with the same det the Austro-Prussian War c nexation of Alsace-Lorrain marck can be said to have l its *Erbfeindschaft*, its "tra France. Bismarck himself m remarkable statement abou gust 1871 he told the then Fi in Berlin, who promptly pass made a mistake in taking you if [we expected] the pea Because for us these provin ment, a Poland backed by Fr well knew what he had don

Why, then, did he do it at odds about the answer to national cry about bringing th annexed by France two h "back to the Reich" could ha him. As far as Bismarck was Prussian-dominated German tical with that ancient Reich

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spread beyond their borders, the German
Reich was to be the stabilizing weight in
Europe.

All in all, a very respectable peace policy,
and one without parallel in post-Bismarckian
Germany. Moreover, it was a popular policy in
Germany, which cannot be said of either the *Welt-*
politik of Imperial Germany or the revisionism of
the Weimar Republic, let alone of Hitler's policy
of conquest. Yet even Bismarck, despite all his
efforts and extraordinary political skill, could not
keep his German Reich out of dangerous entan-
glements. In that respect the history of the Bis-
marck era suggests that from the very outset his
Reich was a misbegotten and possibly unsalvage-
able creation. Bismarck's successors all made a
number of avoidable mistakes, and none could
have improved on the efforts he made after 1871
to preserve and consolidate a German Reich ac-
ceptable to its neighbors as a stable, perhaps even
indispensable, part of the European system of
states. If ultimately even he failed, perhaps the
Reich was flawed from inception.

Despite much grumbling opposition, Bis-
marck adhered to the first of his programmatic
points with iron determination. But in 1884-85
he himself temporarily violated the fourth—ab-
stention from colonial ventures—although that
did not have the same disastrous consequences as
did the greatest achievement of his fifth program-

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marck coined his famous

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phrase of the "honest broker." In the context in
which it was made it exemplifies Bismarck's tact-
ful reluctance and also his slight distaste for this
sort of European mediating and peace-making role.
In a speech at the Reichstag in 1878 he said:

"The mediation of peace in my mind does not
mean that we play the referee in divergent opin-
ions and say, 'That is how it should be, backed by
the power of the German Reich,' but rather I see
our role as more modest, more that of an honest
broker who really wants to see the business deal
succeed. I flatter myself that we might possibly
act as trusted advisers between England and Rus-
sia as I believe we already do between Austria and
Russia, if they by themselves cannot arrive at an
agreement."

That was a very careful way of approaching a
highly sensitive task. One has the feeling that Bis-
marck saw himself forced, almost against his will,
into a mediating role that arose out of the geo-
political situation and the growing power of the
German Reich. And the consequences were indeed
tragic. The Congress of Berlin of 1878 did avert
the threat of war, and the settlement that was
reached—which brought some dissatisfaction as
well as some satisfaction to all concerned—did
have a salutary effect on Europe, but it had a ter-
rible effect on German-Russian relations. Let us
go back a bit.

After the divisions of Poland, and particularly
after the anti-Napoleonic wars of liberation, Prus-

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1938 (BG 1914)

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1895 came up with the am-
nging a two-front war into

two more-or-less successive single-front wars, to
knock France out of the war before Russia could
complete its mobilization, and then move against
the East full force. After Schlieffen's death the
younger Moltke shelved all alternative plans. This
change in Germany's military strategy defines the
intellectual difference between the Bismarckian
and Wilhelmine eras: pessimistic caution as
against an optimistic sense of power.

This sense of power was not altogether mis-
placed. However, it turned into a feeling of in-
vulnerability. The Schlieffen Plan was a hubristic
plan, and it failed.

Of course, all the major continental powers
entered into the war with grandly conceived of-
fensives in the hope of quick victory, and all these
offensives failed: the Austrian offensive against
Serbia; the Russian offensive against Austria (in
Galicia) and Germany (in East Prussia); the French
offensive against Germany in Lorraine and the Ar-
dennes; and finally the German offensive against
Belgium and France. In the early months of the
war something became evident that, contrary to
the beliefs of the various general staffs, was to
shape the course of the entire war: namely, that
given the state of the existing weaponry, the de-
fensive would prove more effective than the of-
fensive. By taking the offensive the best one could
hope for was to overrun enemy terrain, but this
would not knock the enemy out of the war, not
even a weaker one like Serbia or Belgium. That is

1938

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became the Reichsmacht
after '34?

under the direct command of the new president,
in this case Hitler, for the head of state was also
the commander in chief of the armed forces.

The Reichswehr agreed to hand Hitler this all-
important prize if he in turn would rescind the
planned takeover of the army by the SA and refrain
from using the SA as his instrument of terror. That
put Hitler in a very difficult position. There is con-
siderable evidence to support the theory that he
had led the SA to believe that after Hindenburg's
death they would get a chance to carry out their
"second revolution," the military revolution. Hit-
ler saw only one way out of this dilemma: to mur-
der the leadership of the SA. And that is what he
did on June 30, 1934. One does not have to be
unduly sympathetic to the SA to be appalled by
what happened to them.

In anticipation of Hindenburg's expected
death, Hitler had granted the SA collective leave
for the month of July. At the same time he said
he wished to meet with its leadership at Bad Wies-
see on June 30 in order to make plans for the fu-
ture. The SA leaders arrived at Wiessee on June
29; Hitler was expected the next morning. How-
ever, he got to Wiessee sometime during the night
under heavy police escort, not with the intention
of holding a meeting but rather to have the assem-
bled leadership arrested and shipped off to Munich
or Berlin, where they were executed without trial
and without warning. He later claimed he had had
to act to prevent a planned putsch. And in fact

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history texts still speak of the so-called Röhm
Putsch.

But there never was such a putsch. In planning
the military coup, Ernst Röhm, the SA's chief of
staff, thought he was carrying out Hitler's orders.
Instead, he, along with most of the other leaders,
was murdered in his sleep. A few days later the
cabinet put its stamp of approval on the events of
June 30 by saying that Hitler had acted in defense
of the state. This was a foretaste of the murderous,
arbitrary reign of terror that was to engulf Ger-
many from 1938 to 1945.

The Reichswehr honored its agreement with
Hitler. Hindenburg died on August 2, and on that
same day Hitler named himself Hindenburg's suc-
cessor. The Reichswehr swore allegiance to Hitler
as their new commander in chief. With that, Hitler
neutralized the military and turned himself into
both the political and military center of power.
something on the order of a supreme general, a
new emperor.

On the whole, the German people and the old
elite supported the horrifying murder of the SA
leadership, perhaps not as unreservedly as they
had approved of the elimination of the political
parties, yet still with a measure of satisfaction and
relief. The SA had not been very popular. The up-
per classes had looked on them as proletarian rab-
ble, and the middle class had feared them because
their unpredictable and brutal excesses affected all
areas of life, including business. They welcomed

34-38 the good years

the fact that the Führer had put a stop to all of this, that they could now look forward to a return to normalcy, never mind the methods used. And the fact that Hitler used the occasion to rid himself of a number of prominent conservatives, including his predecessor, General von Schleicher, and Schleicher's wife, also did not raise too many eyebrows. If one can speak of the collective guilt of the German people, then perhaps this is where it all began.

The two political upheavals of those early Hitler years, the one from March to July 1933 and the other from June to August 1934, were followed by a period of calm that lasted until the fall of 1938. They were the so-called "good" Nazi years. During that time the terror of the early years was more or less held in check. Of course, the concentration camps were still in operation, but their population decreased; more were let out than were sent in. Life appeared to be returning to normal.

At the same time, Hitler's economic miracle was taking off. The economy was reinvigorated. In the four years from 1933 to 1937 Germany went from mass unemployment to full employment. With this Hitler won the support of—or at least neutralized—the overwhelming majority of former Social Democrats and a large number of former Communists. It remains an open question, however, to what extent the German people really stood behind Hitler. He had never won an absolute majority in a free election, and the 99 percent he

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34-38

got in the various plebiscites and Reichstag elec-
tions between November 1933 and the spring of
1938 are meaningless. They were not real elec-
tions. The people had to vote if they did not want
to call attention to themselves, and so they simply
dropped their ballots in the box. It made no dif-
ference whether those ballots were blank or not.
Still, no one who was there at the time can deny
that by the end of 1933 or 1934 at the latest, Hitler
was supported by the vast majority of the German
people. They approved of his rule and of the results
he got. The middle class liked his program of rear-
mament and his equally successful defiant stance
in foreign affairs, and the workers liked the un-
expected economic upturn and the jobs they won.

What kind of state was Germany during that
time? Contrary to widely held beliefs it was not
a one-party state, unlike today's German Demo-
cratic Republic or the Soviet Union, which are
dominated by a highly structured political party.
The National Socialist party had no central com-
mittee, no Politburo, and Hitler never convened
executive committee meetings. The annual party
congresses staged at Nuremberg with great fanfare
were not the sort of congresses at which delegates
meet to discuss issues and vote on programs. No
such meetings were ever held. The Nazi party con-
gresses were public displays of organizational
muscle. Special days were dedicated to the various
groupings: a Day of the SA, a Day of the SS, a Day
of the Reich Labor Service, and after 1934 also a

34-38

defence power

Day of the Wehrmacht (the new name of the German army after the introduction of universal military service). All organs, all segments of the state, were brought together for one huge, impressive demonstration at which Hitler, and only Hitler, addressed the masses. No one else spoke. It was not the party that dominated the state but Hitler who dominated everything, including the party.

Once all other parties had been eliminated the National Socialist party also ceased to play any meaningful role in Hitler's state. By now the names of almost all top regional and national officials, the party's highest functionaries, are forgotten, and even during the Third Reich they were largely unknown to the general population. Hitler's Third Reich was not a party state, it was a Führer state.

And contrary to popular belief, Germany also was not really a totalitarian state. Hitler's state, more than any other in the history of the German Reich, encompassed many different states. In his book *The Dual State*, the German émigré historian Ernst Fraenkel points out that the Third Reich was composed of at least two states: a state of arbitrary rule and terror alongside the old traditional, bureaucratic, even constitutional state. Civic disputes before the courts were handled as in the past. The same laws and the same legal procedures were followed, National Socialism notwithstanding. And the same holds true for many ministerial functions, where established

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rmach (the new name of the German) the introduction of universal military organs, all segments of the state, together for one huge, impressive at which Hitler, and only Hitler, passes. No one else spoke. It was at dominated the state but Hitler everything, including the party. er parties had been eliminated the ist party also ceased to play any in Hitler's state. By now the all top regional and national of's highest functionaries, are for during the Third Reich they were to the general population. Hitler was not a party state, it was a

to popular belief, Germany also totalitarian state. Hitler's state, her in the history of the German sed many different states. In his state, the German émigré histologist points out that the Third Reich f at least two states: a state of terror alongside the old traditional, even constitutional state. fore the courts were handled as same laws and the same legal followed, National Socialism And the same holds true for functions, where established

procedures continued to be followed and where, particularly after 1934, when the terror of the SA had abated, a measure of normalcy was restored. Of course, it was a normalcy that could be interrupted any time the Führer chose to embark on a particular political campaign; he could always find the requisite instruments to carry out his will.

The Wehrmacht continued to function as a state within the state. The writer Gottfried Benn, who at the time returned to his original profession of military doctor, called it the aristocratic form of emigration.

Well, it was no emigration, and even the designation "aristocratic" is open to dispute. But it was a form of withdrawal, a retreat into a special niche, into a special state within the state, in which old traditions and customs continued to prevail. Thus, for example, the Hitler salute did not replace the traditional military salute until 1944.

The survival of such niches was by no means due to an oversight on the part of Hitler. The Nazis have been called a movement, but, strange as this may seem, after 1933 the only real movement was Hitler himself. Not only did he set the entire Reich and the entire population in motion, he never framed a new constitution, he never coordinated or integrated the numerous institutions and organizations he had created—and he did all this consciously, to keep everything in flux, because he did not look upon the German Reich as some-

1934-38

thing definitive, as a legacy that had to be preserved. For Hitler the Reich was a launching pad, the point of departure for territorial expansion, a new power structure with a fuzzy internal constitutional framework. That accounts for the internal chaos of the Third Reich.

How did Hitler nonetheless manage to govern this nontotalitarian, highly departmentalized state as a Führer state? Given this "authoritarian anarchy" (as it has been called), how was it possible for a supreme authority to impose its will wherever and whenever it chose? The explanation can be found in two words: propaganda and terror. These two instruments were Hitler's most important tools from day one to the very end. They set the Hitler state apart from any of its predecessors.

Let us examine the terror first. To begin with, there were the concentration camps. Citizens could be sent there arbitrarily, without arrest warrants, without legal recourse, without indictment, and once there they could expect the worst. After the fall of the SA the camps came under the control of Hitler's other terror instrument, the SS. On June 30, 1934, Hitler made a very clever move. He did not ask the Reichswehr to carry out the execution of the SA leadership. They were only too glad not to have to soil their hands with this dirty job. Rather, he used another special force, the SS, then the special paramilitary section of the SA.

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The requisite arms were furnished by the Reichs-
wehr. With this single stroke the SS became both
the new SA and something else as well. Unlike
the SA, the SS was never a primarily political or-
ganization. From the very outset it was supposed
to represent a sort of aristocracy among National
Socialist organizations, a racially select troop with
"clean" family trees going back all the way to
1800. And it also had a special function. The SA
had hoped to become the Wehrmacht, and when
it was denied that role it dwindled into insignif-
icance. The SS had a different goal: It wanted to
become Germany's police, and it did. In the early
Hitler years the police were still under the juris-
diction of the individual states, but later were cen-
tralized under a new national department—the
Central Reich Security Office. In no time at all it
came under the total control of the SS whose top
leaders took over the police, and police officials
were given SS ranks. The SS and the police fused
into a single entity, which made them an impor-
tant new power in the state.

The SS continued to spread its wings. Their
acts of terror, which were separate from their
equally feared police functions, were carried out
by special units, the so-called Death Head com-
panies. They replaced the SA as the overseers and
managers of the concentration camps and imposed
a much more impersonal, more predictable, and
more disciplined, though certainly not more hu-

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ges required careful planning and
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charge of Hitler's terror was Hein-
rich supreme commander of the SS.
was Hitler's right hand. The man
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la—was Joseph Goebbels, the in-
department of government, the
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gen called Hitler's invaluable left

ever held the same sort of semi-
fiction of power Himmler carved
in the course of time. He remained
functionary, and unlike Himmler

he never played any role in policymaking, foreign
or domestic. Still, Goebbels oversaw one of the
most important states within Hitler's state. He
had complete control over what nowadays is re-
ferred to as the public media, over all areas with
the potential of influencing and shaping public
opinion, above all the press and broadcasting, but
also the stage, film, and to some degree publishing
as well. Goebbels was a master of communication
techniques.

Goebbels never tried to turn all Germans into
National Socialists. All he did was use the media,
and film in particular, to offer a view of a society
whose health had been restored under the Führer,
under National Socialism. His ministry made oc-
casional propaganda films, but their number can
be counted on the fingers of one hand. The films
he sponsored were humorous, lighthearted, pol-
ished entertainments in which love conquered all
and no one said "Heil Hitler" or mentioned the
Third Reich. These movies gave the German peo-
ple what they were looking for—escape.

Oddly enough, much of Goebbels's propa-
ganda was made with the help of people who
thought of themselves as anti-Nazis. Most of the
working actors and directors were so-called Antis.
By making pictures that more or less ignored the
Third Reich, they managed to convince them-
selves that they were resisting. What they failed
to see was that in making these seemingly harm-
less confections devoid of any hint of Nazi pro-

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istry were conducted by a subordinate, rarely by
Goebbels himself. The papers usually sent a cor-
respondent rather than the top editor to these brief-
ings. The purpose of these sessions was to give so-
called language guidance, not detailed directives
or instructions. The papers were allowed, and even
encouraged, to continue in their traditional style.
The purpose of the directive was to let them know
what not to emphasize or what to gloss over and
what to feature prominently. In some rare in-
stances they were told what editorial line to take.
It would therefore be unfair to say that the press
was completely coordinated. It remained diverse,
but limits to what could be printed were set. Goeb-
bels and Hitler achieved their objective of letting
the non-Nazis know what they wanted them to
hear in a way they could accept. By not over-
whelming the public with ideas they felt it was
not yet ready for, they succeeded brilliantly in ma-
nipulating public opinion and the public mood.
Moreover, the propaganda machinery had a com-
paratively easy time between 1934 and 1938 be-
cause things were going well for Hitler. Even the
non-Nazis were forced to concede that not only
did Hitler know what he wanted, he also did what
he wanted. After all, they said, just look at him.
Let him be, he's making us rich and great and
strong. He's showing the world that Germany
again is a force to be reckoned with.

In those years Hitler scored three major vic-
ories. The first was full employment. Employ-

Goebbels to Goebbels

34-38

paganda, they were doing Goebbels's bidding and helping to cover over the reality. They were saying that things were only half as bad, that all in all life was really quite normal. I am not pointing a finger. Like anybody else, they had to make a living, and anyone who was making a living in the Third Reich was in one way or another helping it. My point is that for them to claim now that by not making propaganda they were part of a resistance movement, as some actors have implied, is not quite accurate.

Goebbels's press policy was not very different. He did not ban the non-Socialist papers, only those of the Social Democratic and Communist press. All the others were allowed to continue. Nor can it be said that Goebbels actually Nazified them. Of course, Nazi journalists were put into editorial offices, as watchdogs, so to speak, but as a rule they did not hold key positions. Most of the editorial staffs of the major non-Socialist papers were kept on—except for Jewish journalists, of course. And those who stayed on were expected to carry on as usual. The press of the Third Reich was still diverse. The readers of Frankfurt's major daily were not handed the same diet as those of the official Nazi daily, and even that paper was not like the *Stürmer*, the official organ of the monomaniacal anti-Semite Streicher. The reader was given a choice; the news was made palatable.

Goebbels's intervention was unobtrusive. The daily press briefings of the Propaganda Min-

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limit on the army—and his proclaimed intention to resurrect Germany's air arm. And in 1936 he made his boldest move, by which Germany scuttled not only the Versailles Treaty but also the voluntarily signed Locarno Pact of 1925: The Wehrmacht moved into the demilitarized zone of the Rhineland. This led to the first crisis of Hitler's pre-1938 foreign policy. For a moment it seemed that France would confront him by mobilizing and sending its armies into the Rhineland. A number of Reichswehr generals, fearing such a French response, opposed Hitler's move, but he gambled that France would not act, and he proved to be right. The people began to feel that from now on Germany could do whatever it wanted, that nobody would dare bar its way. And with this defiance he probably scored the most significant of all his domestic psychological victories.

After this came the truly big, unanticipated successes of 1938: the unopposed peaceful march into Austria and the *Anschluss*, one of the goals of the earlier revisionists. In the fall of 1938—albeit after the first real threat of a crisis—came the Munich Pact in which France and England sold out Czechoslovakia, France's ally, and forced the Czechs to cede the Sudetenland, a predominantly ethnic German border region, to Germany.

The feeling throughout Germany was that Hitler had the *Midas touch*, that he was God's gift to them, that he had given them more than they had dared hope for. It no longer mattered that other

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parts of his program were never completely popular.

What about these other parts? From the very beginning Hitler had relentlessly persecuted two groups: the Communists and the Jews. In view of the fact that by 1932 the Communists had become a mass party and got six million votes, one might have thought that his anti-Communist campaign would not be all that popular. One may well ask what happened to those six million votes after 1933. The answer is, nothing.

Even the non-Socialist and Socialist adversaries of the Communists had secretly hoped that the Communists would be able to mount some sort of resistance against Hitler (something they themselves were no longer ready to undertake), that the Communists would not let themselves be wiped out by Hitler without a struggle. There even was fear of something like a civil war breaking out. However, nothing like that ever happened. After the Reichstag fire the Communist leaders who had not fled the country or gone underground were arrested and sent to concentration camps. The party offices were searched and closed, and the staffs arrested. The Communist party was in effect made illegal without an official ban. The tactic was a complete success; there was no Communist resistance worth mentioning.

A great many Communist voters and supporters, probably a few million, deserted the party in the following months. The non-Socialist par-

ties, and to some degree also the Social Democrats who had waged a fraternal battle against the Communists, were not altogether unhappy with what was happening to them. It must be pointed out, however, that while the non-Socialist parties disappeared without a trace, and while the SPD had gone into exile, Communists inside Germany continued to risk their lives to maintain at least some cadres, some link between the most important party outposts. That sort of perseverance against all odds is more than admirable, although it must also be admitted that in all that time they accomplished nothing. Small Communist groups and grouplets formed and re-formed, and at times even managed to carry out some minor campaigns, like leaving leaflets in public buildings. The only thing they accomplished, however, was to create martyrs. At any rate, Hitler's anti-Communism had no adverse effect, neither on the ready acceptance of his policies nor on his enormous popularity.

Anti-Semitism was a different matter. Neither the German Reich of the Hohenzollern nor the Prussia of Hardenberg and Bismarck had been anti-Semitic states. The anti-Semitism of the German people was at most "conventional"; in the provinces Jews were not always liked and often socially isolated. There was some resentment against their attraction to certain professions (law, medicine, journalism, publishing, literature), but it was a social, nonviolent anti-Semitism. And it was not shared by the majority of the people.

Popular a three categories proved of Jewish the law, in line "Equal rights, entiated between old residents were accepted length. And those who would have least all non-civil rights. They wanted to depose none, not even the extermination parcel of Hitler turned into hints at in practice.

Hitler led by step. First law and profession and the children. Then the professional more professional truly momentous Nuremberg Laws all civil rights: equal relationship was a significant move. Still it was institutional

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and aspirations of almost all early national move-
 ments, and of the citizens of the German Reich.
 In that respect Hitler stands well within the con-
 tinuity of German history, even if his methods
 put everything known or tried in the past into the
 shade.

Society in Hitler's Reich underwent a change,
 but in the final analysis continuity predominated.
 One might say continuity underwent a change.
Politically the old ruling class was more or less
stripped of power, but it retained its social status.
The big landowners remained big landowners, the
big industrialists remained big industrialists, and
the intellectual and cultural elite, insofar as em-
igration had not thinned its ranks, also retained
its position. What changed was the expansion of
these ruling elites, for example the infiltration of
the police by the SS, the infiltration of major eco-
nomical enterprises by Nazi bigwigs, and the
changes in press empires, many of which had been
in Jewish hands. Society in the time of Hitler was
 upwardly mobile, as was also true, in a different
 sense, of the Weimar Republic, and as is still true
 of the two new German states. That does not mean
 that continuity had ended. The military's recap-
ture of the social prestige and status it had tem-
porarily forfeited in the Weimar Republic is part
of this continuity.

The major element of discontinuity was Hit-
ler's anti-Semitism, the biological race theory, a
theory without credence in the former Reich, yet

1938-44

one to which Hitler may have attached even greater importance than to his actual leadership role. For the majority of Germans, insofar as they were neither Jews nor had close links to Jews, this remained a minor issue; they could ignore or accept it as long as the Reich remained as unified and powerful as it had become. And that feeling did not change until the end. I am anticipating the end because the persecution and extermination of the Jews does not belong in the next chapter, which deals with the history of World War II. The mass murder of the Jews was not an act of war, even though it took place during the war.

After 1938 the anti-Jewish campaign grew more virulent. In that year Hitler decided to test the public mood and the effect of his anti-Semitic propaganda by launching a nationwide pogrom. For this purpose he once again called on the practically impotent SA. The test results were negative.

The fairly harmless designation *Kristallnacht* is indicative of the German people's response to this pogrom. The events responsible for this comparatively innocuous name were the least of what took place that day. Shop windows were not the only things that were smashed: Jewish homes were razed, synagogues were torched, thousands of Jews were arrested and shipped to concentration camps, and some were killed. That was not a crystal-smashing night, it was a pogrom. The people refused to acknowledge it. They distanced themselves, they did not take part; there even

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Hitler may have attached even more importance to his actual leadership of Germans, insofar as they were not nor had close links to Jews, this was not an issue; they could ignore or accept the Reich remained as unified as it had become. And that feeling lasted until the end. I am anticipating the persecution and extermination of Jews, or belong in the next chapter, the history of World War II. The role of the Jews was not an act of war, took place during the war. The anti-Jewish campaign grew in that year Hitler decided to test the effect of his anti-Semitic propaganda launching a nationwide pogrom. He once again called on the practical test results were negative. The firmless designation Kristallnacht the German people's response to the events responsible for this common name were the least of what day. Shop windows were not shattered, were smashed: Jewish homes and synagogues were torched, thousands were arrested and shipped to concentration camps where they were killed. That was not a pogrom night, it was a pogrom. The people acknowledge it. They distanced themselves; they did not take part, there even

1938-45

were some public displays of disgust. At the same time, they sought to minimize the horror of it all by tagging it Kristallnacht, a nasty yet semicomical excess for which they disclaimed all responsibility. Yet at the same time they did not wish to hold National Socialism itself responsible, and most certainly not the Führer.

Be that as it may, from Hitler's vantage point the test did not live up to expectations, and he called a halt after twenty-four hours. He had found out that the mass of German people, his faithful and obedient minions, were not ready to take an active part in anti-Jewish excesses. Hitler learned a lesson from this, one that is often overlooked. When he embarked on the Final Solution, he did not carry it out on German soil. The extermination camps were put into eastern Poland. Germany itself, and various other countries, were the scenes of Jewish "transports": the removal of Jews, allegedly for resettlement in other areas. Unlike the other extreme acts and crimes of the Third Reich, the mass murder, the systematic extermination of millions of Jews, was never publicized, let alone trumpeted. Goebbels's superb propaganda machinery was not activated. The German press under Goebbels's control never said that the Jews must be exterminated, and certainly not that they were actually being exterminated. Even as late as 1945 they kept on playing the same old tune about the Jews being Germany's misfortune who must not be trusted. As far as the German newspaper

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readers and radio listeners were concerned, there was no Holocaust.

This conscious hiding of the Holocaust from the German public partially explains their failure to act. Another, and I believe even more valid, explanation is the fact that even if they had known they could not have done anything about it under the conditions that prevailed in the second half of the war.

Whether or not the Germans knew about the mass murder of the Jews is a question that can be answered only on an individual basis. Of course a great deal seeped through. Was it believed? I don't know. For a long time it also was not believed outside of Germany; the horror of it all went beyond the limits of the human imagination. The German Jews themselves did not believe that anything of this kind could happen, or more of them might have tried to flee after 1938.

A history of the German Reich cannot ignore the persecution of the Jews and their programmatic extermination. It happened, and it is an ineradicable blot on the history of Germany. Yet on the other hand, it cannot be put into the same category as other aspects of that history which, like so much else in the Führer state, were rooted in the history and nature of the German Reich. After 1933 something like a Führer state would probably have come into being even without Hitler. And there probably would have been another war even without Hitler. But not the murder of millions of Jews.

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1933-38, 1935

As he wrote in *Mein Kampf*: "It seems as though fate itself wanted to point the way. The vast Eastern empire is on the verge of collapse."

Hitler also recognized that England was largely responsible for Germany's defeat in the West and that the war against England might perhaps have been avoided. There were many similarities between the events leading up to World War I and those leading up to World War II. Bethmann Hollweg had been eager to keep England neutral in the event of a continental war against France and Russia, a war he believed was sure to come, and Hitler too made every effort to keep England neutral, or better still to have England on his side. He also thought he knew the reason for the earlier failure to keep England neutral: because Germany, although hemmed in on the continent by France and Russia, persisted in beefing up its fleet. This had needlessly challenged England to a contest over hegemony outside Europe. Hitler wisely decided not to make the same mistake: no fleet buildup, no world politics, but, rather, concentration on the war against Russia, possibly after a short war against France to protect the rear. It is remarkable, and probably no accident, that this logical plan, so carefully worked out between 1933 and 1938, failed.

In 1935 Hitler signed a naval pact with England in which he agreed to limit the German fleet to a third of Britain's, which was not all that painful a concession considering that Germany had

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1938-1939

ond world war. However, that was not enough for
 him.

The first head-on clash in the contest between
 these two opposing concepts was the Sudeten cri-
 sis of 1939; at issue were the ethnic-German
 border regions of Czechoslovakia. It is generally
 assumed that this crisis ended in a complete and
 uncontested victory for Hitler. Even though En-
 gland and France had been instrumental in the
 creation of Czechoslovakia after World War I, and
 even though France still had a pact with Czech-
 oslovakia, the Western powers narrowly averted
 war by handing over the Sudetenland to Hitler at
 a hurriedly convened summit meeting at Munich.

To repeat: This looked like Hitler's greatest
 triumph. And after Munich the military's oppo-
 sition to Hitler, which had resurfaced during this
 crisis, collapsed completely. Yet strangely enough
 Hitler did not see the prize he won at Munich as
 a victory; he would have preferred a quick war
 against Czechoslovakia. What triumphed in Mu-
 nich was not so much Hitler's planning as Brit-
 ain's policy of appeasement. When the British
 Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain returned to
 London from Munich, he proclaimed that the con-
 ference had brought "peace in our time."

The English undoubtedly figured that the
 countries of southeastern Europe would seek an
 accommodation with Hitler, and that Hitler
 would need anywhere from five to ten years to
 organize the spheres of interest more or less

1938

which Hitler was still completely dominated by such resentments almost a decade after achieving power, though in fact there was not the slightest reason for concern about possible resistance on the part of his defeated adversaries.

It would be superfluous to discuss at any length the judgments which Hitler expressed at his table about kings and princes. He thought the crowned heads and their families rotten to the core, indescribably stupid, and hence not worth being taken seriously. He spoke condescendingly of the "Hohenzollern brood" and expressed the anger he still felt at the memory of his formal reception by the King of Italy in May 1938.⁸

As for Hitler's remarks about the "upper ten thousand"—a term he often used—or the bourgeoisie, these were similarly petulant. He spoke of the Saxon burgher class as "a raffia of idiotic stupidity." "No segment of the population," he declared, "is more foolish when it comes to political matters than this so-called burgher class." In his opinion, the German burgher desired only tranquility and order and was politically cowardly. Only the Hanseatics, the citizens of the once independent north German seaports, came in for an occasional compliment in Hitler's conversation. There is no way to account for the fact that he remained so prejudiced against the middle classes, for without their efficiency in commerce and industry Germany would never have been able to recover so swiftly from the misery of the years before 1933. Moreover, "Führer and Reich Chancellor"⁹ Hitler had won over a large part of the bourgeoisie,

⁸On May 2, 1938, Hitler set out with four special trainloads of functionaries to visit Italy, responding to an invitation which Mussolini had extended during a visit to Germany the previous autumn. Hitler was disgusted "by the fact that protocol required him, as Head of State, to stay with the King in the Quirinal. The formality of his reception at the Palace irked him and left him with a permanent dislike of the Italian Royal House" (Alan Bullock, *Hitler, A Study in Tyranny*, p. 444).—ED.

⁹On January 30, 1933, Hitler was named *Reichskanzler* by *Reichspräsident* Paul von Hindenburg, who died on August 2, 1934. Thereupon Hitler united in himself the functions of chief of state (president) and head of government (chancellor), assuming the formal title *Führer und Reichskanzler*, an act confirmed by 84 per cent of the voters in a plebiscite on August 19, 1934. Although this figure reflects duress and manipulation, there is no question but that the great majority of the German people did endorse him.—ED.

while also enjoying social contact with the "upper ten thousand." Undoubtedly burghers and intellectuals rejected him or serve, but there is really no explanation other than that he never overcame the root during his youth and intensified it for power. He clung to these resentments in all of his basic conceptions.¹

It is more difficult to account for Hitler's. Since the nineteenth century the nation to Germany's reputation, and the including the achievements of scholars, to do with National Socialism—had to the Third Reich. Certainly at the clear. But Hitler still did not like professors were to be put in charge of the declared in 1942, "there would be around after a million years—gigan

¹Hitler's relationship with the German bourgeoisie is strikingly illustrated in Edouard Calic's recollections. Hitler had with Richard Breiting, editor of *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten*, in May and Breiting *Geheimgespräche 1937*, Frankfurt, 1967, a moderately conservative party, a friend of the Goerdeler of Leipzig, and a man quite interested in Hitler and his movement as a brake against and communism. Breiting had two long months after the Nazis' first big breakthrough at the Reichstag elections of September 1930. Hitler would become chancellor. Hitler was attitude toward the German middle classes: needed him and his movement. He would make of the Marxists. He would do whatever he would obey unconditionally. Their talents were indeed as specialists, and as such they had to cooperate. The German bourgeoisie was rotten to the core, legally, Hitler would close down their Reich. Despite this sustained tirade, Breiting reacted. He was impressed by the man's personal state of business, and by his determination to end the chaos a diamond in the rough, but he seemed to have been put to good use.—ED.

1937 + 1938

to prison, to insane asylums, or possibly even for "rehabilitation" to concentration camps. What a conception of the struggle of the artist is revealed by this remark! But the fate of the versatile artist Ernst Barlach, who was forbidden to go on working, shows that Hitler was not making an empty threat.

In 1937 and 1938, Gert H. Theunissen wrote critical reviews of exhibitions at the "House of German Art" for the leading Cologne newspaper, *Kölnische Zeitung*; they were ostensibly favorable, but subtly and with remarkable skill they managed to suggest between the lines the state of atrophy in which German art found itself. Theunissen saw in German art produced under the Third Reich old, wrinkled farm wives, but without "the smell of poverty as in naturalism"; fresh, sun-tanned maids identified as heiresses to the family farm by the aluminum milk can in the background; women offering their well-rounded breasts to infant children; families gathered around the cradle in merry domesticity; and other paintings appealing to the innermost feelings and moods of the German people. But there were also many pictures of factories, inspired by the principle of the "beauty of labor," and a large number of more militant ones, such as "Thus Was the SA," showing a band of strapping brown-shirted rowdies marching down a lane formed by subhuman Communists. Last but not least, the exhibition included a lot of nudity.

Writing with feigned admiration, Theunissen ridiculed Josef Thorak's "massive monumentality" and "muscular tension" (rooted in biological insight), and Ferdinand Liebermann's giant female figures, which had even been given a "certain sacred consecration" by gilding the plaster. He noted that most visitors responded very favorably to the Gothic imitation represented by the greater-than-life-size oak figure by Margarete Hanusch—because it was already somehow familiar to them. But otherwise the critic did not note any imitations of earlier works or styles: "Generally a point of view is maintained which was worked out by the elder generation of living sculptors"—in other words, that of the end of the nineteenth century.

Moving idylls prevailed in painting: "Schwind and Richter are very influential," Theunissen wrote, "while the trailblazing work of

the early romantics, to cite one to the extent, for example, that 1 painters in this exhibition. Thus follow the offshoots of different certain structure." Theunissen's he remarks that Ziegler's female photography, had enjoyed the : that it was only a small step from which can always count on havin

In summary, Theunissen no predominated, for the basic princ ing above all should be suitable painting of Hitler's day was the nostalgia and freedom from ex it was not important how the a he gave a precise duplication of exhibition was an optimistic rep

One Reich, one people, one art which honored the political corresponded to the lowest cor strove to turn history back thi raucous praise for being wh corrosion of what was truly vita the trivial sentimentality of Ki sofar as they have not been dest peared into the attic. In the m verse and dumped overseas at purpose of improving the balanc

Today it would seem that suc ward shows—all but inevitable men who have risen from be shaped by the art of the past, den as a political tool or that it affor

*Kitsch is an untranslatable term w often lugubrious, and tastelessly ornat the latter nineteenth century.—ED.

ably even for "rehabilitation" of the struggle of the fate of the versatile artist to go on working, shows that. Theunissen wrote critical reviews in "Art" for the leading Cologne were ostensibly favorable, but they managed to suggest in which German art found produced under the Third without "the smell of poverty as identified as heiresses to milk can in the background; casts to infant children; family domesticity; and other elings and moods of the German pictures of factories, in of labor," and a large number was the SA," showing dies marching down a lane but not least, the exhibition

Theunissen ridiculed Josef "muscular tension" (rooted Liebermann's giant female certain sacred consecration" lost visitors responded very sent by the greater-than- because it was already is the critic did not note "Generally a point of view by the elder generation of the end of the nineteenth

"Schwind and Richter are the trailblazing work of

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the early romantics, to cite one case, has not yet been recognized to the extent, for example, that the Nazarenes have influenced the painters in this exhibition. Thus everywhere the attempt is made to follow the offshoots of different traditions in order to achieve a certain structure." Theunissen's ridicule is hardly even veiled when he remarks that Ziegler's female nudes, painted with the precision of photography, had enjoyed the strongest response—for the fact is that it was only a small step from his paintings to nude photography, which can always count on having its admirers.

In summary, Theunissen noted that the pleasant and passive predominated, for the basic principle had been observed that a painting above all should be suitable as a decoration for the home. The painting of Hitler's day was therefore characterized by a charming nostalgia and freedom from experimentation. In the graphic arts it was not important how the artist saw the world, but rather that he gave a precise duplication of what he saw. The hallmark of the exhibition was an optimistic representation of reality.

One Reich, one people, one Führer—and one art! A practical art which honored the political guidelines and by its philistinism corresponded to the lowest common denominator. An art which strove to turn history back thirty years or more while garnering raucous praise for being wholesomely progressive despite its corrosion of what was truly vital and creative. It was an art full of the trivial sentimentality of *Kitsch*,³ and its "masterpieces"—insofar as they have not been destroyed or lost—have silently disappeared into the attic. In the meantime, real art, defamed as perverse and dumped overseas at giveaway prices, at best served the purpose of improving the balance of payments.

Today it would seem that such an attitude is—as a glance eastward shows—all but inevitable under totalitarian regimes, where men who have risen from below, encumbered with prejudices shaped by the art of the past, demand of art either that it serve them as a political tool or that it afford them pleasant relaxation. To this

³*Kitsch* is an untranslatable term which suggests an intellectually vacuous, often lugubrious, and tastelessly ornate style that gushed to its florid apogee in the latter nineteenth century.—ED.

1938-9 BE

Benjamin D. Israeli's foreboding "revolution" and its effects on the Jews of a "German revolution," in Germany as well as in Europe.

Buildings with resonances far beyond the Reichstag on the one hand and the Reichstag on the other are mixed in an apt metaphor for the present. Some might say that the building is a symbol of reassurance for the Jewish architect, Sir Norman Foster, in its present shape. Leaving Germany, political correctness is its old name which suppresses imperialism, the building Wilhelmine Renaissance tramodern glass cupola, its aspirations, past and present of imperial Germany unruly parliament and the Weimar Republic. In early 1933, a communist arsonist who it is said was killed by the Nazis, and in the end as an empty shell. In 1945, it became the center of hand-to-hand and desperate machine-gun fire can afford the Soviet soldiers

Gate, erected just before the events from 1806 to the victorious Paris Peace of 1871; from the

bitterness of civil war in 1918–19 to the torchlight parade of Hitler's storm troopers on the evening of January 30, 1933; from the blockade of Berlin by Stalin in 1948–49 to the building and dismantling of the wall in 1961 and 1989 respectively. A few yards south of the gate is a space where in 1938–9 Albert Speer, Hitler's legendary architect, built in record time the vast Neue Reichskanzlei for the Führer. In 1945 a marble monument of the same stone was erected nearby, complete with vintage Soviet guns and tanks, to commemorate the victories of the Red Army between 1941 and 1945—there is no mention of course of their collaboration with Hitler and his henchmen two years previously. The same stone was used to build the Soviet embassy, the seat of Stalin's proconsul in central Europe which is today post-Soviet Russia's embassy. To the west of the gate extend many miles of a route used for centuries by traders and armies, interrupted only by the "siegestsäule," a column celebrating Prussia's victory over France in 1871. Crowned by a gilt bronze goddess of victory, the column is adorned with gun barrels in a celebration of military triumph. To the east is the old promenade, "Unter den Linden," which once led to the splendid baroque Town Palace, built for the first Prussian king. Demolished in 1952 by the East German regime, it became an empty space where the proletariat assembled from time to time to thank its leaders for their existence.

In a landscape saturated with history and littered with monuments to human folly, the five decades of the Bismarckian empire stand out, for better and for worse, as the formative period of modern Germany. The nation-state which he created in 1871, notwithstanding European integration and economic globalization, is still the mold of political life. German corporatism, that perennial intimacy

1969-1972 ~~1970~~

also 1938

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

by a tyrant. . . Freedom can come later, after unity has been imposed on us by Prussia." 37

This was the tragedy of 1848: the conviction that tyranny would bring unity and freedom to the German people.

THE SECOND REICH, 1871-1918

Bismarck

Come, Savior, if already born
Step forth, we'll follow in thy tread!
Thou, last of all dictators,
Come, bring the last dictatorship! *

—J. G. Fischer, 1848

In founding the Second Reich of the German nation, Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898) fulfilled the fondest dream of disillusioned democrats of 1848. Summoned to Berlin in the fall of 1862 by the Prussian king to put down parliamentary pretensions, he quickly set forth his program in a self-fulfilling prophecy: German unity, he predicted, would not come through parliament but through power, through iron and blood. He was not "the last dictator," but he reinforced a tradition and left an inheritance which were immensely helpful to the dictator who would one day be hailed as savior and worshipped as a god.

In popular portraiture, Bismarck appears as the massive paragon of political ability, the cold master of *Realpolitik*. Indeed, the very word is identified with Bismarck, and no one described the concept better than he. It is entirely appropriate that Bismarck should be quoted on Bismarck by an admirer and latter day *Realpolitiker*, Henry Kissinger:

For heaven's sake, no sentimental alliances. . . Gratitude and confidence will not bring a single man into the feud on our side; only fear will do that, if we use it cautiously and skillfully. . . Politics is the art of the possible, the science of the relative. 38

Hitler liked to imagine that he and Bismarck were very much alike. He noted that they both had delicate, artistic hands and pale blue eyes, and that their cranial measurements were very similar. By any test of intellect, culture, and statecraft, a vast gulf separates the creator of Germany from its destroyer. And yet the personalities of the two men do show surprising parallels. For Bismarck was far

* The German verse reads:

Komm, Einzger, wenn du schon geboren
Tritt auf, wir folgen deiner Spur!
Du letzter aller Diktatoren
Komm mit der letzten Diktatur.

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A. H. The shape of the soul
can be grasped by careful
examination of cranial
measurements. The former
head is a better guide than
one of another supposition. We
make on the nature of someone
else's heart.

Hitherto

The Past As Prologue: Hitler

from the emotionally stat too was a man in deep con

The "Iron Chancellor" a whining hypochondriac of grace and thoughtful the next. He despised into an epithet, yet he could Shakespeare and he wrote ing gallons of "Black Velvet" he also denied himself, li man who boasted of his H not sleep at night until h held his hand "like a moth Chancellor and putting hir

Adolf Hitler may or dred psychological spirit; Chancellor's political perfwill," noting that he was of French civilians during the death penalty for a wid feeling, however, that he w Bismarck, he said, was Church; he had been mutive in handling socialism Above all, "Bismarck did nomic materialism, 'the v tions of Jewish bankers. 40

But all in all, Hitler w the two had a great deal i Of the many differences l Unlike Hitler, Bismarck h maturation. He also knew was indeed "the art of th from Goethe was one tha practice: "Genius is the e sich der Meister).

Bismarck demonstrate his goal of creating a stron "we are satiated" and use serve his empire by keepi system of alliances, whicl Peace" (*Mein Friedensbu* player, Bismarck knew whe

Bismarck's domestic p is best seen in the way he

* His list of real and im: somnia, gallstones, neuralgia, di

* a possible Omega are d is a danger sustain the

1969

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and Frederick the Great

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1928, 1941, 1939

B 48

Hitler Orders the Holocaust

Jews were not an enemy of the German nation alone but of all mankind, and their elimination was not only a national but a universal task.

If we pursue this reasoning a bit further we may say that the elimination of the German Jews was in the interest of Germany, since they undermined Germany's capacity to struggle for living space. Consequently, their transfer into countries that were Germany's actual or potential opponents in the struggle for living space meant a weakening of these countries and was thus an advantage to Germany. But Hitler did not say so explicitly. He wished other countries to eliminate their Jews as well. This is the basic contradiction of Hitler's anti-Semitism. As a German he wanted the elimination of the German Jews before all others. But as far as the Jews were concerned, he felt that he could not afford to be a German alone. The Jewish question was so important to him that he sought the elimination of all Jews. In July 1941 he declared to a foreign statesman that he would confront each state with the demand to eliminate its Jews.¹⁰ In October of the same decisive year he said that he was doing humanity a service by exterminating this pest.¹¹

Rudolph Binion has convincingly demonstrated that Hitler did not succeed in solving this contradiction.¹² Thus in principle and from the outset his racial policy was less clear than his foreign policy. As for the war of conquest, he was to pursue the interests of Germany exclusively; hence his task was easy. As for the Jews, he had to pursue the interests of both Germany and humanity at once; hence this task was difficult. At times he set his priorities, at times he did not, and this confusion marked his acts.

Immediately after he came to power his task was easy. He had to remove the German Jews from political standing and if possible from Germany. His policy pursued these goals. By

1938 approximately 150,000 Jews or almost one third of the country's total Jewish population had left Germany. But with

1938, 1939

Hitler Orders the Holocaust 49 B

the annexation of Austria another 200,000 were added. Although a quarter of them left the country within six months, by the end of 1938 Greater Germany had once again as many Jews as Germany had had in 1933. The task seemed unending.

For whatever reasons, after the annexation of Austria and especially after the Munich Conference of September 29, 1938, the anti-Jewish policy became more intense. By March of that year Hitler spoke with increased furor.¹³ In June the Nazi leader and writer Rosenberg proposed Madagascar as a country of emigration.¹⁴ In October Göring wanted the Jews to get out of the economy and if necessary to establish ghettos.¹⁵ Then approximately seventeen thousand Jews holding Polish passports were deported from Germany to Poland.¹⁶ This was a prelude to the November pogrom. A few days later Göring said that if war came, there would be a great settling of accounts with the Jews.¹⁷ On November 24 Hitler told a foreign statesman that the Jewish question was a European problem.¹⁸ On the same day the SS newspaper demanded total destruction of the German Jews if war came.¹⁹ On January 21, 1939, Hitler told the Czech foreign minister that the Jews in Germany were going to be destroyed.²⁰ On January 24 Göring ordered Heydrich and Frick to prepare a solution of the Jewish question by emigration or evacuation.²¹ Finally on January 30 Hitler publicly declared—or, as he put it, prophesied—that the result of another world war would be the destruction of the Jewish race in Europe.²² What sounds so ominous in three of these proclamations is the projected relation between a war and the solution to the Jewish question. Hitler had drawn this connection in *Mein Kampf* and had redrawn it since on several occasions. On February 10, 1939, he repeated to commanding officers that the next struggle was going to be a racial war.²³

When World War II broke out, there was no immediate action against the Jews. Despite Hitler's demand in 1926 for the destruction of the Jews, there was no pogrom and no Jews

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1938

the process by which he made it? It seems that, first of all, we have to abandon our conventional notion of orders. In view of the tremendous difficulties to be overcome, this was not an undertaking that simply could be ordered, not even within the framework of a dictatorship. Years of persistent effort were required by Hitler to bring his collaborators—more the high-ranking functionaries than the henchmen—around to his idea and to lead them patiently into carrying out his plan.

He had to intensify the anti-Jewish feelings of most of his collaborators to a degree that the urge became strong enough among them to get rid of the Jews. He had then to show or to let it appear that the elimination could not be achieved by emigration, evacuation, or deportation. He had to present the Russian Jews as a potential source of resistance to German rule. After he had succeeded in this, he could suggest killing the unwanted Polish and German Jews, and after that had proved feasible he could include the West European Jews. He may have made vague suggestions here and there, both in public and within his inner circle, to various collaborators who were competing against each other for his favor. He may have held out prospects of promotion. He may have flattered or threatened, appealing to loyalty, giving or taking, playing one supporter against the other, according to the acquired art of ruling by his system of government.

1938 Viewed from this perspective, we may date certain intimations, instructions, directives, and orders if it is understood that these were not always clearly defined. For example, after the pogrom of November 1938, when Goebbels was criticized by Göring for the economic damage incurred, Hitler had a long conversation with Göring after which the idea permeated the inner circle that there would be a drastic solution to the Jewish problem when war came. It was first expressed by Göring on November 12, a fortnight later in the SS newspaper, and finally by Hitler himself in his famous prophecy. Is it

secret

secret

not reasonable to assume that Hitler had said something of the sort to Göring, then waited for reactions and, when they proved encouraging, promoted the idea in public?

Or consider this recollection by Himmler's masseur, Felix Kersten. Immediately after the French campaign Himmler was summoned by Hitler and told that he would have to carry out the extermination of the European Jews.⁷⁰ Admittedly, Kersten is unreliable. But is it not suggestive that Hitler in those days, when he was planning the war against Russia, should have thought of the final solution as well? We must regard this, not as an order, but as yet another step along the way.

Certainly Hitler must have given an order in the spring of 1941 providing Himmler with special powers to kill Russian Jews. But at first Hitler's order may well have been only to kill Jewish party and state officials in the USSR and to incite pogroms there. When this plan was well underway, with the campaign running according to plan, Hitler may have extended the order in July or August to cover all other Russian Jews and included the German Jews as well. In other words, he may have tested the ground first and then have proceeded gradually.

Once more it is important to recognize that he did not assign the task to a single agency, the SS and police, but to his personal chancellery as well, which had carried out the killing of the insane. Both agencies were later to compete. This fits in perfectly with the nature of his rule: the gradual disclosure of his objectives and the competition of agencies.

It has not and could not have been my aim to date the entire decision-making process. For the requisite research is in its very beginnings. But it was my aim to suggest how the orders may have been given, how we should envision the decision-making process, and how more confirmation can be achieved. It appears to me that our perspective must be changed. We must, above all, never isolate the Holocaust either from Hitler's thinking or from the difficult conditions under which he

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which is produced by the generator of the one's name vibrations should be used for constructive purposes only.¹⁴ It is worth noting that the above extract from Goodman's comments was made in 1945, a time when Hitler was the best-known "1" in the world, and any numerological profile that did not contain these characteristics would have lacked credibility.

As for Hitler's other supposed psychic faculty, an unerring intuition, his success in confrontation diplomacy and his early war triumphs are often quoted to justify the claim. In 1935, when he broke the Treaty of Versailles by starting to rearm and introduce conscription, he ignored the disquiet of his diplomatic and military experts by saying that other signatories to the treaty would not actively object. He was right. The British reacted by issuing a "solemn protest" while the French appealed to the League of Nations but spoke of searching for means of conciliation and the need to dispel tension. This was not the language of men who intended to back up their protests with action.¹⁵ According to conventional historians, had Britain and France stood up to Germany at that time, Hitler would have been quickly vanquished.

When Hitler occupied the Rhineland in 1936, again his generals said he was defying the odds. France will do nothing, said Hitler, and he was once again correct. Then in 1938 he sent his troops into Austria with the promise that the action would not result in a strike against Germany. He went on to occupy Czechoslovakia and yet again the Allies failed to make an issue of his warlike actions. "He achieved his triumphs in the Rhineland, in Austria, and in the Czechoslovak crisis by disregarding the advice of most of Germany's diplomatic and military experts and following his own prophetic intuitions about the course of action that would be taken by his opponents," King insists.¹⁶

Hitler's immensely successful western offensive was also undertaken against the advice of many of his generals. But, adds King, Hitler trusted in his intuition and again was proved right.¹⁷ Suster also backs Hitler's powers of prediction over the expertise of his generals, adding that he even prophesied the exact date of the entry of his troops into Paris.¹⁸

* Himmler sees that as politics.
1938

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who were besotted by the occult. Perhaps he felt there just might be something to it, but clearly he could not understand what, even though he believed his thought processes were at such an advanced level his comprehension was all-encompassing. Should Hitler set his mind to any subject he could bring to it an understanding that came from a process superior to logic and human thought. Why, he could take up material rejected by the great Wagner and turn it into an opera!

Ultimately Hitler chose the known (knowledge) over the unknown (the occult), and established religion over mysticism. Addressing the Nazi Party Congress in 1938, Hitler proclaimed:

* At the pinnacle of our program stands not mysterious premonitions, but clear knowledge and hence open avowal. But woe if the movement or the state, through the insinuation of obscure mystical elements, should give unclear orders. And it is enough if this lack of clarity is contained merely in words. There is already a danger if orders are given for the setting up of so-called cult places, because this alone will give birth to the necessity subsequently to devise so-called cult games and cult rituals. Our cult is exclusively cultivation of that which is natural and hence willed by God.

Notes

- not already ordered*
1. Michael Howard, *The Occult Conspiracy* (London: Rider, 1989), p. 135.
 2. See chapter 7.
 3. Howard, *The Occult Conspiracy*, p. 135.
 4. J. H. Broggan, *Occult Reich* (Futura, 1974), quoted in Michael FitzGerald, *Storm Troopers of Satan* (London: Robert Hale, 1990), p. 54.
 5. See chapter 7.
 6. Francis King, *Satan and Swastika* (St. Albans, Herts, U.K.: Mayflower Books, 1976), p. 85.
 7. Ibid.
 8. Ibid., p. 86.
 9. Ibid., p. 123.

in Vienna less than twenty-four hours! He was not there on the night of the fifteenth.

After attending a military parade at the Maria-Theresa monument at two o'clock that afternoon—the same parade which Ravenscroft says Hitler attended before going on to the Imperial—Hitler flew out in his Junkers aircraft as the twilight settled on an enervated Vienna.¹⁸

As the plane headed over the Alps toward Germany, Hitler had only one thing on his mind and it was not an old weapon of doubtful origin. Hitler turned to fellow passenger Wilhelm Keitel, the Wehrmacht Chief of Staff, and showed him a crumpled piece of newspaper which was a sketch map of the Reich's new frontiers showing that Czechoslovakia was now closed in on three sides. Hitler placed his left hand on the map so his forefinger and thumb encompassed Czechoslovakia's frontier. He then winked at Keitel and slowly pinched his finger and thumb together.¹⁹ Clearly if Hitler had ventured abroad it could only have been in the early hours of 15 March.

Ravenscroft says the head of the Nazi occult bureau, SS Colonel Wolfram von Sievers, had arrived in the city a few days before to make sure the lance was not removed by Austrian officials. In doing this he had thrown a cordon of SS Troops around the museum.²⁰

In "the early hours" Hitler entered the museum with von Sievers and some other officials including SS head Heinrich Himmler. Once inside he ordered that he be left alone with the symbol that nearly thirty years before he had made the inspiration for his whole life.²¹

Whatever Hitler's visions on this occasion the scene of the German Führer standing before the ancient weapon must be regarded as the most critical moment of the twentieth century until the Americans claimed the Spear in Nuremburg in 1945.²²

The allied powers—Britain, France, and Czechoslovakia—had not attempted to stop the annexation of Austria into the Third Reich. However, says Ravenscroft, Churchill—in possession of the

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story of the lance and Hitler's belief in its world powers through Dr. Walter Stein—warned that the Führer's entry into Vienna constituted a decisive shift in the balance of power and world war was now inevitable.²³

If Hitler had ventured out on the only night he spent in Vienna with but one purpose in mind, his single-mindedness was monumental: The streets were quite obviously unsafe as Carl Zuckmayer, the German playwright who was in Vienna at the time, wrote, "the underworld had opened its gates and let loose its lowest, most revolting, most impure spirits. The city was transformed into a nightmare painting by Hieronymous Bosch, the air filled with an incessant, savage, hysterical screeching from male and female throats . . . in wild hate-filled triumphs."²⁴ How Hitler would have slipped unnoticed through such scenes is difficult to imagine, or to accept. Further, it is obvious Hitler had no need to make the journey to the museum. With one brief order he could have had the lance brought to him.

Hitler certainly could have had in mind the Hapsburg Crown Jewel collection of which the Holy Lance was a small part, but as booty. The German economy was under severe stress as a result of Hitler's single-minded preparations for war. Its own gold and foreign currency reserves were severely depleted. Not surprisingly, the healthier Austrian gold and currency deposits were withdrawn to Germany in one of the first acts under *anschluss*. The Hapsburg collection was sent to Nuremberg, the Nazis' favorite city.²⁵

Given all this, plus a dose of commonsense, Ravenscroft's account of Hitler's reunion with the object in the museum that allegedly inspired his whole life is hard to take seriously.

The night of 14 March 1938 was one of terror, the first of many for millions of innocent victims in Europe. It should be remembered and mourned as such by those who write and study history, not trivialized or have attention diverted from its dreadful meaning.

1938

The general began his tour to ease his mind, and was grasping at these straws of the past since the present held nothing for him.

Patton had a "sixth sense" which had come into its own during the war. U.S. General Omar Bradley recalled years later that Patton could foresee situations as they were developing and prepare to deal with them. After crossing the Moselle River near Coblenz with about three divisions and moving rapidly south, Patton suddenly stopped his advance and collected his forces. "Some members of my Twelfth Army group staff expressed surprise and wondered why he did not keep going as the advance was going so well. Knowing Patton's feel for the battle I suggested there must be a reason which George felt but which was not apparent from the information we had. True, the next day he was hit by a strong counterattack which he was able to repel because he had stopped and regrouped."¹³

Frederick Ayer, a nephew of Patton, recalls that he once asked his uncle if he believed in reincarnation.¹⁴ Patton replied:

There has never been any question. I just don't think it, I damn well know there are places I've been before, and not in this life. For instance when I took over my first command in France (in World War I), at Langres, a young French liaison officer offered to show me around since I had never been there before. For some reason I said "You don't have to, I know this place. I know it well." . . . I told the drivers where to go—almost as if someone were at my ear, whispering the directions. I took him to the Roman Amphitheatre, the drill ground, the Forum and the Temples of Mars and Apollo. . . . I even showed him correctly the spot where Caesar had earlier pitched his tent. But I never made a wrong turn. You see I had been there before.¹⁵

Patton believed he had been a Roman warrior in a previous life.¹⁶

What is interesting about these revelations of Patton's thought processes regarding his theorizing and/or fantasizing about what took place at the Greek temple site and his sense of "knowing" his way around Langres is that Patton seems to have been in

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contact with similar transcendental sources for gathering historical material that Ravenscroft claims Stein had uniquely unearthed, that is, use of occult faculties and mind expansion to reveal events in history that are not to be found in written records.¹⁷ Yet Ravenscroft appears to have been unaware that Patton and his mentor shared this remarkable "faculty."

There is a further irony in Patton's role in this story. His nephew says that the general once told him, "A man must know his own destiny, he must know what he was meant to be." Patton went on to say,

Once, twice, or at the very most, three times, Fate will reach out and tap a man on the shoulder. He usually says, "Go away, I'm busy," or "I don't know you so don't bother me." But if he has the imagination he will turn around and Fate will point out to him what fork in the road he should take. If he has the guts he will take it.¹⁸

The words demonstrate a belief of Hitler's in an almost uncanny manner. In a lecture to his adjutants in 1938, Hitler said: "There is but one moment when the Goddess of Fortune wafts by and if you don't grasp her by the hem you won't get a second chance."¹⁹

As for Ravenscroft's claims that Patton took more time off from his military duty, this time to visit the Holy Lance in Nuremberg and learn of its history, at the time the general was supposedly doing so he was up to his neck in yet another controversy. With the war over he had publicly expressed the opinion that the Americans should now be prepared to continue fighting—against their allies the Russians.²⁰ He had also run into further trouble with actions and words* that showed he disagreed with the policy of uprooting all former Nazis from German society.²¹

*Despite the evidence of Nazi atrocities he had witnessed, Patton had begun to regard the Germans not as enemies, but as future allies against Communist Russia. In a letter to his wife following a visit to the devastated Berlin, he wrote: "We have destroyed what could have been a good race and are about to replace them with the Mongolian savages and all Europe with Communism."

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ness of purpose and bad conscience of the other Powers to win a series of diplomatic successes without even the display of force. In 1938-9, with German rearmament under way and his confidence fortified by success, he was prepared to take bigger risks and to invoke the threat of force if his claims were refused.

It is in this context that the meeting of November 1937 is to be seen. The harangue which Hitler delivered reflects the change of mood at the end of the first period and the opening of the second, a new phase in which Hitler was ready to increase the pressure and enlarge the risks of his foreign policy.

The picture he had formed of the immediate future was inaccurate. Events did not follow the course he predicted; war came at a date and as a result of a situation he had not foreseen. But the inaccuracy of the details matters little, for Hitler was ready to take advantage of any situation that emerged. The importance of the occasion lies in the changed tone in which Hitler spoke, in his readiness to run the risk of war and to annex Czechoslovakia and Austria whenever circumstances offered a favourable opportunity, 'even as early as 1938'.

The years of preparation and concealment were at an end: the Man of Peace was to give way to the Man of Destiny, a new role in which, by March 1939, Hitler was to achieve both the objectives of November 1937: the annexation of Austria and the conquest of Czechoslovakia.

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In the spring of 1938, on the eve of his greatest triumphs, Adolf Hitler entered his fiftieth year. His physical appearance was unimpressive, his bearing still awkward. The falling lock of hair and the smudge of his moustache added nothing to a coarse and curiously undistinguished face, in which the eyes alone attracted attention. The quality which his face possessed was mobility, an ability to express the most rapidly changing moods, at one moment smiling and charming, at another cold and imperious, cynical and sarcastic, or swollen and livid with rage.

Speech was the essential medium of his power. Hitler talked incessantly, often using words less to communicate his thoughts than to release the hidden spring of his own and others' emotions, whipping himself and his audience into anger or exaltation by the sound of his voice. Talk had another function, too. 'Words,' he once said, 'build bridges into unexplored regions.' As he talked, conviction would grow until certainty came and the problem was solved.

Hitler always showed a distrust of argument and criticism. Unable to argue coolly himself, since his early days in Vienna his one resort had been to shout his opponent down. The questioning of his assumptions or of his facts rattled him; the introduction of intellectual processes of criticism and analysis marked the intrusion of hostile elements which disturbed the exercise of manipulating emotion. Hence Hitler's hatred of the intellectual: in the masses 'instinct is supreme and from instinct comes faith. . . . While the healthy common folk instinctively close their ranks to form a community of the people, the intellectuals run this way and that, like hens in a poultry-

yard. With them it is impossible to make history; they cannot be used as elements supporting a community.'

As an orator Hitler had obvious faults. The timbre of his voice was harsh; he spoke at too great length; he was often repetitive and verbose; he lacked lucidity. These shortcomings, however, mattered little beside the extraordinary impression of force, the immediacy of passion, the intensity of hatred, fury, and menace conveyed by the sound of the voice alone.

One of the secrets of his mastery over a great audience was his instinctive sensitivity to the mood of a crowd, a flair for divining the hidden passions, resentments and longings in their minds.

One of his most bitter critics, Otto Strasser, wrote: 'Hitler responds to the vibration of the human heart with the delicacy of a seismograph, or perhaps of a wireless receiving set, enabling him, with a certainty with which no conscious gift could endow him, to act as a loudspeaker proclaiming the most secret desires, the least admissible instincts, the sufferings, and personal revolts of a whole nation. . . . Adolf Hitler enters a hall. He sniffs the air. For a minute he gropes, feels his way, senses the atmosphere. Suddenly he bursts forth. His words go like an arrow to their target, he touches each private wound on the raw, liberating the mass unconscious, expressing its innermost aspirations, telling it what it most wants to hear.'

Hitler had another role, that of visionary and prophet. This was the mood in which he indulged, talking far into the night, in his house on the Obersalzberg, surrounded by the remote peaks and silent forests of the Bavarian Alps; or in the Eyrie he had built six thousand feet up above the Berghof, approached only by a mountain road blasted through the rock and a lift guarded by doors of bronze. There he would elaborate his fabulous schemes for a vast

empire; his plans for biologically preselected; his nations to slavery in the future. These themes had to be shown that he was his fantasies into a terrible Russia, the S.S. extermination of the Jewish Poles and Russians, the Slavs too, were the fruits of Hitler.

All this combines to create the best description is Hitler's way that Providence made of a sleepwalker.' Her 'Dostoevsky might well have morbid derangement and his hysteria.' With Hitler fortably aware of never being the irrational.

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empire; his plans for breeding a new élite biologically preselected; his design for reducing whole nations to slavery in the foundation of his new empire. These themes had long fascinated Hitler, but he was to show that he was capable of translating his fantasies into a terrible reality. The invasion of Russia, the S.S. extermination squads, the planned elimination of the Jewish race; the treatment of the Poles and Russians, the Slav *Untermenschen*—these, too, were the fruits of Hitler's imagination.

All this combines to create a picture of which the best description is Hitler's own famous sentence: 'I go the way that Providence dictates with the assurance of a sleepwalker.' Hermann Rauschning writes: 'Dostoevsky might well have invented him, with the morbid derangement and the pseudo-creativity of his hysteria.' With Hitler, indeed, one is uncomfortably aware of never being far from the realm of the irrational.

The baffling problem about this strange figure is to determine the degree to which he was swept along by a genuine belief in his own inspiration and the degree to which he deliberately exploited the irrational side of human nature, both in himself and others, with a shrewd calculation. For it is salutary to recall, before accepting the Hitler Myth at anything like its face value, that it was Hitler who invented the myth, assiduously cultivating and manipulating it for his own ends. So long as he did this he was brilliantly successful; it was when he began to believe in his own magic, and accept the myth of himself as true, that his flair faltered.

So much has been made of the charismatic nature of Hitler's leadership that it is easy to forget the astute and cynical politician in him. It is this mixture of calculation and fanaticism, with the difficulty of telling where one ends and the other begins, which is the peculiar characteristic of Hitler's personality:

to ignore or underestimate either element is to present a distorted picture.

The link between the different sides of Hitler's character was his extraordinary capacity for self-dramatization. Again and again one is struck by the way in which, having once decided rationally on a course of action, Hitler would whip himself into a passion which enabled him to bear down all opposition, and provided him with the motive power to enforce his will on others. He was capable of a calculated synthetic fury in which he worked himself into a frenzy of indignation, which he could assume or discard at will in order to gain concessions from foreign governments anxious for peace.

One of Hitler's most habitual devices was to place himself on the defensive, to accuse those who opposed him of aggression and malice, and to pass rapidly from a tone of outraged innocence to the full thunders of moral indignation. It was always the other side who were to blame, and in turn he denounced the Communists, the Jews, the Republican Government, or the Czechs, the Poles, and the Bolsheviks for their 'intolerable' behaviour which forced him to take drastic action in self-defence.

Hitler in a rage appeared to lose all control of himself. His face became mottled and swollen with fury, he screamed at the top of his voice, spitting out a stream of abuse, waving his arms wildly and drumming on the table or the wall with his fists. As suddenly as he had begun he would stop, smooth down his hair, straighten his collar and resume a more normal voice.

This skilful and deliberate exploitation of his own temperament extended to other moods. When he wanted to persuade or win someone over he could display great charm. Until the last days of his life he retained an uncanny gift of personal magnetism which defies analysis, but which many who met him

have described. This was the power of his eyes, which had some sort of hypnotic effect; he wanted to frighten, to dominate, to be master of brutal and terrible things.

Yet another role was played by his will-power and his complete command of the facts. He had a knowledge of the facts, on his remarkable memory, and he gave off complicated orders, long lists of instructions and long lists of moment's hesitation. The figures which he cited were full of inaccuracies did not in effect at which he aimed to move from one mood to another; at that moment his eyes would blaze, the next blazing, the next blazing, a faraway look of the vision.

Hitler, in fact, was a great actor's and orator's face, a role and convincing he was saying at the time he was often awkward practice the part became with the immense prestige of the resources of a power there were few who could match the piercing eyes, the 'toric' personality.

Hitler had the gift of grasping the possibilities of his opponents. He knew how to play on the grievances of the German people, as later on the British fear of war and the insistence upon preserv-

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have described. This was connected with the curious power of his eyes, which are persistently said to have had some sort of hypnotic quality. Similarly, when he wanted to frighten or shock, he showed himself a master of brutal and threatening language.

Yet another role was the impression of concentrated will-power and intelligence, the leader in complete command of the situation and with a dazzling knowledge of the facts. To sustain this part he drew on his remarkable memory, which enabled him to reel off complicated orders of battle, technical specifications and long lists of names and dates without a moment's hesitation. The fact that the details and figures which he cited were often found to contain inaccuracies did not matter: it was the immediate effect at which he aimed. The swiftness of the transition from one mood to another was startling: one moment his eyes would be filled with tears and pleading, the next blazing with fury, or glazed with the faraway look of the visionary.

Hitler, in fact, was a consummate actor, with the actor's and orator's facility for absorbing himself in a role and convincing himself of the truth of what he was saying at the time he said it. In his early years he was often awkward and unconvincing, but with practice the part became second nature to him, and with the immense prestige of success behind him, and the resources of a powerful state at his command, there were few who could resist the impression of the piercing eyes, the Napoleonic pose, and the 'historic' personality.

Hitler had the gift of all great politicians for grasping the possibilities of a situation more swiftly than his opponents. He saw, as no other politician did, how to play on the grievances and resentments of the German people, as later he was to play on French and British fear of war and fear of Communism. His insistence upon preserving the forms of legality in

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tacles was their originator, Hitler himself, and they
played an indispensable part in the process of self-
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Hitler had grasped as no one before him what
could be done with a combination of propaganda and
terrorism. For the complement to the attractive
power of the great spectacles was the compulsive
power of the Gestapo, the S.S., and the concentration
camp, heightened once again by skilful propaganda.
Hitler was helped in this not only by his own percep-
tion of the sources of power in a modern urbanized
mass-society, but also by possession of the technical
means to manipulate them.

In making use of his formidable power Hitler had
one supreme, and fortunately rare, advantage: he had
neither scruples nor inhibitions. He was a man with-
out roots or loyalties, and he felt respect for neither
God nor man. Throughout his career he showed him-
self prepared to seize any advantage that was to be
gained by lying, cunning, treachery, and unscrupu-
lousness. He demanded the sacrifice of millions of
German lives for the sacred cause of Germany, but
in the last year of the war was ready to destroy
Germany rather than surrender his power or admit
defeat.

Wary and secretive, he entertained a universal dis-
trust. He admitted no one to his counsels. 'He never',
Schacht wrote, 'let slip an unconsidered word. He
never said what he did not intend to say and he never
blurted out a secret. Everything was the result of
cold calculation.'

He had a particular and inveterate distrust of ex-
perts. He refused to be impressed by the complexity
of problems, insisting until it became monotonous
that if only the will was there any problem could be
solved. Schacht, to whose advice he refused to listen
and whose admiration was reluctant, says of him:
'Hitler often did find astonishingly simple solutions

for problems which had seemed to others insoluble. He had a genius for invention. . . . His solutions were often brutal, but almost always effective.'

The crudest of Hitler's simplifications was the most effective: in almost any situation, he believed, force or the threat of force would settle matters—and in an astonishingly large number of cases he proved right.

In his Munich days Hitler always carried a heavy riding-whip, made of hippopotamus hide. The impression he wanted to convey was one of force, decision, will. Yet Hitler had nothing of the easy, assured toughness of a condottiere like Göring. His strength of personality, far from being natural to him, was the product of an exertion of will: from this sprang a harsh, jerky and over-emphatic manner which was very noticeable in his early days as a politician.

To say that Hitler was ambitious scarcely describes the intensity of the lust for power and the craving to dominate which consumed him. It was the will to power in its crudest and purest form, not identifying itself with the triumph of a principle as with Lenin or Robespierre—for the only principle of Nazism was power and domination for its own sake—nor finding satisfaction in the fruits of power, for, by comparison with other Nazi leaders like Göring, Hitler lived an ascetic life. For a long time Hitler succeeded in identifying his own power with the recovery of Germany's old position in the world, but as soon as the interests of Germany began to diverge from his own, his patriotism was seen at its true value—Germany, like everything else in the world, was only a means, a vehicle for his own power, which he would sacrifice with the same indifference as the lives of those he sent to the Eastern Front.

Although, looking backwards, it is possible to detect anticipations of this monstrous will to power in Hitler's early years, it remained latent until the end

of the First World War noticeably when he recounted in *Mein Kampf* defeat and the Revolution produced a crisis in which he was awakened and becoming a politician and

Resentment is marked hatred intoxicated him. diatribes of hate—against Czechs, the Poles, the middle-classes who belonged to the bourgeois world which he was determined to destroy.

No less striking was the atmosphere of adulthood to have deadened the came into it. The most grotesque errors of taste by the Führer, were aspired genius. It is to the Strasser, who had known they were irritated and Byzantine attitude towards this was among the reasons

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of the First World War and only began to appear noticeably when he reached his thirties. From the account in *Mein Kampf* it appears that the shock of defeat and the Revolution of November 1918 produced a crisis in which hitherto dormant faculties were awakened and directed towards the goal of becoming a politician and founding a new movement.

Resentment is marked in Hitler's attitude, and hatred intoxicated him. Many of his speeches are long diatribes of hate—against the Jews, the Marxists, the Czechs, the Poles, the intellectuals and the educated middle-classes who belonged to that comfortable bourgeois world which had once rejected him and which he was determined to destroy in revenge.

No less striking was his constant need of praise. The atmosphere of adulation in which he lived seems to have deadened the critical faculties of all who came into it. The most banal platitudes and the most grotesque errors of taste and judgement, if uttered by the Führer, were accepted as the words of inspired genius. It is to the credit of Röhm and Gregor Strasser, who had known Hitler for a long time, that they were irritated and totally unimpressed by this Byzantine attitude towards the Führer; no doubt, this was among the reasons why they were murdered.

A hundred years before Hitler became Chancellor, Hegel had pointed to the role of 'world-historical individuals' as the agents by which 'the Will of the World Spirit', the plan of Providence, is carried out.

Whether Hitler ever read Hegel or not, Hegel's writings about the Hero who is above conventional morality find an echo in Hitler's belief about himself. Cynical though he was, Hitler's cynicism stopped short of his own person: he came to believe that he was a man with a mission, marked out by Providence, and therefore exempt from the ordinary canons of human conduct.

Just before the occupation of Austria, in February

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1938, he declared in the Reichstag: 'Above all, a man who feels it his duty at such an hour to assume the leadership of his people is not responsible to the laws of parliamentary usage or to a particular democratic conception, but solely to the mission placed upon him. And anyone who interferes with this mission is an enemy of the people.'

It was in this sense of mission that Hitler, a man who believed neither in God nor in conscience ('a Jewish invention, a blemish like circumcision'), found both justification and absolution. He was the Siegfried come to reawaken Germany to greatness, for whom morality and suffering were irrelevant. So long as this sense of mission was balanced by the cynical calculations of the politician, it represented a source of strength, but success was fatal. When half Europe lay at his feet and all need of restraint was removed, Hitler abandoned himself entirely to megalomania. Ironically, failure sprang from the same capacity which brought him success, his power of self-dramatization, his ability to convince himself. Hitler played out his 'world-historical' role to the bitter end. But it was this same belief which curtailed him in illusion and blinded him to what was actually happening, leading him into that arrogant overestimate of his own genius which brought him to defeat. The sin which Hitler committed was that which the ancient Greeks called hubris, the sin of overweening pride, of believing himself to be more than a man. No man was ever more surely destroyed by the image he had created than Adolf Hitler.

After he became Chancellor Hitler had to submit to a certain degree of routine. This was against his natural inclination. He hated systematic work, hated to submit to any discipline, even self-imposed. Administration bored him and he habitually left as much as he could to others, an important fact in explaining the power of men like Hess and Martin

Bormann, who relieve work.

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Bormann, who relieved him of much of his paper-work.

When he had a big speech to prepare he would put off beginning work on it until the last moment. Once he could bring himself to begin dictating he worked himself into a passion, rehearsing the whole performance and shouting so loudly that his voice echoed through the neighbouring rooms. The speech composed, he would invite his secretaries to lunch, praising and flattering them.

Most North Germans regarded such *Schlamperei*, slovenliness, and lack of discipline as a typical Austrian trait. In Hitler's eyes it was part of his artist nature: he should have been a great painter or architect, he complained, and not a statesman at all.

He passionately hated all forms of modern art, a term in which he included most painting since the Impressionists. His taste was for the Classical models of Greece and Rome, and for the Romantic, and he had a particular fondness for nineteenth-century painting of the more sentimental type. He admired painstaking craftsmanship, and habitually kept a pile of paper on his desk for sketching in idle moments

Architecture appealed strongly to him—especially Baroque—and he had grandiose plans for the rebuilding of the big German cities. The qualities which attracted him were the monumental and the massive; the architecture of the Third Reich, like the Pyramids, was to reflect the power of its rulers.

Hitler looked upon himself not only as a connoisseur of painting and an authority on architecture, but as highly musical. In fact, his liking for music did not extend very much further than Wagner, some of Beethoven, and Bruckner, light opera and operettas. Hitler never missed a Wagner festival at Bayreuth and he claimed to have seen such operas as *Die Meistersinger* and *Götterdämmerung* more than a hundred times. He was equally fond of the cinema, and at the height of the political struggle in 1932 he

and Goebbels would slip into a picture-house to see *Mädchen in Uniform*, or Greta Garbo. When the Chancellery was rebuilt he had projectors and a screen installed on which he frequently watched films in the evening, including many of the foreign films he had forbidden in Germany.

Hitler rebuilt both the Chancellery and his house on the Obersalzberg after he came to power, the original Haus Wachenfeld becoming the famous Berghof. He had a passion for big rooms, thick carpets, and tapestries. Rauschning speaks of 'the familiar blend of *petit bourgeois* pleasures and revolutionary talk'. He liked to be driven fast in a powerful car; he liked cream cakes and sweets (specially supplied by a Berlin firm); he liked flowers in his rooms, and dogs; he liked the company of pretty—but not clever—women; he liked to be at home up in the Bavarian mountains.

It was in the evenings that Hitler's vitality rose. He hated to go to bed—for he found it hard to sleep—and after dinner he would gather his guests and his household and sit talking with them until two or three o'clock in the morning, often later. For long periods the conversation would lapse into a monologue, but to yawn or whisper was to incur immediate disfavour.

There was little ceremony about life at the Berghof. Hitler had no fondness for formality or for big social occasions. Although he lived in considerable luxury, he was indifferent to the clothes he wore, ate very little, never touched meat, and neither smoked nor drank.

The chief reason for Hitler's abstinence seems to have been anxiety about his health. He lived an unhealthy life; he took part in no sport, never rode or swam, and suffered a good deal from stomach disorders as well as from insomnia. He was depressed at the thought of dying early, before he had had time to complete his schemes, and he hoped to add years to

The Dictator

his life by careful diet. He became a crank as preached the virtues of at table with the same talking politics.

Hitler had been profoundly impressed by the organic Church. For the Protestant tempt: 'They are inhuman as dogs, and then when you talk to them, they can take seriously like Rome.' It was 'the that he respected; toward the sharpest hostility. was a religion fit only ethics in particular. It rebellion against the struggle and the survival logical extreme, Christian thematic cultivation of tactical considerations he seeing clearly the danger Church by persecution promised himself, he was influence of the Christian he would be circumspec

There is no evident popular belief that Hitler was a rationalist and a or understanding for human life or its emotional him was the raw material power cast its harsh whole of his life. Even 'world-historical' imagination private life and of his After his early days

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his life by careful dieting and avoiding stimulants. He became a crank as well as a hypochondriac, and preached the virtues of vegetarianism to his guests at table with the same insistence as he showed in talking politics.

Hitler had been brought up as a Catholic and was impressed by the organization and power of the Church. For the Protestant clergy he felt only contempt: 'They are insignificant little people, submissive as dogs, and they sweat with embarrassment when you talk to them. They have neither a religion they can take seriously nor a great position to defend like Rome.' It was 'the great position' of the Church that he respected; towards its teaching he showed the sharpest hostility. In Hitler's eyes Christianity was a religion fit only for slaves; he detested its ethics in particular. Its teaching, he declared, was a rebellion against the natural law of selection by struggle and the survival of the fittest. 'Taken to its logical extreme, Christianity would mean the systematic cultivation of the human failure.' From political considerations he restrained his anti-clericalism, seeing clearly the dangers of strengthening the Church by persecution. Once the war was over, he promised himself, he would root out and destroy the influence of the Christian Churches, but until then he would be circumspect.

There is no evidence to substantiate the once popular belief that Hitler resorted to astrology. He was a rationalist and a materialist, with no feeling or understanding for either the spiritual side of human life or its emotional, affective side. Emotion to him was the raw material of power. The pursuit of power cast its harsh shadow like a blight over the whole of his life. Everything was sacrificed to the 'world-historical' image; hence the poverty of his private life and of his human relationships.

After his early days in Munich, Hitler made few,

if any, friends. In a nostalgic mood he would talk regretfully of the *Kampfzeit*, the Years of the Struggle, and of the comradeship he had shared with the *Alte Kämpfer*, the Old Fighters. With almost no exceptions, Hitler's familiars belonged to the Nazi Old Guard. It was in this intimate circle, talking over the old days, that Hitler was most at his ease. He never lost his distrust of those who came from the bourgeois world. It was on the Old Guard alone that he believed he could rely, for they were dependent on him. More than that, he found such company, however rough, more congenial than that of the bankers and generals, high officials and diplomats, whose stiff manners and 'educated' talk roused all his old class resentment and the suspicion that they sneered at him behind his back—as they did.

Hitler enjoyed the company of women. Many women were fascinated by his hypnotic powers; there are well-attested accounts of the hysteria which affected them at his big meetings. If ladies were present at table he knew how to be attentive and charming, as long as they had no intellectual pretensions and did not try to argue with him. Gossip connected his name with that of a number of women in whose company he had been frequently seen, and speculated eagerly on his relations with them.

Much has been written, on the flimsiest evidence, about Hitler's sex life. Amongst the mass of conjecture, two hypotheses are worth serious consideration. The first is that Hitler was affected by syphilis.

There are several passages in *Mein Kampf* in which Hitler speaks with surprising emphasis of 'the scourge of venereal disease' and its effects. According to certain reports, Hitler contracted syphilis while he was a young man in Vienna. More than one medical specialist has suggested that Hitler's later symptoms—psychological as well as physical—could

be those of a man suffering of syphilis. Unless, however, some day come an open question.

A second hypothesis is of normal sexual intercourse. Hitler well in his life plainly that he was impotent; kissing and flowers, were gone on, but that, it became Hitler was capable of. My quickly: "Putzi," she said,

This too must remain inconsistent with what is with the only two women than a passing interest—the woman he married on life, Eva Braun.

Geli and Friedl Raubal widowed half-sister, Anna, their mother when she came on the Obersalzberg in 1921 simple and attractive, when she wanted to have training next six years she became companion. This period in Munich as the happiest in his life was twenty years younger him whenever he could—in her. Whether Geli was even certain. She was flattered famous uncle, but she sufficed jealousy. Hitler refused of her own; he refused to let her voice trained; he was when he discovered that service, his chauffeur, to make

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be those of a man suffering from the tertiary stage of syphilis. Unless, however, a medical report on Hitler should some day come to light this must remain an open question.

A second hypothesis is that Hitler was incapable of normal sexual intercourse. Putzi Hanfstängl, who knew Hitler well in his Bavarian days and later, says plainly that he was impotent. The gallantry, the hand-kissing and flowers, were an expression of admiration but led to nothing more. 'A bit of petting may have gone on, but that, it became clear to me, was all that Hitler was capable of. My wife summed him up very quickly: "Putzi," she said, "I tell you he is a neuter."'

This too must remain a hypothesis, but it is not inconsistent with what is known of Hitler's relations with the only two women in whom he showed more than a passing interest—his niece, Geli Raubal, and the woman he married on the day before he took his life, Eva Braun.

Geli and Friedl Raubal, the daughters of Hitler's widowed half-sister, Angela Raubal, accompanied their mother when she came to keep house for Hitler on the Obersalzberg in 1925. Geli was then seventeen, simple and attractive, with a pleasant voice which she wanted to have trained for singing. During the next six years she became Hitler's constant companion. This period in Munich Hitler later described as the happiest in his life; he idolized this girl, who was twenty years younger than himself, took her with him whenever he could—in short, he fell in love with her. Whether Geli was ever in love with him is uncertain. She was flattered and impressed by her now famous uncle, but she suffered from his hypersensitive jealousy. Hitler refused to let her have any life of her own; he refused to let her go to Vienna to have her voice trained; he was beside himself with fury when he discovered that she had allowed Emil Maurice, his chauffeur, to make love to her, and forbade

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* D.T. keeps Emil Maurice as
as a species of memory aphrodisiac
for Hitler

the dream of his own greatness, ever had the capacity to love anyone deeply. At the best of times he was never an easy man to live with: his moods were too incalculable, his distrust too easily aroused. He was quick to imagine and slow to forget a slight; there was a strong strain of vindictiveness in him which often found expression in a mean and petty spite.

There is no doubt that Hitler, if he was in the right mood, could be an attractive, indeed a fascinating companion. On the outings in which he delighted he not only showed great capacity for enjoyment himself, but put others at their ease. He could talk well and he had the actor's gift of mimicry to amuse his companions. On the other hand, his sense of humour was strongly tinged with a malicious pleasure in other people's misfortunes or stupidities. He would laugh delightedly at the description by Goebbels of the indignities the Jews had suffered at the hands of the Berlin S.A. Indifferent towards the sufferings of others, he lacked any feeling of sympathy, was intolerant and callous, and filled with contempt for the common run of humanity. Pity and mercy he regarded as humanitarian clap-trap and signs of weakness. The more absorbed he became by the arrogant belief in his mission and infallibility the more complete became his loneliness, until in the last years of his life he was cut off from all human contact and lost in a world of inhuman fantasy where the only thing that was real or mattered was his own will.

'A man who has no sense of history,' Hitler declared, 'is like a man who has no ears or eyes.' He claimed to have had a passionate interest in history since his schooldays and he displayed considerable familiarity with the course of European history. His conversation was studded with historical references and parallels. More than that: Hitler's whole cast of thought was historical, and his sense of mission derived from his sense of history.

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Like his contemporary Spengler, Hitler was fascinated by the rise and fall of civilizations. He saw himself born at a similar critical moment in European history when the liberal bourgeois world of the nineteenth century was disintegrating. What would take its place? The future lay with the 'Jewish-Bolshevik' ideology of the masses unless Europe could be saved by the Nazi racist ideology of the élite. This was his mission and he drew upon history to fortify him in it.

To his *Weltanschauung*, however repellent, Hitler remained remarkably consistent. Once formed, it was rigid and inflexible. Hitler's was a closed mind, violently rejecting any alternative view, refusing to criticize or allow others to criticize his assumptions. Of historical study as a critical discipline, or of the rich fields of human history beside the quest for power, war, and the construction of empires, he was invincibly ignorant.

If Hitler's views on politics were dogmatic and intolerant, his opinions on every other topic were, in addition, banal, narrow-minded, and totally unoriginal as well as harsh and brutal. What he had to say about marriage, women, education, religion, bore the indelible stamp of an innate vulgarity and coarseness of spirit. He was not only cut off from the richest experiences of ordinary human life—love, marriage, family, human sympathy, friendship—but the whole imaginative and speculative world of European literature was closed to him. Everything that spoke of the human spirit and of the thousand forms in which it has flowered, from mysticism to science, was alien to him.

The basis of Hitler's political beliefs was a crude Darwinism. 'Man has become great through struggle. . . . Whatever goal man has reached is due to his originality plus his brutality. . . . All life is bound up in three theses: Struggle is the father of all

things, virtue lies in blood, leadership is primary and decisive.' It followed from this that 'through all the centuries force and power are the determining factors. . . . Only force rules. Force is the first law.' Force was more than the decisive factor in any situation; it was force which alone created right. 'Always before God and the world, the stronger has the right to carry through what he wills.'

The ability to seize and hold a decisive superiority in the struggle for existence Hitler expressed in the idea of race, the role of which is as central in Nazi mythology as that of class in Marxist. All that mankind has achieved, Hitler declared in *Mein Kampf*, has been the work of the Aryan race. Although Hitler frequently talked as if he regarded the whole German nation as of pure Aryan stock (whatever that may mean) his real view was rather different. It was only a part of any nation which could be regarded as Aryan. These constituted an élite within the nation which stamped its ideas upon the development of the whole people, and by its leadership gave this racial agglomeration an Aryan character which in origin belonged only to a section. Thus Hitler's belief in race could be used to justify both the right of the German people to ride roughshod over 'inferior' peoples, and the right of the Nazis, representing an élite, to rule over the German people.

This explains why Hitler often referred to the Nazi capture of power in Germany as a racial revolution, since it represented the replacement of one ruling caste by another. As Hitler told Otto Strasser in May 1930: 'We want to make a selection from the new dominating caste which is not moved, as you are, by any ethic of pity, but is quite clear in its own mind that it has the right to dominate others because it represents a better race.'

What Hitler was seeking to express in his use of the word 'race' was his belief in inequality—both between peoples and individuals—as another of the

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iron laws of Nature. He the egalitarian doctrines economic, political and in

Just as he opposed the democratic belief in equal personal liberty Hitler opposed the *Volk*, the primitive, i of blood and soil.

The *Volk* not only gave the individual's life, it which all other institutions judged. Justice, truth and must all be subordinated to the *Volk* and its preservation.

As soon as Hitler began organization of the State, his mind was that the State as an instrument of qualities to be valued was sacrificed. It was from the *Arbeitsprinzip*, the leadership of the Nazi Party, and lastly, the State, were built.

In Hitler's eyes the way that it bred irresponsibility was to anonymous majorities on the avoidance of decisions. At the same time, the freedom of discussion and freedom of the unity of the nation. For the Youth, 'we have to learn to dominate us, we must find discipline must weld us to subordination must fill us with nation.'

'Our Constitution,' wrote lawyer, Dr. Hans Frank, 'This was in fact literally

iron laws of Nature. He had a passionate dislike of the egalitarian doctrines of democracy in every field, economic, political and international.

Just as he opposed the concept of 'race' to the democratic belief in equality, so to the idea of personal liberty Hitler opposed the superior claims of the *Volk*, the primitive, instinctive tribal community of blood and soil.

The *Volks* not only gave meaning and purpose to the individual's life, it provided the standard by which all other institutions and claims were to be judged. Justice, truth and the freedom to criticize must all be subordinated to the overriding claims of the *Volks* and its preservation.

As soon as Hitler began to think and talk about the organization of the State, the metaphor which dominated his mind was that of an army. He saw the State as an instrument of power in which the qualities to be valued were discipline, unity and sacrifice. It was from the Army that he took the *Führerprinzip*, the leadership principle, upon which first the Nazi Party, and later the National Socialist State, were built.

In Hitler's eyes the weakness of democracy was that it bred irresponsibility by leaving decisions always to anonymous majorities, thus putting a premium on the avoidance of difficult and unpopular decisions. At the same time, the Party system, freedom of discussion and freedom of the Press sapped the unity of the nation. From this, he told the Hitler Youth, 'we have to learn our lesson: one will must dominate us, we must form a single unity; one discipline must weld us together; one obedience, one subordination must fill us all, for above us stands the nation.'

'Our Constitution,' wrote Nazi Germany's leading lawyer, Dr. Hans Frank, 'is the will of the Führer.' This was in fact literally true. The Weimar Con-

stitution was never replaced; it was simply suspended by the Enabling Law, which was renewed periodically and placed all power in Hitler's hands.

Yet Hitler was equally careful to insist that his power was rooted in the people; his was a plebiscitary and popular dictatorship, a democratic Caesarism. It is obvious that Hitler felt—and not without justification—that his power, despite the Gestapo and the concentration camps, was founded on popular support to a large degree.

Like all revolutionary movements, Nazism drew much of its strength from the formation of a new leadership drawn from other than the traditional classes. The Party's fourteen years of struggle served as a process of natural selection, and even before coming to power, the Party created the cadres of leadership to take over the State.

Once in power the Party remained the guarantor of the National Socialist character of the State. 'Our Government is supported by two organizations: politically by the community of the *Volk* organized in the National Socialist movement, and in the military sphere by the Army.' These, to use another phrase of Hitler's, were the two pillars of the State. The

Party was a power held in reserve to act, if the State should fail to safeguard the interests of the *Volk*; it was the link between the Führer and his *Volk*; finally it was the agent for the education of the people in the Nazi *Weltanschauung*. Education is an ambiguous word in this context; on another occasion Hitler spoke of 'stamping the Nazi *Weltanschauung* on the German people.' 'The main plank in the Nationalist Socialist programme,' Hitler declared in 1937, 'is to abolish the liberalistic concept of the individual and the Marxist concept of humanity and to substitute for them the *Volk* community, rooted in the soil and bound together by the bond of its common blood.'

While Hitler's attitude towards liberalism was

one of contempt, towards implacable hostility. The liberalism had lost its attractiveness, especially in Germany, had deep roots. Marxism, represented by revisionist Socialism, was able to exert a powerful appeal on masses comparable with that of the profound differences between Democracy in practice and the rival working-class ideology embodied in mass democracy and authoritarianism as opposed to the autocratic rule of an élite; equality of peoples as opposed to racial nationalism of the strong; class unity; internationalism versus

The Marxist conception of solidarity cutting across frontiers was a threat to Hitler's own exalted concept of the nation founded on the community-minded concept of the nation embodied in, and guaranteed by, the State.

Just as Hitler ascribed all qualities and achievements to what he hated is embodied in the figure, that of the Jew. That Hitler believed what he said first to last his anti-Semitic consistent themes in his career: he embraces the whole span of human history in every direction one follows. I sooner or later one encounters the Jew, the universal scapegoat, the favourite phrases, which have

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one of contempt, towards Marxism he showed an implacable hostility. The difference is significant. Liberalism had lost its attraction in the age of mass-politics, especially in Germany, where it had never had deep roots. Marxism, however, whether represented by revisionist Social Democracy or revolutionary Communism, was a rival *Weltanschauung* able to exert a powerful attractive force over the masses comparable with that of Nazism. Ignoring the profound differences between Communism and Social Democracy in practice and the bitter hostility between the rival working-class parties, he saw in their common ideology the embodiment of all that he detested—mass democracy and a levelling egalitarianism as opposed to the authoritarian state and the rule of an élite; equality and friendship among peoples as opposed to racial inequality and the domination of the strong; class solidarity versus national unity; internationalism versus nationalism.

The Marxist conception of class war and of class solidarity cutting across frontiers was a particular threat to Hitler's own exaltation of national unity founded on the community of the *Volk*. His single-minded concept of the national interest was to be embodied in, and guaranteed by, the absolutism of the State.

Just as Hitler ascribed to the 'Aryan' all the qualities and achievements which he admired, so all that he hated is embodied in another mythological figure, that of the Jew. There can be little doubt that Hitler believed what he said about the Jews; from first to last his anti-Semitism is one of the most consistent themes in his career, the master idea which embraces the whole span of his thought. In whatever direction one follows Hitler's train of thought, sooner or later one encounters the satanic figure of the Jew, the universal scapegoat. One of Hitler's favourite phrases, which he claimed—very unfairly

—to have taken from Mommsen, was: 'The Jew is the ferment of decomposition in peoples.'

In 1922 Hitler said: 'The Jew has never founded any civilization, though he has destroyed hundreds. He possesses nothing of his own creation to which he can point. Everything he has stolen. . . . In the last resort it is the Aryan alone who can form States and set them on their path to future greatness.' From this early speech through the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 and the pogrom of November 1938 to the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto and the death camps of Mauthausen and Auschwitz, Hitler's purpose was plain and unwavering. He meant to carry out the extermination of the Jewish race in Europe, using the word 'extermination' not in a metaphorical but in a precise and literal sense as the deliberate policy of the German State—and he very largely succeeded. On a conservative estimate, between four and four and a half million Jews perished in Europe under Hitler's rule—apart from the number driven from their homes who succeeded in finding refuge abroad.

Stripped of their romantic trimmings, all Hitler's ideas can be reduced to a simple claim for power which recognizes only one relationship, that of domination, and only one argument, that of force.

Hitler was not original in this view. Every single one of his ideas—from the exaltation of the heroic leader, the racial myth, anti-Semitism, the community of the *Volk*, and the attack on the intellect, to the idea of a ruling élite, the subordination of the individual and the doctrine that might is right—is to be found in anti-rational and racist writers in most European countries during the hundred years which separate the Romantic movement from the foundation of the Third Reich. By 1914 they had become the commonplaces of radical, anti-Semitic and pan-German journalism in every city in Central Eu-

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rope, including Vienna picked them up.

Hitler's originality lay in a terrifyingly literal way in which he translated them into reality by the means by which he translated speeches and table talk into action again by the lack of magnificent moral greatness. His politics display a cocksure, eradicable vulgarity. Yet in the insignificance of his gifts was compatible with brilliant gifts to associate such gifts with which Napoleon possessed the character of a Cromwell astonished and offended by underestimating Hitler as a mistake that so many German demagogues made in the 1930s.

It was not a mistake which was made closely with him. When he made. When man, however much they decided on this or that decision, the ascendancy which he was who came into frequent contact with who arrived at his headquarters on the hopelessness of the situation to make any protest when they met the Führer, but returned still and half convinced that he was

The final test of this ascendancy stages of this history when the success destroyed, the German and the greater part of the figure, whom his people no longer still able to prolong the war.

hopelessness until the enemy was in the streets of Berlin and he himself decided to break the spell. But the events of these earlier years cannot be understood unless it is recognized that, however much in retrospect Hitler may seem to fall short of the stature of greatness, in the years 1938 to 1941, at the height of his success, he had succeeded in persuading a great part of the German nation that in him they had found a ruler of more than human qualities, a man of genius raised up by Providence to lead them into the Promised Land.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

FROM VIENNA TO PRAGUE

1938-9

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The winter of 1937-8 marks the turning-point in Hitler's policy from the restricted purpose of removing the limitations imposed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles to the bolder course which brought the spectacular triumphs of the years 1938-41. It was not so much a change in the direction or character of his foreign policy as the opening of a new phase in its development. The time was ripe, he judged, for the realization of aims he had long nurtured.

Hitler had no cut-and-dried views about how he was to proceed, but he was revolving certain possibilities in his mind and, granted favourable circumstances, he was prepared to move against Austria and Czechoslovakia as early as the new year, 1938.

The prospects Hitler had unfolded at the meeting of 5 November 1937 alarmed at least some of those who were present. The Army leaders, Blomberg and Fritsch, feared risking war with Great Britain and France, and were anxious about such material points as the incomplete state of Germany's western fortifications, France's military power and the strength of the Czech defences.

These doubts were not removed by Hitler's irritable assurances that he was convinced Britain would never fight and that he did not believe France would go to war on her own. On 9 November, Fritsch renewed his objections to Hitler. Neurath, the Foreign Minister, also attempted to see Hitler and dissuade him from the course he proposed to follow. Hitler hated to have his intuition subjected to analysis.

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From Vienna to Prague, 1938-9

1937 - '38 ← 235

In September 1936 Hitler named him Plenipotentiary for the Four-Year Plan, a scheme to make Germany self-sufficient which Schacht regarded as impossible. To Schacht's contempt for Göring's ignorance of economics was added the pique of a vain and ambitious man at the rise of a rival power. On 5 September Schacht went on leave of absence from the Ministry of Economics, and his resignation was reluctantly accepted on 8 December 1937. In order to preserve appearances he remained Minister without Portfolio, and for the time being President of the Reichsbank as well. Schacht's successor as Minister of Economics was Walther Funk, but the post was shorn of the greater part of its powers, being wholly subordinated to Göring.

Two principal institutions of the State had so far escaped the process of *Gleichschaltung*—the Foreign Service and the Army. Both were strongholds of that upper-class conservatism which roused all Hitler's suspicion and dislike. Hitler had at first accepted the view that the cooperation of the professional diplomats and the generals was indispensable to him, but he rapidly came to feel contempt for the advice he received from the Foreign Office, whose political as well as social traditions he regarded as too respectable and too limited for the novel, half-revolutionary, half-gangster tactics with which he meant to conduct his foreign policy. Neurath, the Foreign Minister, one of President Hindenburg's appointments, still retained some independence of position, and would have to be replaced.

But the critical relationship was that with the Army. So far the bargain of 1934 had worked well, but not without signs of trouble, which were ominous for the future. The generals, although delighted with the rearmament of Germany, were critical of the speed with which it had been rushed through. The flood of conscripts which began to pour into the depots was more than the four thousand officers of

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chief lieutenant, Heydrich—who had been expelled from the Naval Officer Corps for scandalous conduct in 1930—now entertained the ambition of humbling the proud independence of the Officer Corps, which treated the S.S. and its 'officers' with icy contempt.

The man to whom the Army looked to defend its interests was not the man they now considered Hitler's puppet, Blomberg, who was Minister of War and Commander-in-Chief of the Wehrmacht, but Colonel-General von Fritsch, Commander-in-Chief of the Army (Reichswehr). Fritsch was to prove unequal to the hopes placed in him.

The key to the relationship between the Army and the Nazi régime was Hitler's own attitude. Closer acquaintance had reduced the exaggerated respect he originally felt for the generals. After 1935-6 he saw them as no more than a group of men who, with few exceptions, lacked understanding of anything outside their own highly important but narrow field of specialization, a caste whose pretensions were unsupported by political ability or, when put to the test, by solidarity in face of an appeal to their self-interest. By the beginning of 1938, with his power securely established and with the foundations of German military rearmament solidly laid, he no longer felt the same need to buy the Army's support on its own terms. Thus when Blomberg and Fritsch, on the grounds of Germany's unpreparedness, attempted to apply a brake to the development of his foreign policy, he disregarded their judgement and felt no need to appease their doubts.

Hitler was still smarting with irritation at the opposition Fritsch had expressed in November 1937, when an apparently unconnected series of events provided him with the chance to end once and for all the pretensions of the High Command to independent views.

The trouble began with Blomberg's eagerness to get married to a certain Fräulein Erna Grünh, who,

Blomberg admitted, was a lady with a 'past'. Aware of the rigid views of the Officer Corps on the social suitability of the wife of a Field-Marshal and a Minister of War, Blomberg consulted Göring as a brother-officer. Göring actively encouraged him, and when the marriage took place—very quietly—on 12 January, Hitler and Göring were the two principal witnesses.

At this stage, however, complications arose. A police dossier disclosed that the wife of the Field-Marshal had a police record as a prostitute. Blomberg had dishonoured the Officer Corps, and the generals saw no reason to spare a man whom they had long disliked for his attitude towards Hitler. Supported by Göring, and urged on by the Chief of Staff, General Beck, Fritsch requested an interview with Hitler and presented the Army's protest: Blomberg must go. Hitler eventually agreed, and the question then arose who was to succeed Blomberg.

Fritsch was the obvious candidate, but Himmler opposed him as the man responsible for defeating his attempts to extend the power of the S.S. to the Army, and Göring was ambitious to get Blomberg's place for himself. Indeed, the part played by Göring throughout the whole affair—his encouragement of Blomberg, and the fact that it was he who informed Hitler of the information which had come to light about Erna Grünh after the marriage—invites suspicion. Finally, Hitler too must have hesitated to appoint a man who had shown himself so lukewarm and unconvinced by the Führer's genius at the secret conference on 5 November.

Himmler and Göring settled the matter by again producing a police dossier, this time to show that General von Fritsch had been guilty of homosexual practices. They went further: when Hitler summoned Fritsch to the Chancellery at noon on 26 January and faced him with the charges in the dossier, they arranged for the Commander-in-Chief to be confronted

From Vienna to Prague, with Hans Schmidt, a young man by spying on and blackmailing homosexuals.

Schmidt identified Fritsch whom he had extorted money from as worthless. The officer in question was not Fritsch at all, but by the name of Frisch. Even in court that he had been forced to agree to their demands. Fritsch, as Himmler ordered, was removed from office in indiscretion with his life. He served his purpose. In the face of General von Fritsch's maintenance, and when Hitler sent him, he refused to take any action.

For a few days it looked as if it would lead to a major crisis. A furious storm of scenes round the question of whether to be a court of inquiry into the matter, and, if so, who should conduct it. Behind this loomed the question of who was to be given command, now not only Blomberg's place, but also Commander-in-Chief of the Army, and Fritsch's as Commander-in-Chief of the Army had to be filled.

Hitler's solution to the problem was the German Cabinet, when during the Third Reich. After announcing Blomberg's resignation, he added that Fritsch, too, had resigned his duties because of ill health. as C-in-C. of the Armed Forces. The old post of War Minister had held as well, was transferred to the War Ministry was held by a separate High Command (Oberkommando der Wehrmacht).

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Schmidt identified Fritsch as one of those from
whom he had extorted money. The identification was
worthless. The officer in question, it later emerged,
was not Fritsch at all, but a retired cavalry officer
by the name of Frisch. Eventually Schmidt confessed
in court that he had been threatened by the Gestapo
if he did not agree to their demands and incriminate
Fritsch, as Himmler ordered. Schmidt paid for this
indiscretion with his life. But by then the trick had
served its purpose. In face of Hitler's angry charges,
General von Fritsch maintained an indignant silence,
and when Hitler sent him on indefinite leave, he
refused to take any action to defend himself.

For a few days it looked as if the affair might lead
to a major crisis. A furious battle developed behind
the scenes round the question whether there should
be a court of inquiry into the charges against Fritsch
and, if so, who should conduct it, the Army or the
Party. Behind this loomed the far bigger question
of who was to be given command of the Army, for
now not only Blomberg's office of Minister of War
and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, but
also Fritsch's as Commander-in-Chief of the Army,
had to be filled.

Hitler's solution to the problem was presented to
the German Cabinet, when it met for the last time
during the Third Reich on Monday, 4 February.
After announcing Blomberg's resignation, Hitler
added that Fritsch, too, had asked to be relieved of
his duties because of ill health. Blomberg's successor
as C.-in-C. of the Armed Forces was to be Hitler
himself. The old post of War Minister, which Blom-
berg had held as well, was to be abolished. The work
of the War Ministry was henceforward to be done by
a separate High Command of the Armed Forces
(Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, the familiar O.K.W.

of the war communiqués), which in fact became Hitler's personal staff. To the head of the O.K.W. he appointed a man who was to prove quite incapable of withstanding him, even if he had wanted to—General Wilhelm Keitel.

In General von Brauchitsch Hitler found a man acceptable to the Officer Corps in Fritsch's post of Commander-in-Chief of the Army. At the same time, however, he took the chance to retire sixteen of the senior generals and to transfer forty-four others to different commands. To console Göring, Hitler promoted him to the rank of Field-Marshal, which made him the senior German officer.

The purge extended further than the Army. Neurath was relieved of his office as Foreign Minister, and replaced at the Wilhelmstrasse by the subservient Ribbentrop. The three ambassadors in the key posts of Vienna (Papen), Rome (Hassell), and Tokyo (Herbert von Dirksen) were simultaneously replaced.

Thus Hitler succeeded in removing the few checks which remained upon his freedom of action by using a situation not of his making to establish a still firmer grip upon the control of policy and the machinery of the State. He had replaced Blomberg and Fritsch, Neurath and Schacht, with creatures of his own will—Keitel, Ribbentrop, and Funk—and added to the power in his own hands by assuming direct control of the Armed Forces. When put to the test, the claim of the Army to stand apart from the process of *Gleichschaltung* in the totalitarian state had proved to be hollow.

This last stage in the revolution after power marked the end of the Conservatives' hopes that they still preserved some slender guarantees against the recklessness of the Nazis. It was the prelude to the new era in foreign policy.

About nine o'clock on the evening of 4 February (the day of the Cabinet Meeting in Berlin) Franz

From Vienna to Prague,

von Papen, the Führer's Vienna, was sitting in his when the telephone bell rang. Lammers, speaking first with the brief announcement in Vienna was at an end.

Papen's surprise was confirmed. Hitler personally only the had then been said about the question everyone asked. Papen's recall would be full man policy towards Austria.

For the past eighteen months relations had been governed by 1936. The interpretation of two parties, however, showed opinion. The Austrian Government though not very strongly, might serve as a final settlement between Germany and then the other hand, clearly regarding which to exercise pressure in a way that, in the end, Austria be undermined and the Anschluss fully, on the initiative of the Government in Vienna. Chancellor's manoeuvre in resisting success. For there was a strong uncertainty in Austria which bitterly resented the full penetration represented by the seizure of power by a putsch. Hitler wanted to give the Austrian Nazis an alternative which he could not exert pressure on the Austrian Government proved too obstinate or evasive demands.

On 25 January 1938 a political crisis in the Nazis' headquarters in Vienna led to the prospect of a rising in the spring of

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Hitler found a man in Fritsch's post of y. At the same time, retire sixteen of the forty-four others to Göring, Hitler pro-Marshall, which made

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ning of 4 February g in Berlin) Franz

von Papen, the Führer's special representative in Vienna, was sitting in his study at the Legation when the telephone bell rang. It was the State Secretary, Lammers, speaking from the Reich Chancellery, with the brief announcement that Papen's mission in Vienna was at an end and he had been recalled.

Papen's surprise was considerable, for he had seen Hitler personally only the week before and nothing had then been said about his recall or transfer. The question everyone asked in Vienna was whether Papen's recall would be followed by a change in German policy towards Austria.

For the past eighteen months, Austro-German relations had been governed by the Agreement of July 1936. The interpretation of that Agreement by the two parties, however, showed wide differences of opinion. The Austrian Government had originally, though not very strongly, hoped that the Agreement might serve as a final settlement of the differences between Germany and themselves. The Germans, on the other hand, clearly regarded it as a lever with which to exercise pressure on the Austrians in such a way that, in the end, Austrian independence would be undermined and the *Anschluss* carried out peacefully, on the initiative of a Nazi-controlled government in Vienna. Chancellor Schuschnigg's room for manoeuvre in resisting such pressure was limited. For there was a strong underground Nazi party in Austria which bitterly resented the policy of peaceful penetration represented by Papen and itched to seize power by a putsch. Hitler had so far refused to give the Austrian Nazis a free hand, but this was an alternative which he could use to bring additional pressure on the Austrian Government if Schuschnigg proved too obstinate or evasive in meeting German demands.

On 25 January 1938 a police raid on the Austrian Nazis' headquarters in Vienna brought to light plans for a rising in the spring of 1938 and for an appeal

to Hitler to intervene. Schuschnigg was uneasy and only too well aware of Austria's increased isolation with the establishment of the Rome-Berlin Axis. At the time of Papen's sudden recall, the Austrian Chancellor was already revolving in his mind the advantage of a personal meeting with Hitler to put German-Austrian relations on a clearer footing.

Papen now had very good reasons of his own for advocating such a meeting. Here might be a chance to reinstate himself, and the day after his dismissal he hurried to Berchtesgaden to put the proposal to Hitler personally. The suggestion that Schuschnigg might come to see him aroused Hitler's interest. Ignoring the fact that he had just recalled Papen from his post, he ordered him to return at once to Vienna and make the necessary arrangements.

Schuschnigg tried to safeguard himself by asking for assurances that the 1936 Agreement should remain the basis of Austro-German relations in the future. Papen was perfectly ready to give such assurances, and on the evening of 11 February Schuschnigg and his Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Guido Schmidt, quietly left Vienna by train. The next morning they were driven up the mountain roads from Salzburg to the Obersalzberg. Hitler was waiting on the steps of the Berghof when they arrived, and at once conducted the Austrian Chancellor into his study for a private talk before lunch.

Scarcely had they sat down than Hitler, brushing aside Schuschnigg's polite remarks about the view from his window, launched into an angry tirade against the whole course of Austrian policy. Schuschnigg's attempts to interrupt and defend himself were shouted down as Hitler rapidly worked himself into a towering rage. He talked excitedly of his mission: 'I have achieved everything that I set out to do, and have thus become perhaps the greatest German in history.' Characteristically, he began to abuse Schuschnigg for ordering defence works to be con-

structed on the border. 'Germany, which was pe 'just revenge'.

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structed on the border. This was an open affront to Germany, which was perfectly capable of exerting 'just revenge'.

Austria, Hitler sneered, was alone: neither France, nor Britain, nor Italy would lift a finger to save her. And now his patience was exhausted. Unless Schuschnigg was prepared to agree, at once, to all that he demanded, he would settle matters by force. For the moment, however, Hitler said nothing of what his demands were. After this two-hour tirade, he suddenly broke off and led his guest in to lunch. Throughout the meal he was charm itself, but the presence of German generals at the table did not escape the Austrians' notice.

In the middle of the afternoon Schuschnigg was taken to see Ribbentrop and Papen. They presented him with a draft of Hitler's demands. The Austrian Government was to lift the ban on the Nazi Party and to recognize that National Socialism was perfectly compatible with loyalty to Austria. Seyss-Inquart, a 'respectable' crypto-Nazi, was to be appointed Minister of the Interior, with control of the police and the right to see that Nazi activity was allowed to develop along the lines indicated. An amnesty for all imprisoned Nazis was to be proclaimed, and Nazi officials and officers who had been dismissed were to be reinstated. Another pro-Nazi, Glaise-Horstenau, was to be appointed Minister of War, and to assure close relations between the German and Austrian Armies there was to be a systematic exchange of officers. Finally, the Austrian economic system was to be assimilated to that of Germany.

Schuschnigg's efforts to secure alterations in the draft, other than minor changes, were unavailing. Hitler told him: 'You will either sign as it is and fulfil my demands within three days, or I will order the march into Austria.' When Schuschnigg explained that, although willing to sign, he could not, by the Austrian Constitution, guarantee ratification,

or the observance of the time limit for the amnesty, Hitler flung open the door, and, turning Schuschnigg out, shouted for General Keitel. The effect of the summons was well calculated, and Schmidt remarked to the Chancellor that he would not be surprised if they were arrested in the next five minutes. Half an hour later, however, Hitler again sent for Schuschnigg. 'I have decided to change my mind,' he told him. 'For the first time in my life. But I warn you—this is your very last chance. I have given you three more days before the Agreement goes into effect.'

This was the limit of Hitler's concessions, and the Austrian Chancellor had little option but to sign. His one anxiety now was to get away. Just twenty-four hours after they had arrived at Salzburg the Austrian Chancellor's train set out again for Vienna. Up at the Berghof the Führer relaxed: it had been a highly successful day.

The next day, the 13th, General Alfred Jodl recorded a meeting with Keitel: 'He tells us that the Führer's order is that military pressure by shamming military action should be kept up until the 15th.' On the 14th Jodl added: 'The effect is quick and strong. In Austria the impression is created that Germany is undertaking serious military preparations.' On the 16th, the Austrian Government announced a general amnesty for Nazis and the reorganization of the cabinet, with Seyss-Inquart as Minister of the Interior. The Austrian Nazis were already boasting that within a matter of weeks, if not of days, they would be in the saddle and give Austria a taste of the whip.

At the end of the first week of March Schuschnigg resolved upon a desperate expedient which, he hoped, would destroy the strongest argument Hitler had so far used—that a majority of the Austrian people were in favour of an *Anschluss* with Germany. He determined to hold a plebiscite on Sunday 13 March, in which the Austrian people should be invited to . . . declare whether they were in favour of an Austria

From Vienna to Prague, which was free and independent.

Hitler does not appear the plebiscite until the was furious that Schuschnigg him in this way, but he and nothing was prepared German and Austrian Nationalism, and military plan

The question that moved Mussolini's reaction, and Hesse to the Duce with a mission to deliver personally a convincing argument that Austria with the Czechs, in order and 'to throw the weight of a million men against Germany then continued that the Germans oppressed by their last, the Austrian people oppressors, and Austria was of anarchy. He could no longer of his responsibilities as Father and as a son of Austria

In the course of the night his orders to Gisele Horst in Berlin, and packed him two o'clock in the morning. The invasion of Austria, the time Hitler went to Berlin 11 March the Army trucks beginning to roll south to

The same morning, in Vienna, the telephone woke at half past five. The Chinese line: the German border closed an hour before, and two countries stopped. The

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From Vienna to Prague, 1938-9

which was free and independent, German and Christian.

Hitler does not appear to have been informed of the plebiscite until the afternoon of 9 March. He was furious that Schuschnigg should try to obstruct him in this way, but he had been taken by surprise and nothing was prepared for such an eventuality. German and Austrian Nazi leaders were hastily summoned, and military plans were drawn up.

The question that most preoccupied Hitler was Mussolini's reaction, and he sent off Prince Philip of Hesse to the Duce with a letter which he had instructions to deliver personally. It began with the unconvincing argument that Austria had been conspiring with the Czechs, in order to restore the Hapsburgs and 'to throw the weight of a mass of at least twenty million men against Germany if necessary'. Hitler then continued that the Germans in Austria were being oppressed by their own government. Now, at last, the Austrian people were rising against their oppressors, and Austria was being brought to a state of anarchy. He could no longer remain passive in face of his responsibilities as Führer of the German Reich and as a son of Austrian soil.

In the course of the night 10-11 March Hitler gave his orders to Glaise-Horstenau, who was still waiting in Berlin, and packed him off to Vienna by plane. At two o'clock in the morning Directive No. 1 for Operation Otto, the invasion of Austria, was issued. By the time Hitler went to bed early on the morning of 11 March the Army trucks and tanks were already beginning to roll south towards the frontier.

The same morning, in the Chancellor's flat in Vienna, the telephone woke Schuschnigg from his sleep at half past five. The Chief of Police, Skubl, was on the line: the German border at Salzburg had been closed an hour before, and all rail traffic between the two countries stopped. The Chancellor dressed and

Chancellor, 1933-9

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From Vienna to Prague, 1938-9

March 9, 1938

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ernment. Anyone who objected would have to face a German court-martial by the invading troops. With Seyss-Inquart technically in office the façade of legality could be preserved. When Keppler telephoned to Berlin shortly before 9 p.m. to report that Seyss-Inquart was acting as instructed, Göring replied: 'Listen. You are the Government now. Listen carefully and take notes. The following telegram should be sent here to Berlin by Seyss-Inquart: "The provisional Austrian Government, which, after the dismissal of the Schuschnigg Government, considers it its task to establish peace and order in Austria, sends to the German Government the urgent request to support it in its task and to help it prevent bloodshed. For this purpose it asks the German Government to send German troops as soon as possible."' Göring added a few more instructions. Seyss-Inquart was to form a government from the names on the list sent from Berlin; the frontiers were to be watched, to prevent people getting away.

Throughout the country the local Nazis were already seizing town halls and government offices. The threat of a seizure of power by force, which was implicit in the noisy mob filling the street outside the Chancellery, contributed to the atmosphere of compulsion before which in the end President Miklas had to yield, and a little before midnight he capitulated. To avoid bloodshed and in the hope of securing at least the shadow of Austrian independence, he nominated Seyss-Inquart as Federal Chancellor of Austria. At two o'clock in the morning Seyss-Inquart's appeal to Hitler to halt German troops at the frontier was turned down: the occupation must go on.

The hour for crossing the frontier was fixed at day-break on Saturday, the 12th. Before then Hitler had received the message he had been waiting for all day—news from Rome. When Prince Philip rang up at 10.25 p.m. on the night of 11 March, it was Hitler, not Göring, who came to the telephone to hear the

reassuring words: 'The Duce accepted the whole thing in a very friendly manner. He sends you his regards. . . .' Hitler's response was effusive: 'Please tell Mussolini I will never forget him for this. . . . I will never forget, whatever may happen. If he should ever need any help or be in any danger, he can be convinced that I shall stick to him, whatever may happen, even if the whole world were against him.'

With that load off his mind Hitler was content to leave Göring to take over the direction of affairs in Berlin. He was not much worried about the risk of British or French intervention, but Göring took steps to secure a promise that the Czech Army would not come to Austria's aid.

Hitler himself crossed the frontier on the 12th, and drove through the decorated villages into the crowded, cheering streets of Linz. He was in an excited mood: he had come home at last. The next day he went out to lay a wreath on his parents' grave at Leonding. To Mussolini he sent a telegram: 'I shall never forget this. Adolf Hitler.' To the crowds he declared: 'If Providence once called me forth from this town to be the leader of the Reich, it must, in so doing, have charged me with a mission, and that mission could be only to restore my dear homeland to the German Reich.'

That night, perhaps under the influence of the enthusiastic reception he had met in his homeland, Hitler decided not to set up a satellite government under Seyss-Inquart but to incorporate Austria directly into the Reich.

Next morning, the Sunday on which the ill-fated plebiscite was to have been held, one of Hitler's State Secretaries, Stuckart, flew to Vienna to place Hitler's plan before the new Austrian Government. The terms in which the suggestion was framed admitted of only one answer. A Cabinet meeting was hurriedly summoned, and late on the night of the 13th Seyss-In-

From Vienna to Prague

quart was able to present of a law already promulgated which read: 'Austria is Reich.' Hitler was deeply touched, and he turned to mark: 'Yes, a good political move. same night the arrests began were to total seventy-six

Austria was to have its independence in which not only Greater Germany was to be placed under Nazi auspices. When he visited the Reichstag on 18 March Hitler's declaration of the Reichstag and his appeal for another plebiscite to consolidate the gains of the Anschluss.

In the course of the election campaign from end to end of the demonstration at Vienna Hitler's master of Vienna he said is in my eyes a pearl. I wish which is worthy of it and of the whole German nation.

Under the Nazi system there was room for surprises—99.0 per cent approval of his actions; in the plebiscite higher still: 99.75. 'For this is the proudest hour of my life.'

The union of Austria with Germany was the fulfilment of a German dream. At the Versailles Conference, which had set even than the unification of Germany. Bismarck had deliberately refused the dissolution of the Hapsburg Empire. In the war many Austrians had fought for Germany the only future of the non-German province of the empire appeared to be left hanging.

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quart was able to present the Führer with the text
of a law already promulgated, the first article of
which read: 'Austria is a province of the German
Reich.' Hitler was deeply moved. Tears ran down his
cheeks, and he turned to his companions with the re-
mark: 'Yes, a good political action saves blood.' The
same night the arrests began: in Vienna alone they
were to total seventy-six thousand.

Austria was to have its plebiscite after all, a plebi-
scite in which not only Austria but the whole of
Greater Germany was to take part, this time under
Nazi auspices. When he presented his report to the
Reichstag on 18 March Hitler announced the dissolu-
tion of the Reichstag and new elections for 10 April,
appealing for another four years of power to con-
solidate the gains of the new Grossdeutschland.

In the course of the electoral campaign Hitler trav-
elled from end to end of Germany, with a closing
demonstration at Vienna on the 9th. To the Burgo-
master of Vienna he said: 'Be assured that this city
is in my eyes a pearl. I will bring it into that setting
which is worthy of it and I will entrust it to the care
of the whole German nation.'

Under the Nazi system of voting there was no
room for surprises—99.08 per cent voted their ap-
proval of his actions; in Austria the figure was
higher still: 99.75. 'For me,' Hitler told the Press,
'this is the proudest hour of my life.'

The union of Austria with Germany was the ful-
filment of a German dream older than the Treaty of
Versailles, which had specifically forbidden it, or
even than the unification of Germany, from which
Bismarck had deliberately excluded Austria. With the
dissolution of the Hapsburg Monarchy at the end of
the war many Austrians saw in such a union with
Germany the only future for a State which, shorn of
the non-German provinces of the old Empire, ap-
peared to be left hanging in the air. Austria's none

76,000!

too happy experience in the post-war world, including grave economic problems like unemployment, added force to this argument. If the rise of Nazism in Germany diminished Austrian enthusiasm for an *Anschluss*, yet the pull of sentiment, language and history, reinforced by the material advantages offered by becoming part of a big nation, was strong enough to awaken genuine welcome when the frontier barriers went down and the German troops marched, in, garlanded with flowers. For months, even years, Austria had been living in a state of insecurity, and there was a widespread sense of relief that the tension was at an end, and that what had appeared inevitable had happened at last, peacefully. Moreover, the Austrian Nazi Party had attracted a considerable following before 1938. Vienna, where the Jews had played a more brilliant part than in almost any other European city, was an old centre of anti-Semitism, and in provinces like Styria Nazism made a powerful appeal.

Dissillusionment was not slow to come. Some of the worst anti-Semitic excesses took place in Vienna, and many who had welcomed the *Anschluss* were shocked by the characteristic Nazi mixture of arrogance and ignorance, and of terrorism tempered by corruption. Even Austrian Nazis were soon to complain at the shameless way in which the new province was plundered. Vienna was relegated to the position of a provincial town and the historical traditions of Austria obliterated.

None the less, in 1938 Hitler had a plausible case to argue when he claimed that the *Anschluss* was only the application of the Wilsonian principle of self-determination. Those outside Austria who wanted to lull their anxieties to sleep again could shrug their shoulders and say it was inevitable—after all, the Austrians were Germans, and Hitler himself an Austrian. In Rome Mussolini made the best of a bad job and shouted down Italian doubts by loudly proclaim-

From Vienna to Prague

ing the value and strength of the new union. In London and Paris there was no doubt that the British and French had drawn too harsh conclusions from the situation. Their obligations to the Czechs, who still hoped for a settlement, were refused to consider a British ultimatum to Prague.

Yet those who, like Chamberlain, had seen the situation of Austria as a decisive factor in the balance of power were to find that the acquisition of Vienna placed the German frontier on the edge of the Hungarian plain and the Balkans. To the south was the common frontier with Italy and to the north fifty miles from the Adriatic. Germany was in a position to press its demands in all directions. Germany's strategic position was immeasurably improved. Austria's resources in the East were to be disregarded.

The execution of the *Anschluss* was hastily improvised, in a way that had not foreseen, but such was the ease with which it had been achieved that it tempted him to move on to the next. Every foreign policy since 1933 had been a gamble. To his astonishment, there had not even been a rebuff from the League of Nations to rebuff his further successful adventures. He was half-open, needing only a right back.

German armaments were increasing at a more rapid rate. On 1 April 1938 twenty-eight divisions were in the East, including the

Chancellor, 1933-9

ar world, including employment, added of Nazism in Ger- siasm for an An- nt, language and advantages offered was strong enough the frontier bar- roops marched, in, nths, even years, of insecurity, and relief that the ten- t had appeared in- ceptually. Moreover, cted a considerable ere the Jews had n almost any other of anti-Semitism, n made a powerful

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From Vienna to Prague, 1938-9 April 1938251

ing the value and strength of the Axis. In London and Paris there was uneasiness, but reluctance to draw too harsh conclusions. The French reaffirmed their obligations to the Czechs, but Chamberlain, who still hoped for a settlement with the Dictators, refused to consider a British guarantee to Czechoslo- vakia.

Yet those who, like Churchill, saw in the annexation of Austria a decisive change in the European balance of power were to be proven right. The acquisition of Vienna placed the German Army on the edge of the Hungarian plain and at the threshold of the Balkans. To the south, Germany now had a common frontier with Italy and Yugoslavia, no more than fifty miles from the Adriatic. To the north, Hitler was in a position to press Czechoslovakia from three directions. Germany's strategic position had been immeasurably improved. Nor was the contribution of Austria's resources in iron, steel, and magnesite to be disregarded.

The execution of the *Anschluss*, it is true, had been hastily improvised, in answer to a situation Hitler had not foreseen, but such a step had always been one of his first objectives in foreign policy, and the ease with which it had been accomplished was bound to tempt him to move on more rapidly to the achievement of the next. Every step Hitler had taken in foreign policy since 1933 had borne an increased risk, and every time he had been successful in his gamble. To his astonishment and delight this time there had not even been a special session of the League of Nations to rebuke him. The door to further successful adventures appeared to be already half-open, needing only a vigorous kick to swing it right back.

German armaments were now increasing at a much more rapid rate. On 1 April 1938, twenty-seven or twenty-eight divisions were ready; by the late autumn of 1938, including reserve divisions, this figure

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Chancellor, 1933-9

had grown to fifty-five divisions. Expenditure on rearmament was mounting by leaps and bounds.

This increase in German military strength did not yet amount to military supremacy in Europe, but taken with the fears, disunity and weakness of the opposition—those psychological factors to which he always attached the greatest importance—Hitler calculated that by the autumn of 1938 he would be in a position to press home his next demands with an even greater chance of success. Ten days after the result of the plebiscite on Austria had been announced, therefore, on 21 April, Hitler sent for General Keitel and set his Staff to work out new plans for aggression.

There was no doubt where Hitler would turn next. He had hated the Czechs since his Vienna days, when they had appeared to him as the very type of those Slav *Untermenschen*—‘subhumans’—who were challenging the supremacy of the Germans in the Hapsburg Monarchy. The Czechoslovak State was the symbol of Versailles—democratic in character, a strong supporter of the League of Nations, the ally of France and of Russia. The Czech Army, a first-class force, backed by the famous Skoda armament works and provided with defences comparable with the Maginot Line in strength, was a factor which had to be eliminated before he could move eastwards. For the Bohemian quadrilateral was a natural defensive position of almost unequalled strategic value in the heart of Central Europe, within less than an hour's flying time from Berlin, and a base from which, in the event of war, heavy blows could be dealt at some of the most important German industrial centres. The annexation of Czechoslovakia was the second necessary step in the development of his programme for securing Germany's future.

The Czechs had few illusions about their German neighbours. They had done their best to build up their own defences and to buttress their independence by

From Vienna to Prag

alliances with France meant that any attack inevitably lead to general war, that France and Great Britain, to avoid war, were prepared to prevent the Czechs from being given. The lever to undermine the Czech position on its frontiers of a German and a quarter million of the Hapsburg Empire. The Germans had been a part of Czech politics since the rise of the Nazis and the growing strength of the Czechs followed by sharpened demands for a greater role in Prague and by the spread of Germanization among the Czechs. The German Foreign Office, the Nazi Sudeten German Party, Konrad Henlein, and others in ousting the rival parties from the field.

Aware of the danger to the Czechs, the German Government within their walls made a renewed effort towards a satisfactory settlement with the Czech leaders. Ostensibly this was to end the whole crisis—a minority in Czechoslovakia. In this way Hitler sought to win opinion in the rest of Europe to his pathy for the wrongs of the Czechs.

After the annexation of Austria, the rights or wrongs of the Czechs were anything more than a push. In 1938 he delegated Henlein

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alliances with France and Russia. On paper this meant that any attack on Czechoslovakia must inevitably lead to general war; in actuality it meant that France and Great Britain, in their anxiety to avoid war, were prepared to go to great lengths to prevent the Czechs invoking the guarantees they had been given. The lever with which Hitler planned to undermine the Czech Republic was the existence inside its frontiers of a German minority of some three and a quarter millions, former subjects of the old Hapsburg Empire. The grievances of the Sudeten Germans had been a persistent source of trouble in Czech politics since the foundation of the Republic. The rise of the Nazis to power across the frontier and the growing strength of Germany had been followed by sharpened demands from the Sudeten Germans for a greater measure of autonomy from Prague and by the spread of Nazi ideas and Nazi organization among the German minority. From 1935 the German Foreign Office secretly subsidized the Nazi Sudeten German Party under the leadership of Konrad Henlein, and during 1938 Henlein succeeded in ousting the rival parties among the German minority from the field.

Aware of the dangers represented by this Trojan Horse within their walls, the Czech Government made a renewed effort towards the end of 1937 to reach a satisfactory settlement with the Sudeten German leaders. Ostensibly this remained the issue throughout the whole crisis—a square deal for the German minority in Czechoslovakia. By presenting the issue in this way Hitler succeeded in confusing public opinion in the rest of the world, and mobilizing sympathy for the wrongs of an oppressed minority.

After the annexation of Austria, however, the rights or wrongs of the German minority ceased to be anything more than the excuse with which Hitler was pushing his foot into the door. On 28 March 1938 he delegated Henlein to be his representative in

uctions to put forward would be unacceptable. In this way Hitler's permanent unrest in progressively intense he could plausibly again, to intervene

ready led to big demands. Much wild talk of 'go-timidation of Czechs' was current of side of the frontier. Events must not out-Henlein was told to Hitler laid it down fortifications must be

May on a State visit. Hanger-on tried to trains which were egation and its customs. The competition in the endless galas, expensive presents and se. Nothing appealed so much as a free

r. He was less pleased with him, as Head of the endure the formality

st met in September considerable strain. neighbours. The An-Italy, where anxiety ved, while the Anglo-

Italian Agreement of April had been noted without enthusiasm in Berlin. When Ribbentrop produced a draft German-Italian treaty of alliance, Mussolini and Ciano were evasive. But Hitler's references to the new Italy were in a generous vein, and by the time he left he had succeeded in restoring cordiality between the two régimes.

On Hitler's return to Germany he found the diplomatic situation developing even more favourably than he had expected. The French and English had joined, in urging the Czechs to make the utmost concessions, possible to the Sudeten Germans. Not content with this, Lord Halifax instructed the British Ambassador in Berlin to tell Ribbentrop that Britain was pressing the Czechs to reach a settlement with Henlein, and to ask for German cooperation. Ribbentrop's reply was that the British and French action was warmly welcomed by the Führer, who must have been delighted at the way in which the other Powers were doing his work for him. A day or two later the General Staff reported that a dozen German divisions were stationed on the Czech frontiers ready to march at twelve hours' notice.

On 20 May Keitel sent Hitler a draft of the military directive for Operation Green (the code name for Czechoslovakia). On the same day, however, there was an unexpected turn to events. The Czech Government, alarmed by German troop concentrations near the frontier, ordered a partial mobilization of its forces. The British and French Governments at once warned Hitler of the grave danger of general war if the Germans made any aggressive move against the Czechs, and the French, supported by the Russians, reaffirmed their promise of immediate aid to Czechoslovakia. This display of solidarity left Hitler with no option but to call a retreat.

On 23 May the Czech Ambassador in Berlin was assured that Germany had no aggressive intentions

towards his country, and indignant denials were made by the German Foreign Office of the reports of troop concentration.

The alarm felt in London and Paris at the prospect of German military action, however, rapidly turned into irritation with the Czechs. The advocates of appeasement blamed President Benes for his 'provocative' action, while Chamberlain determined never to run so grave a risk of war again.

For a week Hitler remained at the Berghof in a black rage, which was not softened by the crowing of the foreign Press at the way in which he had been forced to climb down. Then, on 28 May, he suddenly appeared in Berlin and summoned a conference of military advisers at the Reich Chancellery. Hitler sketched with angry gestures on a map exactly how he meant to eliminate the State which had dared to inflict this humiliation on him.

Hitler hoped by the swiftness of his action to forestall effective intervention. In any case, thirty-six divisions were to be immediately mobilized, with X-day set for not later than 1 October 1938.

Hitler's tactics for the next three months, June, July, and August of 1938, were devoted to preparing the ground for intervention. In their anxiety to avoid war London and Paris urged the Czechs to make more and more concessions to the Sudeten Germans. Hitler noted with satisfaction the strain to which the Czechs were being subjected, their feeling of being pushed and hurried by their friends, their sense of isolation.

To the east Hitler pressed the Rumanians not to make transit facilities available to the Russians, who might come to Czechoslovakia's aid. He kept a watchful eye on Poland, where opinion was inflexibly opposed to any idea of Soviet troops marching across its territory; the Polish Government was preoccupied with the possibility of taking advantage of their dif-

From Vienna to Prague, difficult position to secure its position in Czech Silesia.

The Poles were not the for territory might be er Czechoslovakia. At the er lost the whole of Slovak State. Budapest's demand the districts inhabited by whole province, had never vakia against the claims ists, Benes had conclude Rumania and Yugoslavia, ilar Hungarian claims. T enough to take advantage but were worried lest in a *casus foederis* for the themselves too completely tortuous efforts of the H to the last moment met Berlin.

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The Poles were not the only people whose appetite
for territory might be encouraged at the expense of
Czechoslovakia. At the end of the war Hungary had
lost the whole of Slovakia to the new Czechoslovak
State. Budapest's demand for the return at least of
the districts inhabited by Magyars, better still of the
whole province, had never wavered. To safeguard Slo-
vakia against the claims of the Hungarian revision-
ists, Benes had concluded the Little Entente with
Rumania and Yugoslavia, who were affected by sim-
ilar Hungarian claims. The Hungarians were eager
enough to take advantage of the Czechs' difficulties,
but were worried lest in doing so they should provide
a *casus foederis* for the Little Entente and commit
themselves too completely to the German side. The
tortuous efforts of the Hungarians to sit on the fence
to the last moment met with little appreciation in
Berlin.

With Russia Hitler confined himself to putting ob-
stacles in the way of her giving aid to the Czechs,
and played heavily on British and French dislike of
inviting Russian cooperation in order to keep any
United Front from coming into existence. So suc-
cessful had been Hitler's anti-Bolshevik propaganda
that the Franco-Russian and Russo-Czech pacts of
1935 were regarded by the British and French Gov-
ernments as liabilities rather than as assets. On the
Russian side there was equal distrust of the Western
Powers, and a determination not to go one step ahead
of France and Britain in risking war with Germany.
Hitler's remark to Otto Strasser—'There is no soli-
darity in Europe'—was still true.

Meanwhile Henlein continued negotiations with
the Czech Government in a desultory way, taking
care always to find fresh objections to the successive
Czech offers of a greater measure of Home Rule for

the Sudeten districts. The Sudeten German Party kept feeling against the Czechs in the frontier districts at fever-pitch: by the end of the summer the tension between the Sudeten population and the Czech officials was reaching snapping-point.

On the German side of the frontier the military preparations were systematically continued. Hitler, however, now began to encounter some resistance in the Army High Command. The risk of a general war alarmed his staff officers, and not all were convinced by Hitler's declaration that intervention by France and Britain could be discounted. The opposition was led by General Ludwig Beck, Chief of Staff of the Army, who tried to persuade the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, General von Brauchitsch, to make a stand against Hitler.

Brauchitsch, although he agreed with Beck's argument, tried to avoid taking action. In the first week of August, however, at Beck's insistence, a meeting of the leading commanders was held in Berlin under the chairmanship of Brauchitsch. Only two generals dissented from Beck's views. This time Brauchitsch went so far as to submit Beck's memorandum to Hitler.

News of the generals' conference had already reached Hitler. After a stormy argument with Brauchitsch, on 10 August Hitler summoned another conference, this time to the Berghof. The senior generals were excluded; Hitler appealed to the younger generation of the Army and Air Force leaders, and for three hours he used all his skill to set before them the political and military assumptions on which his plans were based. Then, for the first—and last—time at a meeting of this sort, he invited discussion. The result was disconcerting. General von Wietersheim, Chief of Staff to the Army Group Commander at Wiesbaden, General Adam, got up and said bluntly that it was his own, and General Adam's, view that the western fortifications against France could be held for only three weeks. A furious scene followed,

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Hitler cursing the Army as good-for-nothing and shouting: 'I assure you, General, the position will not only be held for three weeks, but for three years.'

When Beck resigned, and demanded that the Commander-in-Chief resign with him, Brauchitsch refused. General Halder took over Beck's duties as Chief of Staff from 1 September. Hitler rejected any alteration in his policy, yet he was conscious of the fact that the opposition, if it had been silenced, had not been convinced.

On 3 September Hitler summoned Keitel, Chief of the O.K.W., and Brauchitsch to the Berghof to go over the final arrangements. Field units were to be moved up on 28 September and X-day fixed by noon on 27 September. The next day President Benes put an end to the Sudeten leaders' game by inviting them to set down on paper their full demands, with the promise to grant them immediately whatever they might be. In their embarrassment at having no more cause for agitation, the Sudeten leaders used the pretext of incidents at Moravska-Ostrava to break off the negotiations with Prague and send an ultimatum demanding the punishment of those responsible before they could be resumed. Benes had knocked the bottom out of the argument that the issue was Sudeten grievances and immediately afterwards, Henlein left for Germany.

For some time past the foreign embassies in Berlin had been reporting that the opening of the final stage of the Czech crisis would coincide with the Nuremberg Party Rally, due to begin on 6 September. Hitler's closing speech on 12 September, it was said, would show which way the wind was blowing and perhaps decide the issue of peace or war.

Meanwhile a small group of conspirators was discussing the possibility of seizing Hitler by force as soon as he gave the order to attack the Czechs, and putting him on trial before the People's Court. Amongst those involved were Beck, Karl Goerdeler,

Ulrich von Hassell, General von Witzleben, General Erich Höppner, Colonel Hans Oster, and Ewald von Kleist. Everything depended upon the conspirators' ability to persuade Brauchitsch, Halder, and the other generals of the certainty of a general war if Czechoslovakia was attacked. Soundings were made in London in the hope of securing incontestable proof that Britain and France would support the Czechs, in the event of a German attack. Such evidence as they were able to get, however—including a letter from Churchill—failed to convince Brauchitsch or Halder, and the conspiracy hung fire. On 9 September Hitler held another military conference, attended by Halder, Brauchitsch and Keitel. Hitler was highly critical of the Army's plans, condemning them for failure to provide the concentration of forces which alone would secure the quick, decisive success he needed. His aim was to drive at once right into the heart of Czechoslovakia and leave the Czech Army in the rear. X-day was now fixed for 30 September and was to be preceded by a rising in Sudetenland.

Hitler still held to the belief that Britain and France would not go to war over Czechoslovakia. As if to confirm his view, *The Times*, on 7 September, published its famous leader suggesting the possibility of Czechoslovakia ceding the Sudetenland to Germany. When Hitler stood in the spotlights at the huge stadium on the final night of the Rally, all the world was waiting to hear what he would say—and they were not disappointed. His speech was remarkable for a brutal attack on another State and its President such as had rarely, if ever, been heard in peacetime before.

Hitler made no attempt to disguise his anger at the humiliation of 21-2 May, which, he declared, had been deliberately planned by Benes, who spread the lie that Germany had mobilized. 'You will understand, my comrades, that a Great Power cannot for a second time suffer such an infamous encroachment upon

From Vienna to Prague its rights. . . . Yet, he was careful not to permit himself to precise the Sudeten Germans—no one would follow if the der

The speech was the detenant, and several Czech Government pro the rising, and by the hand. Henlein fled to E of his followers.

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Hitler was delighted. the prospect of the Prir making his first flight a der to come and plead v offer to meet him half- Berghof. They were ac only by the interpreter.

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von Witzleben, General Oster, and Ewald von Brauchitsch, Halder, and the possibility of a general war if soundings were made. It was an incontestable proof of support the Czechs, in such evidence as they included a letter from Brauchitsch or Halder. On 9 September Hitler spoke, attended by Halder, who was highly critical of them for failure to use forces which alone would have given him the success he needed. He went right into the heart of the Czech Army in the rear. In September and was to be in the land.

He said that Britain and France were against Czechoslovakia. As *Times*, on 7 September, was suggesting the possibility of the Sudetenland to Germany. The spotlights at the huge Nuremberg Rally, all the world would say—and they said—his speech was remarkable. The State and its President were heard in peacetime.

He disguised his anger at which, he declared, had Benes, who spread the lie. 'You will understand, however, cannot for a second allow encroachment upon

its rights. . . . Yet, for all his tone of menace Hitler was careful not to pin himself down; he did not commit himself to precise demands—only 'justice' for the Sudeten Germans—nor to the course of action he would follow if the demands were not made.

The speech was the signal for a rising in the Sudetenland, and several people were shot. But the Czech Government proclaimed martial law, put down the rising, and by the 15th had the situation well in hand. Henlein fled to Bavaria with several thousand of his followers.

The failure of nerve came, not in Prague, but in Paris. Twenty-four hours after Hitler's speech at Nuremberg the French Government reached a point where it was so divided on the question of its obligations to Czechoslovakia that the French Prime Minister, Daladier, appealed to Chamberlain to make the best bargain he could with Hitler. Chamberlain at once sent a message to Hitler proposing an interview.

Hitler was delighted. His vanity was gratified by the prospect of the Prime Minister of Great Britain making his first flight at the age of sixty-nine in order to come and plead with him. Hitler did not even offer to meet him half-way, but awaited him at the Berghof. They were accompanied to Hitler's study only by the interpreter.

Hitler began by a long, rambling account of all that he had done for Germany in foreign policy, how he had restored the equality of rights denied by Versailles, yet at the same time had signed the Pact with Poland, followed by the Naval Treaty with Britain, and had renounced Alsace-Lorraine. The question of the return of the Sudeten Germans, however, was different, he declared, since this affected race, which was the basis of his ideas. These Germans must come into the German Reich.

Chamberlain, who had spent most of the interview so far listening and watching Hitler, interrupted to ask if this was all he wanted, or whether he was aim-

Choslovakia. Hitler and Hungarian demands left would not in-

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Government were session in principle, nance then to have ommit himself unababinet; but if Hit- ceful separation of oslovakia, then he d would return for asked Hitler for an precipitate action With all the appear- ion, Hitler agreed,

knowing perfectly well that X-day was still a fortnight away.

Hitler never supposed that the British Prime Minister would be able to secure the Czechs' agreement to a voluntary surrender of the Sudetenland to Germany. He saw the interview at Berchtesgaden as a further means of ensuring that Britain and France would not intervene. He had drawn the British Prime Minister into advocating the cession of the Sudetenland on the grounds of self-determination; if, as he anticipated, this was rejected by Prague, in Chamberlain's eyes the responsibility of war would rest on the unreasonable Czechs, and Britain would be less likely than ever to go to Czechoslovakia's aid, or to encourage the French to do so.

During the week that followed, therefore, Hitler continued his preparations to attack Czechoslovakia. On the 18th the Army reported its plans for the deployment of five armies against the Czechs, a total of thirty-six divisions, including three armoured divisions.

Political preparations matched the military. On 20 September the Slovak People's Party, at Henlein's prompting, put forward a claim to autonomy for the Slovaks. On the same day Hitler sharply urged the Hungarians to present their demands to Czechoslovakia for the return of the districts claimed by Hungary. On the 21st the Poles delivered a Note in Prague, asking for a plebiscite in the Teschen district. By the 22nd the Sudeten Freikorps, armed and equipped in Germany, had seized control of the Czech towns of Eger and Asch.

Chamberlain again flew to Germany on the 22nd, and was received by Hitler at Godesberg, on the Rhine. Chamberlain was in an excellent temper. He had succeeded in getting the agreement of both the British and French Governments to the terms with which he now returned and in forcing the Czechs to

accept them by an Anglo-French ultimatum. He was prepared to present a plan for the transfer of the Sudeten districts of Czechoslovakia to Germany without a plebiscite, leaving a commission to settle the details including the transfer of populations where no satisfactory line could be drawn. The existing alliances which the Czechs had with Russia and France were to be dissolved, while Britain would join in an international guarantee of Czechoslovakia's independence and neutrality.

When Chamberlain had finished speaking, Hitler inquired whether his proposals had been submitted to the Czech Government, and accepted by them. The Prime Minister replied: 'Yes.' There was a brief pause. Then Hitler said, quite quietly: 'I'm exceedingly sorry, but after the events of the last few days this solution is no longer any use.'

Chamberlain was both angry and puzzled; he had, he declared, taken his political life in his hands to secure agreement to Hitler's demands—only for Hitler to turn them down. Nor did Hitler give any clear indication of the reasons why he had changed his mind. He talked of the demands of the Poles and Hungarians, the unreliability and treachery of the Czechs; he argued himself into a fury over the wrongs and sufferings of the Sudeten Germans; above all, he insisted on the urgency of the situation and the need for speed. The whole problem, he shouted, must be settled by 1 October. If war was to be avoided, the Czechs must at once withdraw from the main areas to be ceded and allow them to be occupied by German forces. Afterwards a plebiscite could be held to settle the detailed line of the frontier, but the essential condition was a German occupation of the Sudetenland, at once.

Chamberlain took note of Hitler's new demands, but he refused to commit himself. He had assumed that Hitler's demands for the cession of the Sudetenland had been sincerely meant, but Hitler's real in-

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Chancellor, 1933-9

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From Vienna to Prague, 1938-9

tention, as defined in his directive after the May crisis, was 'to destroy Czechoslovakia by military action'. The Sudeten question was used simply as a means to create favourable political conditions for carrying out his objective.

The next day Chamberlain tried to persuade Hitler to accept a compromise. Instead Hitler added a new time limit requiring the Czechs to begin evacuation of the territory to be ceded by 26 September, and to complete it by 28 September, in four days' time. The exchanges between the two men had already become tart when Ribbentrop brought the news that the Czechs had ordered mobilization. That, Hitler declared, settled matters. The argument went to and fro, Hitler excitedly denouncing the Czechs, Chamberlain not concealing his indignation at Hitler's impatience and his anger at the way he had been treated.

Then, once again, with perfect timing, Hitler produced his final 'concession'. 'You are one of the few men for whom I have ever done such a thing,' he declared. 'I am prepared to set one single date for the Czech evacuation—1 October—if that will facilitate your task.' He once more promised that the Czech problem was the last territorial demand which he had to make in Europe. This remark, Chamberlain told the House of Commons, was made 'with great earnestness'.

On 25 September the British Cabinet decided that it could not accept the terms Hitler had offered in the Godesberg Memorandum. On the 26th the British Government at last gave assurances of support to France if she became involved in war with Germany as a result of fulfilling her treaty obligations, and preparations for war were expedited in both Britain and France. The British Prime Minister, however, still refused to give up hope and resolved to make one last appeal to Hitler.

In the interval Hitler had swung back into his most intransigent mood, working his resentment,

hatred and impatience of opposition up to the pitch where they would provide him with the necessary stimulus for his speech at the Berlin Sportpalast on the evening of the 26th. This was the mood in which Sir Horace Wilson and the British Ambassador found him when they arrived to present the British Prime Minister's letter three hours before the meeting in the Sportpalast was due to begin. The utmost the British representatives were able to get out of him was agreement to conduct negotiations with the Czechs, on the basis of their acceptance of the Godesberg Memorandum. If he was to hold back his troops, Hitler demanded an affirmative reply within less than forty-eight hours, by 2 p.m. on Wednesday 28 September.

Hitler's speech at the Sportpalast was a masterpiece of invective which even he never surpassed. He began with a survey of his own efforts to arrive at a settlement with the other Powers in the past five years, and instanced the familiar catalogue of problems that had already been solved. 'And now before us stands the last problem that must be solved and will be solved. It is the last territorial claim which I have to make in Europe, but it is the claim from which I will not recede and which, God willing, I will make good.' The origin of the Czech problem, he declared, was the refusal of the Peacemakers to apply their own principle of self-determination.

From this point Hitler's account became more and more grotesque in its inaccuracy. Having established a rule of terror over the subject peoples, the Slovaks, Germans, Magyars, and Poles, Benes had set out systematically to destroy the German minority; they were to be shot as traitors if they refused to fire on their fellow Germans. The Germans were so persecuted that hundreds of thousands fled into exile; thousands more were butchered by the Czechs. Mean-

From Vienna to Prague

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while Benes put his country at the service of the Bol-
sheviks as an advanced air base from which to bomb
Germany.

Hitler briefly explained the Godesberg proposals,
brushing aside the Czech objection that these consti-
tuted a new situation. The Czechs had already agreed
to the transfer of the districts demanded; the only
difference was the German occupation. 'My patience
is now at an end. I have made Herr Benes an offer
which is nothing but the execution of what he him-
self has promised. The decision now lies in his hands:
Peace or War. He will either accept this offer and
now at last give the Germans their freedom, or we
will go and fetch this freedom for ourselves.'

The next morning Hitler was still in the same
exalted mood; the process of self-intoxication with
his own words was still at work. When Sir Horace
Wilson asked where the conflict would end, if the
Czechs rejected the German demands, Hitler retorted
that the first end would be the total destruction of
Czechoslovakia. Wilson then added that the war could
scarcely be confined to Czechoslovakia, and that Brit-
ain would feel obliged to support France if she went
to the aid of the Czechs, and Hitler replied, 'If France
and England strike, let them do so. It is a matter of
complete indifference to me. I am prepared for every
eventuality. It is Tuesday today, and by next Mon-
day we shall all be at war.'

As soon as Wilson had gone Hitler ordered the
movement of the assault units, twenty-one reinforced
regiments, totalling seven divisions, up to their action
stations. They must be ready to go into action on 30
September. A concealed mobilization was put into
operation, including that of five further divisions in
Western Germany.

~~Yet Hitler had not slammed the door.~~ Even at the
height of his frenzy in the Sportpalast the night be-
fore he had still left open the alternative to war

which he had put forward at Godesberg. While Ribbentrop and Himmler were in favour of war, there were others in Hitler's entourage who pressed him to make a settlement, among them Göring. Events began to support their arguments. In particular, the news that Great Britain and France were taking active steps in preparation for war, and Sir Horace Wilson's warning that Britain would support France impressed Hitler more than all Chamberlain's appeals.

At this moment the group of conspirators who planned to carry out a *coup d'état* and seize Hitler by force were making renewed preparations. Hitler's decision, of course, cannot have been influenced by a plot of which he remained ignorant, but the conspiracy reveals something of the dismay that was felt in the Army High Command at the risk of a general war—and of this Hitler was perfectly well aware.

During the late afternoon of the 27th, a mechanized division in full field equipment rumbled through the main streets of Berlin, and was greeted with almost complete silence by the crowds, who turned their backs rather than look on. For a long time, Hitler stood at the window to watch, and the total lack of enthusiasm—in contrast to the scenes of 1914—is reported to have made a singularly deep impression on him. At ten o'clock the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy, Raeder, arrived to reinforce the Army's arguments that their fortifications and forces were inadequate—an appeal that was given weight by the news, received during the night, that the British fleet was being mobilized.

Hitler was sufficiently interested in keeping open the line to London to send a letter to Chamberlain, which was delivered at 10.30 p.m. on the 27th. It was skilfully phrased to appeal to Chamberlain, and the closing sentence—'I leave it to your judgement whether . . . you consider you should continue your effort . . . to bring the Government in Prague to

From Vienna to Prague, reason at the very last Prime Minister to make

With the morning of 28th—'all hope of avoidance'—all hope of avoidance gone. A sense of gloom spread over Prague and Paris.

Shortly after eleven o'clock, François-Poncet, brought a good way to meet the German for the immediate occupation of land by 1 October and the series of stages up to 10 October yet been accepted by the German to by Hitler France would

The decisive move, however, was an appeal which the British sent Mussolini. The Duce was the prospect of a European war ill-prepared. At the British sent Attolico, the Italian Ambassador to Hitler.

Breathless and hatless, Chamberlain went to the Chancellery while Hitler was waiting for François-Poncet. Mussolini, anxious for full support, but he asked him to delay for four hours in order to examine the proposal forward by Paris and London. He made an impression on Hitler which he agreed.

Next, Sir Neville Chamberlain's reply to Hitler. In a last appeal, he put forward the suggestion for a conference to discuss the necessities. Hitler what he wanted. He called again on the telephone instructed to inform Hitler

ancellor, 1938-9

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From Vienna to Prague, 1938-9

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reason at the very last hour—spurred the British
Prime Minister to make one final effort.

With the morning of 28 September—'Black Wed-
nesday'—all hope of avoiding war seemed to have
gone. A sense of gloom hung over Berlin, no less
than over Prague and Paris and London.

Shortly after eleven o'clock the French Ambassa-
dor, François-Poncet, brought an offer which went a
good way to meet the Godesberg demands, providing
for the immediate occupation of part of the Sudeten-
land by 1 October and the occupation of the rest in a
series of stages up to 10 October. The plan had not
yet been accepted by the Czechs, but if it was agreed
to by Hitler France would demand Czech acceptance.

The decisive move, however, appears to have been
an appeal which the British Government addressed to
Mussolini. The Duce was now thoroughly alarmed at
the prospect of a European war for which Italy was
ill-prepared. At the British request he agreed to
send Attolico, the Italian Ambassador in Berlin, to
Hitler.

Breathless and hatless, Attolico arrived at the
Chancellery while Hitler was still engaged with Fran-
çois-Poncet. Mussolini, Attolico began, sent assur-
ances of full support whatever the Führer decided,
but he asked him to delay a final decision for twenty-
four hours in order to examine the new proposals put
forward by Paris and London. Mussolini's appeal
made an impression on Hitler; after a slight hesita-
tion he agreed.

Next, Sir Neville Henderson arrived, bringing
Chamberlain's reply to Hitler's letter of the night be-
fore. In a last appeal the British Prime Minister
put forward the suggestion of an international con-
ference to discuss the necessary arrangements to give
Hitler what he wanted. Mussolini, meanwhile, was
again on the telephone to Attolico, who was in-
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terruptions while members of one delegation or an-
other went in and out to prepare alternative drafts.
Finally, in the early hours of the morning of 30
September, agreement was reached, and the two dicta-
tors left to the British and French the odious task of
communicating to the Czechs the terms for the parti-
tion of their country.

The Munich Agreement contained few substantial
variations from the proposals of the Godesberg Mem-
orandum. On 1 October German troops marched into
the Sudetenland, as Hitler had demanded. The prom-
ised plebiscite was never held and the frontiers when
finally drawn followed strategic much more than
ethnographical lines, leaving two hundred and fifty
thousand Germans in Czechoslovakia, and including
eight hundred thousand Czechs in the lands ceded to
the Reich. Czechoslovakia lost her system of fortifica-
tions together with eleven thousand square miles of
territory. To this must be added crippling industrial
losses and the disruption of the Czech railway system.
President Benes was forced to go into exile and one
of the first acts of the new régime was to denounce
the alliance with Russia. On 10 October the Czechs
ceded the Teschen district to Poland, and on 2 No-
vember Ribbentrop and Ciano dictated the new Czech-
Hungarian frontier at a ceremony in Vienna from
which the two other signatories of the Munich Agree-
ment and the guarantors of Czechoslovakia were
blatantly excluded.

Hitler's prestige rose to new heights in Germany,
where relief that war had been avoided was com-
bined with delight in the gains that had been won on
the cheap.

Abroad the effect was equally startling, and Chur-
chill described the results of the Munich settlement
in a famous speech on 5 October 1938: 'At Berchtes-
gaden . . . £1 was demanded at the pistol's point.
When it was given (at Godesberg), £2 was demanded

at the pistol's point. Finally the Dictator consented to take £1 17s. 6d. and the rest in promises of goodwill for the future. . . . We are in the presence of a disaster of the first magnitude.'

Austria and the Sudetenland within six months represented the triumph of Hitler's methods of political warfare. His diagnosis of the weakness of the Western democracies, and of the international divisions which prevented the formation of a united front against him, had been brilliantly vindicated. Five years after coming to power he had raised Germany from one of the lowest points of her history to the position of the leading Power in Europe—and this not only without war, but with the agreement of Great Britain and France. He can scarcely have failed to appreciate the fact that, twenty years after the end of the First World War, he had dictated terms to the victorious Powers of 1918 in the very city in the back streets of which he had begun his career as an unknown agitator.

Yet Hitler was more irritated than elated by his triumph. The indignation against the Czechs into which he had lashed himself, his pride and sensitivity to prestige, his ingrained dislike of negotiation, his preference for violence, his desire for a sensational success for the new German Army he had created, the recurrent thought of the original plan to secure the whole of Czechoslovakia—all these were factors liable to start up once more the conflict in his mind. By allowing himself to be persuaded into accepting a negotiated settlement, Hitler came to believe that he had been baulked of the triumph he had really wanted, the German armoured divisions storming across Bohemia and a conqueror's entry into the Czech capital. This was still his objective.

A new directive for the Armed Forces was issued on 21 October which listed, immediately after measures to defend Germany, preparations to liquidate the remainder of Czechoslovakia.

The well-meaning effort the next six months, far irritated Hitler further. He put him on his best behaviour, treats a difficult reason and his better instincts more determined than ever kind of general settlement Chamberlain's policy. He cessions in return for those offered to him; he was only in so far as it was that and the complete abandonment of continental affairs.

On the night of 9-10 November 1938, a pogrom against the Jews in Germany was carried out. The murder of a Nazi diplomat in London, the Horror and indignation in both Great Britain and the United States. Roosevelt recalled the British reaction to the condemnation of the Nazi regime. Hatred of the Jews, a deep emotion of which he was aware, against Britain, the British should dare the fate of the German Jews. The centre of that Jewish world had long inflamed his imagination as the major obstacle in his way.

One of Hitler's diplomatic moves in the winter of 1938-9 seems to have come from Great Britain. In 1938, François-Poncet, a joint director of the existing Franco-German talks, Germany's abandonment of Lorraine, together with suggestions on all questions

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The well-meaning efforts of the appeasers during the next six months, far from mollifying, only irritated Hitler further. He objected to this attempt to put him on his best behaviour, to treat him as a governess treats a difficult child, appealing to sweet reason and his better instincts. After Munich he was more determined than ever not to be drawn into the kind of general settlement which was the object of Chamberlain's policy. He refused to make any concessions in return for the gestures of appeasement offered to him; he was interested in appeasement only in so far as it was the equivalent of capitulation and the complete abandonment of British interest in continental affairs.

On the night of 9-10 November a carefully organized pogrom against the Jewish population throughout Germany was carried out as revenge for the murder of a Nazi diplomat by a young Jew in Paris. Horror and indignation were immediately expressed in both Great Britain and the United States. President Roosevelt recalled the American Ambassador in Berlin, and the British Press was unanimous in its condemnation of the Nazi outrages. Hitler flew into a rage. Hatred of the Jews was perhaps the most sincere emotion of which he was capable. To his resentment against Britain was added the fury that the British should dare to express concern for the fate of the German Jews. He now saw London as the centre of that Jewish world conspiracy with which he had long inflamed his imagination, and Great Britain as the major obstacle in his path.

One of Hitler's diplomatic objectives during the winter of 1938-9 seems to have been to detach France from Great Britain. In mid-October he suggested to François-Poncet a joint declaration guaranteeing the existing Franco-German frontier, thus confirming Germany's abandonment of any claim to Alsace-Lorraine, together with an agreement to hold consultations on all questions likely to affect mutual

relations. The French Government proved amenable, and the proposed Declaration was signed on 6 December.

In the meantime Hitler was at pains to strengthen his relations with Italy. At Munich Ribbentrop had produced a draft for a defensive military alliance between Germany, Italy, and Japan, and at the end of October the German Foreign Minister visited Rome to urge the Duce to put his signature to the treaty. Mussolini was wary of committing himself to an outright military alliance, and he resented Ribbentrop's visit to Paris in December and the German-French Declaration at precisely the moment when Italy was raising her own claims to Tunisia, Corsica, and Nice. Yet the very fact that Mussolini was beginning a new quarrel with France forced him back into his old position of dependence on Germany. At the beginning of the New Year, after two months of hesitation, the Duce suppressed his doubts and said he was willing to accept the suggested treaty.

In his speech of 30 January Hitler was lavish in his praise of Fascist Italy and her great leader: he had Mussolini where he wanted him and the working partnership of the Axis had been reaffirmed.

What would Hitler's next move be? No question more absorbed the attention of every diplomat and foreign correspondent in the winter of 1938-9. Every rumour was caught at and diligently reported.

Immediately after Munich, Dr. Funk went on a tour of the Balkans. His visit underlined the state of economic dependence upon Germany in which all these countries—Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia—now found themselves. Their political docility was secured by other means besides preferential trade and currency agreements—by the organization of the German minorities; by subsidies to local parties on the Nazi model, like the Iron Guard in Rumania; by playing on internal divisions be-

From Vienna to Prague, between different peoples a same country; by encouraging of one country, like Hungary, of another, like Rumania; Austria and the capitulations had to recognize the sphere of influence and accordingly.

After Munich Hitler did not show disappointment with the press their claims on the Danube. He showed considerable regard for the Balkan demands on Slovakia and their annexation of Ruthenia and Polish frontier. In Poland was set up within the same relationship towards autonomous Slovakia. The capital of Ruthenia was the capital of Ukrainian national freedom to the oppressed Poland and of the Soviet.

Poland and Russia too seriously to discover a common inveterate hostility, and between the two countries.

This Polish-Soviet rapprochement was a part in persuading the plans for a Greater Ukraine. In January it was a difficulty was beginning to occupy London and Paris.

On 24 January Lord Halifax, Secretary, wrote an appointment, which was to Roosevelt and which was French Government as well as saying that he had received that indicated Hitler was

and of 1938

CHAPTER NINE

HITLER'S WAR

1939

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After the annexation of Austria, Hans Dieckhoff, one of the senior men in the German Foreign Office, remarked to Ribbentrop that Bismarck would have taken years to consolidate his position before making another move. 'Then,' Ribbentrop retorted, 'you have no conception of the dynamics of National Socialism.'

The obvious weakness of Hitler's policy, the fault which destroyed him as surely as it had destroyed Napoleon, was his inability to stop. By the end of 1938 Hitler had everything to gain by waiting for a year or two before taking another step, sitting back to profit from the divisions and hesitations of the other European Powers, instead of driving them, by the fears he aroused, into reluctant combination. Moreover, a temporary relaxation of the rearmament drive would have had considerable economic benefits for Germany.

At a meeting of the Reich Defence Council on 18 November, Göring spoke at length on the need to concentrate all the resources of the nation on raising the level of rearmament from a current index of 100 to one of 300. Everything was to be subordinated to this single task, regardless of the fact, which Göring frankly admitted, that the German economy was already showing strain.

Alarmed at the financial consequences of Göring's new measures, Schacht, as President of the Reichsbank, presented a memorandum on 7 January 1939, signed by the directors of the Bank, protesting against the Government's reckless expenditure. Hitler

Hitler's War, 1939

sent for Schacht and had don't fit into the National Socialism. Schacht was replaced by a secret decree placed orders of the Führer, with the Government with w

If any country had given intentions it was Poland 1919, and afterwards w. Poles had acquired territory more resented by the other part of the Versailles provide Poland with access separated from Germany where the Poles enjoyed. East Prussia was divided by the Polish Corridor. Much of the land had been first seized by Prussia, and was inhabited in turn taken more than German public opinion with the eastern frontiers of opinion was in refusing power in Germany had growth of Nazi influence only a question of time to the Reich.

Yet the first country was a Pact of Non-Aggression. A previous reason for Hitler's placate the most suspicious and France's principal until he was strong enough in equanimity. But there is Hitler was anxious to see Russia. If the Poles accepted

*The Army, the
and the Reich*

celebration were perplexed to see him rise from the table and depart. "I'm off to a wedding," he told Milch—and chuckled out loud as he said it.

Most of what has been written hitherto about what now became the Blomberg-Fritsch affair has been based on the narratives left by embittered adjutants like Friedrich Hossbach, Fritz Wiedemann, and Gerhard Engel. The availability of more reliable materials, like Milch's private diaries, Blomberg's own manuscripts, the verbatim Gestapo grilling of General von Fritsch, and the secret letters and manuscripts that he wrote in 1938 and 1939 (now in private hands in Moscow) enables us to dispense with these narratives.

Both Blomberg and Fritsch were relics of an older generation, representative of the generals who had never really swallowed the National Socialist revolution of 1933. The career generals under their command refused to accept that an air force created and directed by two former lieutenants, Göring and Milch, could be of any real value. Fritsch in particular resented the recent interpolation of a Wehrmacht high command under Blomberg as supreme commander. When he returned from his Egyptian vacation—he had taken only a young adjutant, Captain Joachim von Both, as companion—on January 2, Fritsch had done nothing to discourage mounting criticism of Blomberg by the army generals. Looking bronzed and fit, Fritsch was among the guests at the luncheon in honor of Göring's birthday on the twelfth, and he too must have wondered why Göring left early.

Any doubts that Göring may have entertained about Blomberg's chosen bride were dispelled as he attended the wedding, held behind closed doors of the great hall of the War Ministry that afternoon. As the girl came mincing in, heavily veiled, Göring and Hitler exchanged mute glances. She was slim and blonde, and her genre was quite unmistakable. Blindly content, Blomberg left to honeymoon in Capri. General von Fritsch's papers record a two-hour meeting with Hitler three days later, on January 15, at which the Führer "spoke in great agitation of his concern about the spreading of anarchist propaganda in the army." Fritsch asked for proof, but Hitler declined to show it. (Probably it was Forschungsamt evidence, which a general could not be shown.) Six days later, Hitler delivered a three-hour dissertation to hundreds of senior generals in Blomberg's ministry, lecturing them on history, race, and nation—and on Germany's need for Lebensraum, "which we are going to have to seize by force."

That same day, January 21, the bubble burst in Berlin. An anonymous caller, impersonating a general, telephoned the army high command and demanded to be put through to General von Fritsch. When this was refused, the caller shouted, "Tell the general that Field Marshal von Blomberg has married a whore!"

Hitler had left Berlin for the Obersalzberg; Blomberg had been called to his mother's funeral. The Brown Page reporting the anonymous phone call to Fritsch rocketed across Berlin into Göring's villa. Everything began hap-

pening at once. At 4:15 p.m. he was brought into the War Ministry by his chief of staff, General W. Blomberg's bride? Keitel her—perhaps the police.

Late the next morning the photograph came as expected that he might even particular woman. (He de among them) suspected vulnerability to railroad hi "The ink was hardly dry ments began to turn up a

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pening at once. At 4:15 P.M. Count Wolf von Helldorf, Berlin's police chief, brought into the War Ministry a police index card and asked Blomberg's chief of staff, General Wilhelm Keitel, if he recognized the photo: Was this Blomberg's bride? Keitel replied uneasily that he had not yet set eyes on her—perhaps the police chief ought to try General Göring instead?

Late the next morning Helldorf drove up the autobahn to Carinhall. Perhaps the photograph came as no surprise to Göring. More than one person suspected that he might even have engineered Blomberg's meeting with this particular woman. (He denied it.) Others (Fritsch, Göring himself, and Keitel among them) suspected the SS had rigged it. "They exploited Blomberg's vulnerability to railroad him into this marriage," Fritsch recorded at the time. "The ink was hardly dry on the marriage papers when mountains of docu-
ments began to turn up about the Blomberg woman's past." *

A couple of days later Keitel brought over to Göring the complete police file on her—a buff vice-squad folder with fingerprints, "mug shots," and pornographic photographs of the woman who had just married the field marshal with Hitler and Göring as witnesses. It was a Sunday, he recalled years later. "For three hours I sat at the table [overwhelmed] by the contents. It was not necessary to add anything." Göring appears to have done the decent thing, because as soon as Blomberg returned from the funeral he sent Bodenschatz over with "documents" to Milch, which Milch was to take over to Blomberg—"documents about F.B.," as Milch's diary records (probably referring to Frau Blomberg).

Göring was waiting on the steps of the Reich Chancellery as Hitler arrived back in Berlin. The buff folder was in his hands. Hossbach, Blomberg's ADC, also showed up, hoping to secure an immediate appointment for the field marshal with Hitler. Göring waylaid him, tapped the folder, and said, "It always falls to my lot to bring particularly unpleasant matters to the Führer's attention." He paced the floor like an angry lion, waiting for Hitler.

"What I have witnessed today," he snarled at Wiedemann, Hitler's ADC, waiting with him, "knocks the bottom out of the barrel!"

The prim, prudish Hitler winced as Göring showed him the file and photographs. As Göring hastened to point out, Blomberg had made fools of both of them, he had flouted the officers' code in marrying this woman, and he had brought ridicule on the Wehrmacht. Hitler sent Göring over to speak with Blomberg. The frosty interview lasted less than five minutes. Göring told the white-faced field marshal that the Führer insisted he resign.

Göring must already have been certain that Fritsch was out of the running. He hoped that Fritsch's opposition to Hitler's planned military adventures ruled Fritsch out. "What would your prime minister have done," he rhetorically asked Sir Neville Henderson a few days later, "if the chief of the imperial general staff [the British equivalent to Fritsch] had come to him and not only demanded the resignation of the war minister but also expressed dissatisfaction with the government's foreign policy and other measures?"

* Perhaps the man Blomberg wanted
to get rid of might have been
Göring.

Göring immediately began extensive canvassing to be awarded the War Ministry. He sent over Bodenschatz to brief Wiedemann; he briefed von Below himself. But Hitler hesitated to give him the supreme command. His own solution, which he would disclose to Blomberg a few days later, was to become supreme commander himself, making use of Blomberg's staff, the Wehrmachtsamt, for the time being.

Unaware that Hitler had decided to award himself the prize, Göring took furtive steps to disqualify the only other runner, General von Fritsch. He recalled that the general had apparently once been accused of a peccadillo and sent for the police file to refresh his memory. Two years earlier a young convicted blackmailer, one Otto Schmidt, had claimed that in November 1933 he had witnessed a male prostitute, one Sepp Weingärtner, engaged in a homosexual act with a man who identified himself as "General Fritsch"; Schmidt had extorted twenty-five hundred marks from the man afterward. Among other homosexual victims Schmidt had named were Walter Funk and other leading Nazis. The authorities had notified Hitler and Göring. Hitler had ordered the investigations discontinued, because the Rhineland crisis was brewing. But evidently the investigations continued nonetheless, because early in July 1936 Schmidt was turned over to the Gestapo for higher interrogation, and this time the chief of the Homosexual Crimes Squad, Josef Meisinger, showed the blackmailer a photograph of General von Fritsch. From the general's private papers we know that at the end of 1937—perhaps coincidentally, some days after Blomberg had invited a wide-eyed Göring to ship his rival out of Germany—the Gestapo not only suddenly resumed its interrogations of the blackmailer but also located and began to question the male prostitute involved, Weingärtner.

"I do not know," wrote Fritsch in his own hand a few days later, "from whom the actual initiative came, be it from Hitler, from Göring or Himmler. Whoever it was, the crown witness, who was currently serving time in the Papenburg camp, was immediately produced."

It seems upon deeper analysis unlikely that Göring had initiated the whole fiasco. For him to have started the move against Fritsch as early as December 1937 would imply that he had realized that the Blomberg fiancée was indeed "a whore," and that he had nonetheless allowed himself and Hitler to be made ridiculous by attending her wedding in January.

Overimpetuous this time, Göring jumped bum-deep into this juicy scandal—not suspecting that he would shortly sink in almost up to his neck. He brought the dossier on the "homosexual Fritsch" to Hitler's attention at the same time as that on the Blomberg bride. Hitler told him to question the blackmailer, Schmidt, in person.

Age thirty-one now, the felon was brought into the Göring villa. He had been sentenced to seven years on December 28, 1936, on multiple counts of blackmail, impersonating a police officer, and a variety of homosexual

offenses. General Göring that the dark-haired, sall physiognomy of a crimi and Schmidt easily picke the accused general, sayi tified him from pictures; vining enough. "It is q do them the honor of so a believed that the availa sexual acts."

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 that the dark-haired, shallow-featured man with penetrating dark eyes had the
 physiognomy of a criminal. He passed some photographs across the desk,
 and Schmidt easily picked out the one of Fritsch. Later, Göring would bluff
 the accused general, saying that the accomplice, Weingärtner, had also iden-
 tified him from pictures; this was not true. Schmidt, however, seemed con-
 vincing enough. "It is quite possible," conceded Fritsch later, "and I shall
 do them the honor of so assuming, that both the Führer and Göring genuinely
 believed that the available evidence amply proved that I indulged in homo-
 sexual acts."

Such, at any rate, was the prelude to one of the most unlikely confrontations
 in the history of the German high command. Early on January 26, 1938, the
 Wehrmacht adjutant Hossbach tipped off Fritsch about the allegations. The
 general stormed around to the Chancellery and demanded to see Hitler. He
 was left to cool his heels until 8:30 P.M., when he was shown into the library
 where Hitler and Göring were awaiting him.

The Führer [wrote Fritsch in his private papers] declared at once
 that I stood accused of homosexual activity. . . . If I confessed,
 he said, I should be required to go away on a long journey and
 that would be the end of it. Göring also spoke in this vein.

Greedy for a quick decision, Göring tried bluffing a confession out of Fritsch.
 There could be no doubt, he said. "This blackmailer has consistently spoken
the truth in over a hundred other cases."

Unexpectedly, Fritsch denied the charges—but not angrily or heatedly,
 because he had been tipped off by Hossbach hours before. He was altogether
 too cool about it in Hitler's view. Hitler handed over the Otto Schmidt file
 for the general to read. Fritsch did as bidden, gaped at one particularly
 perverse allegation, and his monocle fell out.

"While I ran my eye over the document in understandable commotion,"
 he wrote, "the blackmailer was brought in, a creature completely unknown
 to me. Acting astonished, he exclaimed—or so they said—'Yes, that's him!'"

This was the scene: a pale-faced Führer, an oversized air-force general
 beaming like a bemedaled Buddha, a scrawny blackmailer wearing an ill-
 fitting borrowed suit and pointing a quivering finger—and a Prussian baron
 and four-star general, standing ramrod stiff, with his monocle screwed firmly
 back in place. Göring broke the suspense, turning on his heel and stalking
 over to the dining room where Colonel Hossbach was waiting. "It was him!"
 he gasped melodramatically, lowering himself into a sofa. "It was him, it
 was him!" He produced a handkerchief, and mopped his brow.

Back in the library, General von Fritsch protested his innocence. "My
 word of honor," he recalled, with burning indignation, "was cast aside in

favor of the allegation of a scoundrel with a criminal record . . . I returned home deeply shaken by the wounding attitude shown by the Führer and Göring."

On Hitler's instructions, still protesting his innocence, the general was questioned by the Gestapo officers Werner Best and Franz Josef Huber the next day. Göring obtained the verbatim transcript and, with Himmler and Huber at his side, personally questioned not only Schmidt but Weingärtner too. Huber would never forget the incredulous contempt on Göring's face as he set eyes on the latter, the homosexual prostitute. Schmidt stuck to his story, but his pal was by no means so positive about Fritsch.

Shortly Göring had more cause for misgivings. He and the minister of justice jointly grilled Weingärtner alone, and the man again said that he "could not swear" that the army general had been his client.

Himmler's discomfiture was only beginning. At Gestapo headquarters Detective Franz Huber glimpsed on a colleague's desk a seized bankbook belonging to a certain cavalry captain, Achim von Frisch—and there were withdrawals in it that tallied exactly with the twenty-five hundred marks that Otto Schmidt claimed to have extorted from Fritsch. Huber warned his superiors, Heydrich and then Himmler: Neither told Hitler or Göring, nor did Göring have the moral courage to report his misgivings about Weingärtner, because in the meantime Hitler had bowed to army pressure and appointed a court of honor to try the Fritsch case, and—callously preempting its findings—he had already begun searching for a new commander in chief for the army.

Hitler dismissed without a second thought Göring's own greedy application to be given command of the army as well as the air force. His choice of successor eventually narrowed down to General Walther von Brauchitsch, father of one of Göring's adjutants. True, Brauchitsch was also involved in delicate matters: divorce negotiations revealing that he had spent years in an adulterous relationship. But he was the only army general who seemed to measure up to Hitler's requirements.

Over the last three days of January 1938 Göring negotiated with this general and his wife; she turned out to be demanding a large cash settlement before agreeing to a divorce. The cash was forked out by a philosophical Hitler, who had long ago learned that everything, from Carinhall to Eva Braun, had to be paid for. That obstacle out of the way, on the afternoon of February 3, 1938, he ordered Colonel General von Fritsch to resign.

Hitler camouflaged the whole nauseating scandal by a sweeping purge at the highest level. Dozens of generals learned literally from their morning *Völkischer Beobachter* that they had been axed. Over at the Foreign Ministry Neurath was replaced by the haughty Joachim von Ribbentrop, while the Ministry of Economics—currently though inconspicuously held by Göring himself—went to Walter Funk, who was indeed a well-known homosexual.

Hitler consoled Göring with Blomberg's old rank, field marshal—no mean

* D.T. He was soft on money. A young man he had had none to protect and now to send to him as to others

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Field Marshal Hermann Göring preside over the court of honor Brauchitsch, and two legal advisors was markedly different from for either Blomberg's or Fritsch's outcome other than a very unusual

Fritsch had instructed an Count Rüdiger von der Goltz. to have blackmailed this lawyer, Herl totally different lawyer, Herl count to begin intensive house of General von Fritsch's allegations of March he found what he Achim von Frisch. This office had blackmailed, but even blackmailer had given him for "Detective Kröger," the idea ating. It was an open-and-shut

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consolation, of course, since he thus outranked every other officer in the Reich. For two hours on February 5, Hitler offered his own account of these last weeks, while his senior generals and admirals clustered in a semicircle around him and Göring. Göring had appeared carrying a field marshal's baton. (It was probably the only such baton to be fished out of a stinking bog of intrigue, the army's illustrious Erich von Manstein reflected.) Hitler spared no sordid detail of Fritsch's felonies before making the only announcement that really mattered—that he had appointed himself supreme commander of the Wehrmacht.

A few days later, brooding upon the circumstances of his dismissal, General von Fritsch would surmise, "Above all, somebody must have systematically and deliberately poisoned the Führer's confidence in me." He suspected Himmler, and even Blomberg. "For the last four years," he meditated, "he [Blomberg] has not been honest with me. But there must be some special reason—otherwise this lack of trust of the Führer and betrayal by Göring defy comprehension."

Field Marshal Hermann Göring—how grand that sounded!—would have to preside over the court of honor now convened to hear the Fritsch case. Raeder, Brauchitsch, and two legal assessors would assist him. But now his position was markedly different from two weeks earlier. No longer in the running for either Blomberg's or Fritsch's posts, he had no personal interest in the outcome other than a very urgent concern to protect his own reputation.

Fritsch had instructed an attorney well known to Göring to defend him, Count Rüdiger von der Goltz. By coincidence, Otto Schmidt had also claimed to have blackmailed this lawyer once. It soon turned out to have been a totally different lawyer, Herbert Goltz. This misidentification prompted the count to begin intensive house-to-house inquiries in the area around the scene of General von Fritsch's alleged homosexual encounter. On the second day of March he found what he had been looking for, a retired cavalry captain, Achim von Frisch. This officer not only admitted that it was he whom Schmidt had blackmailed, but even produced the actual receipt that the obliging blackmailer had given him for the twenty-five hundred marks. It was signed "Detective Kröger," the identity Schmidt had already admitted impersonating. It was an open-and-shut case.

The discovery threatened to put Göring, the general's arch accuser, in a hideous position. Count von der Goltz alerted Erich Neumann, the Staatssekretär in Göring's Four-Year Plan office. Neumann, seeing only the horrid implications for his chief's reputation, blurted out, "But this is ghastly!" Hitler, however, suspected immediately that this was just a clever cover-up by the army, and insisted that the court of honor go ahead. The Gestapo prevailed on Otto Schmidt to swear an affidavit that the Frisch episode was quite distinct from the Fritsch affair.

The court's first session thus threatened to become a day of reckoning for

"cropped up," obliging a wildly excited Field Marshal Göring, the next morning, to adjourn the court of honor against Fritsch sine die. Delighted that Ribbentrop was momentarily in London, he seized control in Berlin.

That morning, March 10, 1938, he found the Chancellery already teeming with ministers, generals, and brown-uniformed party officials. General Keitel had sent off for the *Case Otto* file. Hitler summoned General Ludwig Beck, the unenthusiastic chief of general staff, and directed him in a five-minute interview to have two army corps standing by to cross into Austria on Saturday the twelfth. At 5:00 P.M. Milch arrived back in Berlin and went straight into an operational conference with Göring and Stumpff. Ribbentrop's Staatssekretär Baron von Weizsäcker suggested they cloak their invasion in a semblance of legality by getting an "appeal" from the Austrian government for German troops to come in and "restore order." Göring did not at first see the point of such a stunt—"We don't need it," he told Hitler. "We're going in anyway, come hell or high water!"

At the back of his mind were the five Italian divisions that Mussolini had mobilized once before on the Brenner frontier, in 1934, after the Nazis murdered his friend Dollfuss. "I wanted," Göring later explained, "to make things quite plain [to Mussolini] and discourage any intentions he might have." German troops pouring into Austria would not only deter the Italians from laying greedy hands on the eastern Tyrol, but they would prevent the Hungarians and Czechs from seizing other border provinces of Austria. By nine P.M. Göring had drafted a letter to Dr. Schuschnigg, calling on him to resign in favor of Seyss-Inquart, since he had violated the Berghof Agreement, and a suitable telegram for Berlin to receive from Seyss-Inquart. Göring sent the documents down to Seyss-Inquart in Vienna by courier that same night.

Friday March 11, 1938—D-Day minus one—found Göring "the busiest man in Berlin," as he unashamedly boasted during his trial. At 10:00 A.M. he called a further military conference with Brauchitsch, Beck, and Milch. He wedged his bulk into a phone booth in the Reich Chancellery and began dictating orders down the line to his agents seven hundred miles away in Vienna. He sent Keppler down with a list of Austrians he had selected to form Seyss-Inquart's first Cabinet. Among them were Ernst Kaltenbrunner, a soft-spoken thirty-four-year-old lawyer defaced by dueling scars, to control the secret police; Major Alexander Löhr, an Austrian Air-Force officer, for defense; the lawyer Hans Fischböck for trade and industry, and Paula Göring's husband Franz Hueber to take over justice and foreign affairs.

Schuschnigg stalled for time. At 2:45, Seyss-Inquart phoned Göring from Vienna saying that the chancellor had agreed to postpone his plebiscite. It was not enough. After consulting Hitler, Göring phoned Seyss-Inquart back an hour later. "You must send off that prearranged telegram to the Führer,"

March 1938

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Göring demanded, and at 4 to dictate an ultimatum to :

Göring kept his patience Vienna cut him off. (In retr sever the line completely.) had appointed. "God know embassy were," he said lat Dombrowski—in fact, it w nig, later an SS mass-murde to report that he was making Miklas, the constitutional of

Göring extended the dead SA and SS units were now Göring told Globocnik to g were to be replaced, he said ministers were to be—"Just that."

GLOBOCNIK: Ja, ja!

GÖRING: Well, say the

GLOBOCNIK: Ja, your b

GÖRING: Right.

At five-thirty he received a c in Vienna's Herrengasse. He realized that he really was pl Seyss-Inquart that he was t taking the German military t time. "If our demands are no Austria's existence will be o Miklas hasn't grasped that in to grasp it now." He tossed back to wait.

That evening he was stagin into his ceremonial uniform. H attaché had sent their excuse already arriving at the ornate pahed and the beautiful peopl the time liveried footmen slip as the final orders went out to air crews.

The big question mark was the floor, stiff-lipped and sayi

ed Field Marshal Göring, the next against Fritsch sine die. Delighted ndon, he seized control in Berlin. and the Chancellery already teeming ormed party officials. General Keitel r summoned General Ludwig Beck, f, and directed him in a five-minute g by to cross into Austria on Saturday back in Berlin and went straight into r and Stumpff. Ribbentrop's Staats- they cloak their invasion in a 'peal' from the Austrian government store order." Göring did not at first n't need it," he told Hitler. "We're ater!"

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Göring demanded, and at 4:00 P.M. he phoned Seyss-Inquart again, this time to dictate an ultimatum to Schuschnigg to resign by 5:30.

Göring kept his patience only poorly. Several times during phone calls, Vienna cut him off. (In retrospect, it is a mystery why the Austrians did not sever the line completely.) The clock was ticking on toward the deadline he had appointed. "God knows who half the people rattling around in that embassy were," he said later. Once, he understood he was speaking with a Dombrowski—in fact, it was the Trieste-born Austrian Nazi Odilo Globoc- nig, later an SS mass-murderer, whom Seyss-Inquart had sent to the embassy to report that he was making only slow headway with the Austrian president Miklas, the constitutional obstacle to any Nazi takeover.

Göring extended the deadline by two hours. The formerly banned Austrian SA and SS units were now blatantly patrolling Vienna's streets in uniform. Göring told Globocnig to get rid of the country's newspaper chiefs: They were to be replaced, he said, by "our men." He spelled out who the new ministers were to be—"Justice, that's straightforward. You know who gets that."

GLOBOCNIG: *Ja, ja!*

GÖRING: Well, say the name.

GLOBOCNIG: *Ja, your brother-in-law, right?*

GÖRING: Right.

At five-thirty he received a call from the staff in Seyss-Inquart's chambers in Vienna's Herrengasse. He could hear the panic in their voices as they realized that he really was planning to invade. He shouted down the line to Seyss-Inquart that he was to march right back to the president's palace, taking the German military attaché General Wolfgang Muff with him this time. "If our demands are not accepted, our troops will invade tonight, and Austria's existence will be over! . . . Tell him we're not kidding now. If Miklas hasn't grasped that in four hours, then tell him he's got four minutes to grasp it now." He tossed the receiver back onto its cradle, and settled back to wait.

That evening he was staging his Winter Ball, and it was time to change into his ceremonial uniform. He found that the Austrian envoy and his military attaché had sent their excuses, but over one thousand other guests were already arriving at the ornate Aviators' Building. The air-force band oom- pahed and the beautiful people of Berlin waltzed around the floor—and all the time liveried footmen slipped in and out with messages and telegrams as the final orders went out to one hundred thousand troops and hundreds of air crews.

The big question mark was Italy. Dour-faced Italian diplomats cluttered the floor, stiff-lipped and saying nothing. Together Hitler and Göring had

drafted a long letter during the day to Benito Mussolini, justifying their coming action in Austria. The complete typescript text, found years later in Göring's papers also made plain to the Duce that Germany intended to act against Czechoslovakia next. Göring had sent his friend Prince Philipp down to Italy with this new epistle to the Romans.

Göring waited at the Chancellery for word from Vienna and Rome. The seven-thirty deadline came and went. Just before eight Seyss-Inquart phoned again: Schuschnigg had merely "withdrawn," leaving everything in suspense. "Okay," replied Göring, "I'm going to order the invasion. . . . Tell those in charge that anybody resisting us will be turned over to our drumhead courts-martial. Is that clear?"

As they pensively trooped back to the conference room, Hitler slapped his thigh. "All right," he announced. "We go in!"

Hitler signed the executive order at eight-thirty. Back at the ball, an invisible tension, taut as a bandsman's drumskin, held the building as Göring returned to the floor. He took General Milch aside and murmured, "We go in at dawn."

It was not a secret that could be kept. In whispers and asides the news rippled across the floor. Göring reassured Massimo Magisrati that no German troops would advance south of Innsbruck; the diplomat's response was glacial. Then the surface tension eased, as droplets of good news arrived. At 8:48 P.M. Wilhelm Keppler phoned from Vienna—President Miklas was ordering Austrian troops not to resist. As the Prussian State Opera corps de ballet began to pirouette and whirl around the floor, Göring, sitting at the center table of the guests, tore a blank page from his program and penciled a note to Sir Neville Henderson:

As soon as the music is over I should like to talk to you, and will explain everything to you.

They met in his private room. The British ambassador said, "Even if Schuschnigg has acted with precipitate folly, that is no excuse for Germany to be a bully."

Two hours later Mussolini gave his assent to Hitler's action. He had told Prince Philipp frankly that he had written off Austria as soon as Schuschnigg had committed the plebiscite "*Dummheit*."

"I always knew we could bank on Mussolini," Hitler congratulated Göring. "This is the happiest moment of my life. Not for one second did I doubt the greatness of the Duce."

Encased on three sides by hostile German forces, Czechoslovakia realized that its future strategic position would be impossible. At 11:00 P.M. the Czech minister Vojtěch Mastný scurried over to Göring and presented his compliments. The field marshal rose to his feet and solemnly gave his word

that Prague had no grounds for to the Czech president, Dr. Ed mobilize Czech forces. "Good am now able to repeat my undi me in supreme charge—he's g

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Göring's vague plan now was allow Hitler to be voted in a Saturday—it was now March 1 special mission, to reassure the pension rights if he retired, "W guffawed the day before, "you c

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German forces, Czechoslovakia realized it would be impossible. At 11:00 P.M. the message was carried over to Göring and presented his message to his feet and solemnly gave his word

that Prague had no grounds for concern. Mastný passed this reassurance on to the Czech president, Dr. Edvard Beneš, who promised for his part not to mobilize Czech forces. "Good," said Göring, told of this at midnight. "I am now able to repeat my undertaking officially because the Führer has put me in supreme charge—he's going elsewhere for a short time."

Elsewhere was Austria. Learning at 2:30 A.M. that Heinrich Himmler had already flown there, Göring ordered one of his minions to phone urgent instructions to the exhausted Seyss-Inquart in Vienna: "He [Göring] wants you to take over their wiretapping agencies right away, okay?" Göring did not want Himmler getting his hands on these.

From first light onward three hundred Luftwaffe transport planes began ferrying troops into Austria. Acting head of state for the first time in his life, Göring remained in Berlin, relishing every moment of this brief taste of power. He phoned Mastný, this time to promise that no troops would come within ten miles of the Czech frontier. He sent for Tauschitz and mockingly remarked that he had missed him at last night's ball.

The Austrian envoy asked only, "Where is the Führer?"

"He's gone," roared Göring, laying it on thick and rotten. "He's gone where he's not been allowed to go for twenty years: to visit his parents' grave in Austria."

Göring's vague plan now was that President Miklas should step down, to allow Hitler to be voted in as president of Austria. At midday that Saturday—it was now March 12—he sent Milch down by plane with a special mission, to reassure the president that Germany would respect his pension rights if he retired. "With fourteen children to support," he had guffawed the day before, "you can't just do as you please!"

That Saturday evening he settled back at Carinhall and tuned in to the radio commentaries coming from all the world. He was unquestionably proud of what he had done for his Führer. Hitler was being given the Austrian equivalent of a ticker-tape parade as his automobile plowed slowly through cheering crowds into the first big town, Linz. Hysterical Austrians mobbed the car, strewing flowers in his path. "People are weeping and sobbing with joy," Göring related to one caller. "It's so unnerving that even our men can't hold back their tears. . . . Just one great outburst of joy from everybody, give or take a few panicky Jews and other guilt-stricken gentlemen."

Soon the airwaves carried the voice of Hitler himself, broadcasting from a balcony in Linz, while half a million Austrians packed into the square below. Göring heard Hitler, an orator like few others, tongue-tied with emotion.

Some hours later the phone rang, and it was Hitler calling, still choked with pent-up feelings. "Göring," he said, "you just can not imagine. I had completely forgotten how beautiful my country is."

"Yes," reported the field marshal, glowing, to Ribbentrop the next morning. "The Führer was just about all in when he spoke to me last night."

British might well figure among his enemies after all in some future war. He summoned his high command to a briefing in Berlin four days later.

Shortly before he addressed these generals, he broke it to Göring that he was going ahead with *Green* in the fall—that a purely political settlement was no longer acceptable. Göring clutched at straws. He argued that the army generals had made barely any progress on the vital West Wall, the line of bunkers defending Germany's frontier against France. Hitler was unmoved. "We'll deal with Czechoslovakia using these old generals," he said mockingly, "then we've got four or five years."

Göring's awe of Hitler was absolute, and this was his gravest impediment. "I try so hard," he once admitted to Hjalmar Schacht, "but every time I stand before the Führer, my heart drops into the seat of my pants." His heart wallowing around those nether regions now, he buttonholed Hitler's personal adjutant just before Hitler's conference of May 28 began. "Wiedemann," he pleaded, "does the Führer really imagine the French won't do anything if we light into the Czechs? Doesn't he read the Forschungsamt intercepts I send over?"

Hitler paid no heed to Göring's misgivings. "It is my unshakable resolve," he said to the generals, "that Czechoslovakia shall vanish from the map of Europe."

He gave them until September to be ready.

And then one day late that spring, five days after the Hitler conference, one of the telephones on his desk rang. "Congratulations!"—he recognized Emmy's voice—"from tiny Edda and me!"

A father at forty-five, the field marshal jumped into his sports car and hurtled over to the West Sanatorium clutching a bouquet of roses, while diplomatic Berlin heaved a sigh of relief: Göring, the ambassadors hoped, the complete family man, must now become a man of peace and conciliator in the councils of war.

Emmy settled into motherhood. "Hermann likes women who are fat," she told Sir Nevile Henderson, and comfortably complied.

Troubled by his heart, Hermann himself made token forays in the opposite direction. Along with the other amusements at Carinhall (which included a dentist's chair to "bore" his guests) he had installed an Elizabeth Arden reducing machine, and for the benefit of the visiting duchess of Windsor he forced himself between its rollers in full-dress uniform. The duke gave him a signed portrait photograph, which Göring later displayed next to the Führer's; he had had the latter specially enlarged and framed by his master silversmith, Professor Herbert Zeitner.

He had all the happiness that money could buy and more money than was proper to buy it. Tax declarations found in his files show that in fiscal 1936 he had paid only 2,832 marks tax on his 28,160-mark salary as air minister, and only 190 marks on his 15,795 marks pay as prime minister of Prussia.

But his emoluments from oil for him to fork out 120,000 marks of Greek gold bangle and smuggled bag ("I am delighted," wrote sending him this Christmas "won for Germany. Of course, comes from"); Göring's fortune buying two or three ancient barossa, which his friend the "God's own island," Capri.

Most of all he liked to cruise *Carin II*, a pleasure that cost dear. The AEG company had machinery alone, while Prussia rebuilding the bridges over the boat's superstructure was too

In June 1938 he cruised up Emmy was nursing Edda at the out of her earnings as a film actress to see *Hamlet* at Castle Elsinore to purchase twenty-one dozen Bach bakery. He had fallen for "ing," recalled pastry-cook Hermann in the shop had to pack the product a shuttle service out to the city short-lived. On the following bakery—everybody wanted to Hermannsson, "he ordered me which we had to send him by

His favorite cruising routes Berlin into the Elbe and down Germans lined the banks and past. Arrayed in a white uniform up applause and sunshine while like "Blame It on Napoleon. and he settled down to a bee very idea of losing was unthrift at the thought of accidentally stuff a pajama pocket with a lavish, mahogany-paneled bed

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But his emoluments from other sources were already substantial—enough for him to fork out 120,000 marks (about \$40,000 1936 dollars) for an ancient Greek gold bangle and smuggle it out of Italy in the ambassador's diplomatic bag ("I am delighted," wrote the ambassador, Ulrich von Hassell, to Göring, sending him this Christmas "gift" on December 23, 1937, "that it has been won for Germany. Of course, there must be no mention of which country it comes from"); Göring's fortune was also large enough for him to contemplate buying two or three ancient towers in Italy, including the Castello di Barbarossa, which his friend the Swedish author Axel Munthe offered him on "God's own island," Capri.

Most of all he liked to cruise in his—or more strictly, Emmy's—yacht, *Carin II*, a pleasure that cost both the Prussian purse and his benefactors dear. The AEG company had to pay thirty thousand marks for the electrical machinery alone, while Prussia had to bear the cost of demolishing and rebuilding the bridges over the rivers and inlets around Carinhall, since the boat's superstructure was too high.

In June 1938 he cruised up to the North Sea pleasure island of Sylt, where Emmy was nursing Edda at "Min Lütten," the dunes cottage she had bought out of her earnings as a film actress. Early in July he cruised up to Copenhagen to see *Hamlet* at Castle Elsinore, meet Crown Prince Fredrik, and above all to purchase twenty-one dozen *skrubbar*—Danish pastries—at the Christian Bach bakery. He had fallen for them while visiting Denmark in 1919. "Göring," recalled pastry-cook Hermansson, "drove up in three cars. The girls in the shop had to pack the pastries into cardboard boxes and carry them in a shuttle service out to the cars." His reducing efforts had evidently been short-lived. On the following Sunday the Danish townsfolk crowded into the bakery—everybody wanted to sample the Göring *skrubbar*. "Later," said Hermansson, "he ordered more pastries and *kranskaka* [a ring-shaped cake], which we had to send him by train."

His favorite cruising routes took *Carin II* along the inland waterways from Berlin into the Elbe and down the canals to the Rhine. Proud, contented Germans lined the banks and waved as their chubby field marshal chugged past. Arrayed in a white uniform, he sprawled in a deck chair and lapped up applause and sunshine while the boat's loudspeakers boomed gaudy songs like "Blame It on Napoleon." At dusk they made fast at some village quay and he settled down to a beer and a game of skat at a pfennig a point. The very idea of losing was unthinkable, and his adjutants sat with faces bleached at the thought of accidentally winning. Game over, the field marshal would stuff a pajama pocket with bonbons scooped up from a jar and retire to his lavish, mahogany-paneled bedroom.

At 6:00 A.M. his valet, Robert, often found him up on deck, swathed in blankets and contemplating the rising sun. Göring would motion to the valet to switch on the phonograph down below, and then the chosen riverside village would be awakened by an entire Wagner opera blaring from the boat's

the final golden chords had enveloped Robert. "Again!" he might come through again as far as 'Behold the light rays.' "

"sand marks a month!" whispered the valet once. Robert showed him and him to get Göring's name engraved

dy'll give you anything for it," he

should have been golden-hued after overclouded for Göring by Hitler's dent Beneš was proving less tractable country's Maginot-style frontier fortifications. Britain, however, though treaty-er to assist Beneš. "There can be no Göring assured his aircraft industrialists 8. "Nor does France, for that matter. t be certain."

audience, including the big names like Messerschmitt, and the directors of t a Czech "provocation."

agine that if Germany yet again able to crawl away and say, 'I always dead against it and the with them.' They'll just laugh you ey won't care two hoots whether

pad hint about Germany's bright future ll be the greatest power on earth. The oy . . . But we must venture something investment." He assured his listeners conferred at least once a week with cer. "Nothing important is ordered—g discussed down to the very last detail them of the new generation of aircraft air-cooled radial BMW engine and the ward thinking by these aviation experts:

Göring] a strato-bomber capable one hundred thousand feet . . .

I still miss the rocket engines that would enable us to fly at that attitude. And I still see no sign at all of a bomber that can carry five tons of bombs to New York and get back. How happy I'd be to get such a bomber and ram some of their arrogance right back down their throats.

As that summer wore on, he lazed in the sunshine, strolled around the forest glades, coddled the infant Edda, devoured adventure books, and leafed through the newspapers. They carried photographs of him accepting yet another sword, handmade by Paul Müller of Solingen, four feet long with its cross guard encrusted with twenty-five rubies and gold lettering emblazoned on the blade: TO THE HONORARY MASTER OF THE GERMAN CRAFTSMEN, FIELD MARSHAL HERMANN GÖRING. "With this sword," he said, raising the heavy weapon in both hands, "I shall smite all the enemies of Germany!"

He wondered who they would ultimately be. Would Hitler really order *Case Green*? What would Italy do this time? On July 9 he entertained the Italian chief of staff, General Alberto Pariani, at Carinhall. He boasted about his air force and claimed that Britain and France had no intention of helping the Czechs. Pariani disagreed, and warned the field marshal that Germany must finish Czechoslovakia with one thrust.

"We must hang together," Göring cautioned him, "for better or for worse."

That summer's entries in Göring's thick, leather-bound diary—lettered in gilt, "*Besprechungen*" ("Conferences")—reflected his energy in mobilizing the aircraft industry for war. The diary opened with a July 11, 1938, conference on securing the requisite manpower, including women, for the aircraft factories, training new apprentices and converting unskilled workers into specialists. On the same day he conferred with a building contractor about proposals to use Reich autobahns for aircraft runways and hangars, and he discussed the construction of new air-raid shelters and underground factories, while the same diary reveals him on the fifteenth and sixteenth in secret talks with Four-Year Plan agents, Neuhausen and Bernhardt, on ways of extending Nazi influence in Yugoslavia and Spain, and on obtaining foodstuffs and raw materials from Spain in return for arms deliveries to General Franco. ("Caution," Göring noted, "because of Nonintervention.")

The Luftwaffe's plans for *Green* were now complete. Four hundred fighters, six hundred bombers, and two hundred dive-bombers and ground-attack planes would operate against Czechoslovakia, while 250 Junkers 52 transports would drop paratroops into the heart of the fortifications. Simultaneously General Helmuth Felmy's Second Air Fleet (*Luftflotte*) would stand by to operate from airfields in northwestern Germany against Britain as soon as *Green* was over.

As fall approached, Göring became restive. He had a lot more to lose in

a war than his Führer. On July 14, he approved Milch's suggestion that a British fighter squadron be invited over to Germany for a friendly visit to the Luftwaffe. Using Wiedemann's girl friend, Princess Stephanie von Hohenlohe, he had inquiries made in London whether he himself might fly over to see Lord Halifax. On July 18, the latter, now foreign secretary, received Wiedemann in secret in London and provided the one assurance that the field marshal had asked for, that he would not be exposed to public insult. But then, when Wiedemann reported this outcome to Hitler the next day on the Obersalzberg, Hitler said that it was "out of the question" for Göring to go to London now.

Hitler had begun waging an ultramodern war of nerves on Prague—what he called in a secret speech in August "whetting the blade." Göring played an active part in this, and his Forschungsamt closely monitored its results.

This psychological warfare reached its climax when the French air-force commander, General Joseph Vuillemin, visited Germany in mid-August 1938. Göring allowed him to see the beer gardens, swimming pools, and saunas that he had provided for aircraft-industry workers; as Vuillemin's gaping aides counted the brand-new Me 109 fighter planes lined up on Döberitz Airfield—twenty-seven—a four-engine Focke-Wulf Condor touched down. At Oranienburg, where only cows had grazed twelve months earlier, an Ernst Heinkel factory was now producing seventy He 111 bombers a month—more than the entire French aircraft industry in a year. In a remarkable new hedgehopping Fieseler Storch, Ernst Udet flew the French Commander in Chief at a lazy eighty miles an hour over the local concentration camp (Vuillemin noted that it was visibly "well attended"—"*très habité*."') As the Storch fluttered down onto an airfield, it rocked in the slipstream of the new record-breaking He 100 zooming a few feet overhead at full throttle. It was purely a laboratory-test vehicle, but Milch blandly asked about "production plans," and Udet grinned and said, "The second mass-production line is just starting and the third in three weeks' time."

And so the amiable bullying went on. At Messerschmitt's Augsburg works airfield a twin-engined Me 110 heavy fighter prototype, jacked up in the butts, blasted away with a twenty-millimeter cannon, and another was looped and stunted with one engine shut down. At Junkers' Magdeburg plant officials bragged that the 1,250-horsepower Jumo 211 would replace the standard 210 from November (it would still not be in squadron service five years later).

In his final report General Vuillemin warned Paris that the German Air Force was one of "truly devastating power," and this undoubtedly helped the vacillating French to make up their minds when the time came.

Whatever his own misgivings, Göring cooperated with the OKW on the tactical planning of *Green* and heaped criticism on the army generals and their plans. He insisted that the all-important "provocation" be timed to ensure the right flying weather for his air force. On August 23, he summoned his commanding generals to Carinhall, and two days later his air staff issued

a directive for *Enlarged Case* countries would come to Cz Hitler's SS adjutant Max Wun on the Obersalzberg on the la

Although we have no record incident that suggests that G economic adviser, Helmut W rendezvous in Basel with Edg him to put a very oddly wor Department on behalf of som If war broke out, this question Washington intervene with Lo even more draconian Versaille highly placed" Berlin gentler cided that at the present junct

In London the Foreign Office was the first feeler to have co

Of course, Göring's "feeler psychological warfare. But he derson too. Hitler, he said on S rally, had asked him to inform him to settle the Sudeten probl the moderation of his other sug sador out of the drum-thumpi peace and quiet of Castle Velde of a Czech "incident"—for ex man leader Konrad Henlein. He "Chamberlain and Hitler ough

Chamberlain had in fact bee fourteenth, Henderson phoned berg to Carinhall suffering from bypassing Ribbentrop to secure prime minister. "Of course!" e at Berchtesgaden, at once. Char some headway and agreed to m a record of the Berghof meeting

On the morning of the sever Carinhall and found Göring, still In an hour-long talk the ambasse closeted alone with Hitler on the some precipitate military action meeting. Göring put his mind at of his toughest language yet. "I make war on Germany, one thi

Nov 1938

The religious christening irked the party as much as the Göring church wedding had. (Rudolf Hess, also a first-time father, opted for the party's own pagan "naming ceremony" six days later.) Martin Bormann, Hess's powerful chief of staff, found out that Göring's nanny was not a party member. Emmy confessed sweetly, "I am not either!" To protect her from further reproof, Hitler would give her a golden party membership badge as a Christmas gift, engraved with a low number—744,606—borrowed from a member who had passed on to a place where, no doubt, party membership no longer counted.

A few days after the christening Göring took the sleeper back to Berlin. As the train passed through Halle, an adjutant shook him awake and raised the blind. The clouds were lit by a distant conflagration. He thought no more about it until driving through Berlin to his ministry—he found his car slithering across broken glass, and there were smoldering ruins where Jewish stores and synagogues had been. It was the first he knew of the nationwide pogrom organized by Dr. Joseph Goebbels.

Göring had fallen out with the "little doctor" over Goebbels's unconventional life-style. During October Magda Goebbels had come over to Carinhall to weep on Emmy's shoulder about the "devil incarnate" whom she had married. She admitted that she was herself entangled with her husband's handsome secretary, Karl Hanke, but everybody in Berlin knew that Goebbels was shamelessly coercing young actresses for sexual favors. The latest was the elegant Czech actress Lida Baarova. Göring authorized a security wiretap on her phone, and ruthlessly broadcast the scandal around Nazi high society. The Gestapo joined the hue-and-cry. "There are literally dozens of cases," Heinrich Himmler, no paragon of virtue himself, chuckled to Alfred Rosenberg. "The women are standing in line to swear affidavits on how he coerced them. I've turned over the choicest statements to the Führer."

Goebbels justified himself to Göring by saying that his wife was "frigid as an iceberg." Pacing up and down his study, puffing a Virginia cigarette, Göring solemnly listened then sent the couple down to see Hitler. The Führer patched things up.

The pogrom of November 9 was Goebbels misguided way of saying thank you.

Göring had no time at all for pogroms. Since the Nazis had come to power, his speeches had betrayed a dutiful anti-Semitism that met the mood of the moment in Central Europe. Ethnic imbalances have always provided ammunition for nationalists, and nowhere more so than in Germany. In 1933 its half million Jews made up less than one percent of the population, but they crowded the more lucrative and influential professions. Berlin's 160,000 Jews provided 27 percent of the doctors, 48 percent of the attorneys, and fifty-six percent of the notaries. Vienna had even more. "Vienna," declared

SUNSHINE GIRL AND CRYSTAL NIGHT

princess might have envied the infant Edda Göring her beauty as a child. Her parents called her a princess. Her father's eyes betrayed a trace of her father's eyes. She was sold of him enfolding her in his arms at her christening on November 4, 1938. The wiser men of Germany, from Cranach, the burghers of Cologne, and men subscribed to build a very large hall at Carinhall—a miniature Sanssouci, and dolls to scale. Her fourth birthday, she wore a red uniform manufactured by the Reich. Her fifth, learning the piano; her sixth, she was out of a trainload of grimy evacuees from the Ruhr. By the last wartime Christmas, she wore nightdresses made of heavy bridal tulle. By that time the refugees were in the direction.

Göring, speaking there on March 26, 1938, "can no longer rightfully be called a German city. Where there are three hundred thousand Jews, you cannot speak of a German city."

He made liberal use of Nazi solecisms about the Jews. Telephoning Ribbentrop after the Anschluss, the FA heard him say, "The fact is that apart from the Jews clogging up Vienna, there's nobody at all who's against us." Why should a Hermann Göring use different language when even the British ambassador was warning of "Jewish troublemaking" and lobbying in favor of a preventive war against Hitler?

The Göring attitude toward Jews was beset by inconsistencies. He dealt with them when purchasing fine artifacts and precious stones; through his valet, Robert, he would purchase in Paris a recording of Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann*, although Offenbach's works were proscribed in Nazi Germany. The Nuremberg Laws on race, drafted by the Ministry of the Interior in September 1935, came as a surprise to him. ("I am still wondering," he would say in an overheard May 1945 conversation, "where they could have originated.") He moderated where he could. When the fervent Nazi gauleiter of Danzig, Albert Forster, wanted to introduce the laws there in 1937, it was Göring who prevented it. He shielded individual Jews, like Arthur Imhausen, the Jewish co-inventor of synthetic edible fats. "At my suggestion," he wrote to the Ruhr chemist on June 23, 1937, "in view of your services, the Führer has authorized your recognition as a full Aryan." He allowed Gustav Gründgens the (homosexual) artistic director of his Prussian State Theater, to hire actors with Jewish wives, and he encouraged Emmy to intervene with the authorities on behalf of Jewish stage colleagues (until a personal letter came from Hitler urging her to desist).

While the doctrinaire Nazis fought the Jews at every level of their existence, Göring fought only certain Jews, and on a much narrower front. The economic factor underlay all his directives against them. On May 15, 1936, soon after being appointed "currency dictator," he had remarked, "Scandinavian importers want German motor vehicles but are being put off by bad representation of our interests, mostly by Jews." "It's a fallacy," he argued on the same occasion, "to believe that Jews are going to work exceptionally hard to please us. There are exceptions, but these just prove the rule."

In this economic battle he would be quite ruthless. A few days after the November 1938 pogrom he referred to an earlier conference "at which we discussed this problem for the first time and took the decision to Aryanize the German economy, to throw the Jews out of our business life and into the debtors' register." The concept had been sound, he said, but he complained that the execution had been only mediocre.

All that would change during 1938. As chief of the Four-Year Plan he gave warning in his Vienna speech of March 26 that Jewish businesses were to be compulsorily purchased and sold off to non-Jews—"systematically and carefully, legally but inexorably."

The remaining Jews in up with two streetwise certificates to two thousand caught. Göring then issued Jewish-owned businesses. "Exclusion of Jews from the new impetus that came the beginning of a defi

All over the world [sic] at Carinhall on July it's clear why: Anti-Semitism is a logical consequence of them.

The Jew sees only a world on fire. And praying for war—because of the world's press.

Göring's little-publicized life was as carefully planned fight over Corinth or Crete, some of which had seen corporations designed to combat anti-Semitic countries in which no distinction between Jewish different nationalities "just Sudeten territories," he wrote who're becoming Englishmen cut any ice with us."

Under his chief economic official bloodhounds stripped off their Aryan camouflage of the Reich. This example, the ruthless liquidation of Central and Eastern Europe. In 1934 Ignaz had bequeathed to his four sons—all of whom immediately begun to divest themselves of unchallengeable "front men" of unchallengeable the Reich. The assets were to "insoluble difficulties" were to "entjüden" both Petschek and Göring suggested he mop

partly American) stockholders were for the major offensive against the Germany's lignite-brickette producer Wohlthat directed his attack on diligence from the Gestapo and Forster's clung to their property with a before Munich they vanished and citizenship and, incidentally, over government fund set up to aid Czech personal "promise of safe-conduct," or questioning.

man offices, Göring and Wohlthat Germans, English, and Swiss bankers. in the financial swamp and claimed that the Petscheks had thought of radical decision that brought victory on of the Petschek conglomerate, a German Coal Trading, Inc., to be a Reich Citizenship Act of June 14, he deemed Jewish if under predominance in the Petschek defenses, because fully named corporation was in fact rate bank. One after the other, the were proclaimed Jewish and turned

the financial problem of buying out holders were paid off in full when the year 1939; as a bonus for Göring the deposits to exchange for urgently while, as the Germans had occupied and confiscated crates filled with currency would be freighted to neutral Switzerland. The family had defrauded the Reich of the penalties and tax arrears would far one to the German "front men," so Wohlthat and his team would report to new tax-fraud and currency-violation

problem" most evenings as he motored all. He tried to put it out of his mind entered his own domain, with its herds. But as he chewed contentedly on his nurse their infant daughter by the

roaring fire, those moose reminded him of the problem again. "We'll give the Jews a forest of their own," he cruelly jested when Goebbels asked in November for an ordinance banning Jews from public parks, "and [Undersecretary] Alpers will see to it that all the animals that look like Jews—the moose has that same hook nose—are put in there and allowed to apply for naturalization."

Nobody wanted Europe's Jews. When Jews who had emigrated from Poland began to flood back there in alarm, their own Warsaw government passed a law designed to keep them out. A furious Polish Jew stormed the German embassy in Paris and pumped bullets into the ambassador's deputy, an impulsive action that was the beginning of the Jews' long journey into darkness, because a vengeful speech by Goebbels triggered a pogrom throughout Germany and Austria—a dusk of agonizing screams, of arson, and of shattered shop windows that would go down in history as "Crystal Night."

Unquestionably, Göring approved of punishing the whole Jewish community in some way for the diplomat's murder. "The swine will think twice," he said, "before they inflict a second murder on us." But the unthinking and needlessly destructive mode of revenge that Goebbels had selected outraged him. As his limousine made its way through the shards in Berlin the next morning, November 10, he got fighting mad and called a terse meeting of the Nazi party leaders at the Air Ministry Building. Walther Darré heard Göring call the pogrom "a bloody outrage." The field marshal lectured them all on their "lack of discipline." He reserved his most pained language for Dr. Joseph Goebbels. "I buy most of my works of art from Jewish dealers," he cried.

Goebbels rushed yelping to the Führer's lunch table but found little sympathy. Hitler had spent the night in Munich issuing orders to stop the outrages and sending out his adjutants to protect Jewish businesses like Bernheimer's, the antique dealers. Himmler was also furious with Goebbels for having made free with the local SS units to stage the pogrom. Over at the Chancellery that afternoon, November 10, Göring waded into Goebbels. "This is going to cost us a bloody fortune abroad," he shouted, "and I'm the one who's got to earn it all!"

Hitler did not take sides but expressed concern to Göring over the undisciplined approach to "the Jewish problem" and ordered him to draw up stringent laws immediately. Later that day he telephoned Göring to make the point: "All the key measures must be in one central hand." Lest he be misunderstood, he instructed Bormann to send Göring a letter emphasizing that the Führer wanted a uniform attack on the whole problem.

On Hitler's instructions, Göring called a Cabinet-level conference on November 12. "I am sick and tired of these demonstrations," he bellowed. "They don't harm the Jews but they do end up hurting me, because I am the one who has to hold the economy together."

Most of Crystal Night's appalling results were now in. Nazi-directed mobs

had wrecked seventy-five hundred Jewish stores and a hundred synagogues, often setting fire to neighboring non-Jewish property. A single Berlin jeweler's like Margraf's had been looted of 1,700,000 Reichsmarks (\$375,000) of stock. The total loss—provisionally assessed at 25 million Reichsmarks (\$5.6 million)—would fall squarely on the (non-Jewish) German insurance market. Meanwhile the government would lose all tax revenue from the seventy-five hundred wrecked stores. It was a massive "own goal" that Goebbels, the Nazi "minister for public enlightenment," had scored. "It seems," snapped Göring at the conference, "that our own public could do with some enlightenment!"

The chief of the Insurance Companies' Association, Eduard Hilgard, assessed the glass damage alone at 6 million Reichsmarks. He confirmed that the major loss would fall on non-Jews, since the Jewish businessmen mainly just rented their stores.

GÖRING: "That's just what we were saying."

GOEBBELS: "Then the Jew must pay for the damage."

GÖRING: "That's not the point. We haven't got the raw materials.

It's all foreign plate glass [a Belgian monopoly], and it's going to cost a fortune in hard currency! It's enough to drive you up the wall!"

While Göring had some expectation of picking up foreign currency if the German insurers had reinsured abroad, his hope that they might even refuse to pay out on claims submitted by Jews was frustrated.

HILGARD: "If we refuse to honor clear and binding obligations, it would be a blot on the honor of the German insurance market."

GÖRING: "But not if I intervene with a statutory order!"

HILGARD: "I was about to come to that."

HEYDRICH: "You could cough up on the insurance all right, and then we could confiscate it at the point of payout. That way you save face."

Hilgard was still uneasy and thought that would "not be a good thing" in the long run.

"I beg your pardon!" exclaimed Göring. "If you're legally obliged to pay out six millions and all at once an angel descends from on high, in the form of my somewhat corpulent self, and tells you that you're let off paying a million of that—the hell you can't say it's a good thing!"

The verbatim record of this discussion provides an unsavory picture of Hermann Göring. Told that even the looted merchandise was often German-owned and sold by the Jews only on a commission basis, Göring wailed, "I wish you'd done in two hundred Jews and not destroyed such assets."

"Thirty-five," corrected stapo. "It's thirty-five dea

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"Thirty-five," corrected Reinhard Heydrich, the ice-cool head of the Gestapo. "It's thirty-five dead."

The upshot was two laws, co-signed by Göring, purporting to eliminate Jews from the economy and to levy a collective fine on the Jewish community of one billion Reichsmarks for the diplomat's murder. There is little doubt that Hitler and Göring had jointly hit on this cynical idea as one way of bridging Germany's growing currency deficit. As Göring frankly explained at a meeting of the Reich Defense Council on November 18, 1938, this penalty and the sale of Jewish businesses provided an "interim remedy" for the budgetary shortfall.

There remained some loose ends after the pogrom. He signed a fistful of decrees over the coming weeks providing the legal framework that Hitler had been demanding for an orderly, regularized solution of "the Jewish problem."

Undoubtedly his purpose was to prevent any recurrence of such pogroms. In his eyes Heydrich was the real villain, after Goebbels. "The rest of them," his sister Ilse Göring told a friend, quoting Hermann, "are tolerable. Himmler himself is quite unimportant and basically harmless."

Heydrich had a clever legal mind and had thought the whole "Jewish problem" logically through. "The problem [is]," he had explained at the November 12 meeting, "not how to get the rich Jews out but the Jewish mob." He foresaw a ten-year plague of rootless, unemployed Jews in the Reich and demanded that they wear distinguishing badges.

"My dear Heydrich," said Göring, "you're not going to get anywhere without the large-scale erection of ghettos in the cities."

In some instances he moderated the anti-Jewish ordinances. At the end of November he ordered the release of any World War I combat veterans found among the twenty thousand Jews detained during the "reprisal action" after the diplomat's murder. To avoid excesses, in mid-December 1938 he issued a circular stating, "To ensure uniformity in dealing with the Jewish problem, which is of vital concern for our overall economic interests, I request that all regulations and other important directives bearing upon it be submitted to me for sanction before being issued."

Irritated by the continuing arbitrary actions by officials against Jews, he secured clear guidelines from Hitler later that month. "I have sought the Führer's pleasure on these matters," Göring announced, "and in the future this, his will, is to be considered the sole guiding principle." In the future, no Jews were to be deprived of protected tenancies (that is, tenancies from which they could not legally be evicted); Hitler merely suggested that they be brought under one roof. The expropriation of Jewish-owned housing was to be halted. "Most pressing," defined Göring, "is the Aryanization of factories and businesses, agricultural real estate and forests." While Jews were no longer to use railroad sleeping cars or dining cars, a petty discrimination for which Goebbels had agitated in November, Göring ruled out the

introduction of "Jews Only" compartments or any total ban on using public transport. Finally he said, Hitler had ordained that Jewish civil servants would not forfeit their pensions.

In one respect Hitler, Göring, Ribbentrop, and Himmler all saw eye to eye. All three saw Jewish emigration—to Tanganyika, to Madagascar, or to Palestine, as the only realistic solution. On January 24, 1939, Göring set up within the Ministry of the Interior a Central Reich Office for Jewish Emigration, and ordered Heydrich to organize a suitable Jewish agency to process applications, raise funds for the poorer Jews, and agree on destinations. Göring insisted on being kept informed. "My decision," he ruled, "is to be obtained before taking any fundamental actions."

With Göring's inauguration of this central office, the expulsion of Jews from the German-controlled area of Europe gained momentum. Two thirds thus escaped before the war obliged Heinrich Müller, of the Gestapo, to order a halt on October 23, 1939: Three hundred thousand Jews had left Germany, 130,000 Austria, and 30,000 Bohemia and Moravia; seventy thousand of these had found their way to Palestine.

Emigration was only one possibility that Göring foresaw. "The second is as follows," he said in November 1938, selecting his words with uncharacteristic care. "If at any foreseeable time in the future the German Reich finds itself in a foreign political conflict, then it is self-evident that we in Germany will address ourselves first and foremost to effecting a grand settling of scores against the Jews."

Nov 1938

LOSI

model of the sprawling He war—he wanted to exploit. Politically he was increasing. unveil his plans for world. January and February 1939, wider. In the coming year the moderates. But he was hard-earned status as Hitler's

Little was left of their earlier in February 1939, Hitler's recent months he had seen Go among the late-night guests.

From the field marshal's to have "his pudgy fingers in berg would put it.

Considering his later reputation often of a surprising intricac

1998 - Rubinstein

developing upwards, even if its inhabitants do not always wear the appearance of a professor of astronomy.

Francis
Bacon

It is quite natural that Bruno, who is in advance even of our own times, should have been regarded by his contemporaries either as a diabolical seducer or a mad fantastic. The philosopher who gave clear and definite expression to what all the world was thinking was Francis Bacon: no fathomless volcano like Bruno, no God-seeker, struggling in the darkness, like Böhme, no sensitive psychological atom like Montaigne, no fiery world-eye like Shakspeare, but a deliberate and impressive speaker who had the gift of comprehending and brilliantly formulating the effort of his own age. It was of his essence that he was English, for such a philosophy as his could only come out of England.

The rise
of England

During the sixteenth century England developed from a mediæval city-state into a modern European great power, not as patriotic legend pretends, thanks to its rulers, but in spite of them, for they were generally mediocre, often contemptible. Henry VIII we have come across several times already. Not even Shakspeare's court poetry with all its retouching could depict him except as a coarse and treacherous despot. Holbein's portrait is enough to give a complete idea of this bejewelled butcher, this overpowering incarnation of bestial energy and insatiable vitality. His son, Edward VI, who gave promise of talents, died in youth; he was succeeded by "Bloody Mary," an embittered old maid and intense bigot, who, completely under the influence of her husband, Philip II (for whom she had a lifelong and ill-requited passion), strove by the most brutal means to bring about a Catholic restoration and — what her subjects resented far more even than her cruel attempts at reaction — lost Calais in the war with France which she carried on as an ally of Spain. If she had lived a few years longer, revolution would have followed. Her successor was Elizabeth, a prudent and clear-sighted but immoderately vain and egoistic woman, with the brutal unscrupulousness, cool deceit, and self-righteous prudery which England's enemies regard as her national characteristics. Certainly "cant" was developed in her, even so soon, to sheer artistry. It is a quality for which no other language has a word, because no other people has the characteristic. Cant is neither lying nor hypocrisy: it is something far more complicated. It is a talent — namely, that of feeling everything

322 323

to be true and good when an Englishman pleasant, he conclude wrong or untrue. Thus fidious not only to oth with the clearest conscience is an instinct that he is described as honest de

The two most infamous executions of Essex and Mary II, as queen, a traitor, and Mary II. What does bring disgrace justice to its bloody end womanly gentleness at Nor can any reasonable but only for the cool throughout her reign to permitted Walter Raleigh to call the first English respect she fell far lowly ably committed as mar coldblooded deliberation and more frankly. When band Darnley into the nation, but when Elizabeth public opinion was silenced cleverly; still, cleverness: tenuous circumstance

On Elizabeth's death succeeded by James I, son Margaret Tudor; he un same time the evil quality: needing obstinacy and and moral irresponsibly Mary's secretary, murdered by Darnley. thick, and his beard thin and unmusical; men said

D.T.

It was thus that I explained the English to A. G. — then the mouth of Rubinstein's return another demon had primed. It was the perfect lecture for Rubinstein to give since he was a picture-book of cant.

1938

to be true and good which brings immediate practical advantage. When an Englishman feels anything for any reason to be unpleasant, he concludes — in his subconsciousness — to call it wrong or untrue. Thus he has the singular faculty of being perfidious not only to others, but to himself, and he exerts his talent with the clearest conscience, which is perfectly natural since it is an instinct that he is satisfying. Cant is something that may be described as honest deceit or the gift of cheating oneself.

The two most infamous blots on the reign of Elizabeth are the executions of Essex and of Mary Queen of Scots. On both occasions she was, as queen and as politician, in the right, for Essex was a traitor, and Mary the head of many dangerous conspiracies. What does bring discredit on her is that she not merely pursued justice to its bloody end, but that she sought to get a reputation for womanly gentleness and Christian mercy out of it all as well. Nor can any reasonable man reproach her for her many lovers, but only for the cool *tartufferie* with which she allowed herself throughout her reign to be celebrated as the Virgin Queen and permitted Walter Raleigh (who must himself have known better) to call the first English colony Virginia in her honour. In this respect she fell far lower than her deadly rival Mary, who probably committed as many crimes in her life, but none with such coldblooded deliberation, and certainly "strayed" both less often and more frankly. When Mary's lover Bothwell blew her husband Darnley into the air, the whole of Scotland rose in insurrection, but when Elizabeth's favourite Leicester poisoned his wife, public opinion was silent, for things had been managed far more cleverly; still, cleverness has never yet been regarded as an extenuating circumstance in a murder case.

On Elizabeth's death, after fifty-five years' reign, she was succeeded by James I, son of Mary Stuart and great-grandson of Margaret Tudor; he united both crowns, uniting, however, at the same time the evil qualities of both the rival houses — the domineering obstinacy and arrogance of the Tudors and the inertia and moral irresponsibility of the Stuarts. His father was probably Mary's secretary, the ugly David Rizzio, who was bestially murdered by Darnley. His figure was fat and ungainly, his head thick, and his beard thin, his eyes bulging, his speech stammering and unmusical; men said that he spat out rather than articulated

See p 324

family tree that accompanied the application was as

—
 Hermann Georg Hiedler — Johann Nepomuk Hiedler

Alois Hitler

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Klara Pölzl

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 on Gustav was born, in 1886 a daughter, Ida, who
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 i suffering is hidden behind these bare figures!
 If was born the three other children were already
 a what care the sorely tried mother must have
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 m, too.

he early death of the three children was due to
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*var good Death was
 Adolf's victims*

PORTRAIT OF HIS MOTHER

35

1938

The most outstanding trait in my friend's character was,
 as I had experienced myself, the unparalleled consistency in
 everything that he said and did. There was in his nature
something firm, inflexible, immovable, obstinately rigid,
 which manifested itself in his profound seriousness and was
 at the bottom of all his other characteristics. Adolf simply
 could not change his mind or his nature. Everything that
 lay in these rigid precincts of his being remained unaltered
 for ever. How often did I experience this! I remember what
 he said to me when we met again in 1938 after an interval
 of thirty years. "You haven't changed, Kubizek, you have
 only grown older." If this was true of me, how much more
 was it of him! He never changed.

I have tried to find an explanation for this fundamental
 trait in his character. Influence of surroundings and educa-
 tion can hardly account for it, but I could imagine — al-
 though a complete layman in the field of genetics — that the
 biological effect of the intermarriage in the family was to
 fix certain spheres and that those "arrested complexes" have
 produced that particular type of character. It was just this
 inflexibility that was responsible for Adolf Hitler's causing
 such innumerable sorrows to his mother.

Once more the mother's heart was sorely tried by destiny.
 Five years after Adolf's birth, on March 24, 1894, she gave
 birth to a fifth child, a son, Edmund, who also died young,
 on June 29, 1900, in Leonding. Although Adolf had no
 recollection of the first three children in Braunau, and never
 spoke of them, he could clearly remember his brother Ed-
 mund, at the time of whose death he was already eleven years
 old. He told me once that Edmund had died of diphtheria.
 The youngest child, a girl called Paula, born on January 21,
 1896, survived.

Thus, an early death had deprived Klara Hitler of four
of her six children. Perhaps her mother's heart was broken
 by these terrible trials. Only one thing remained, the care

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THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

The first resolution was made in 1919 when, after long internal struggles, I became a politician and took up the battle against my enemy.

Manifestly the date was important to Hitler. He was at that time 30 years old—the same age another Messiah is reported to have begun his mission to save mankind.

That he saw himself as the special agent of God, and identified with Him was made manifest on many occasions:

I go the way that Providence dictates for me, with all the assurance of a sleepwalker.

—Speech of 14 March 1936, Munich

God has created this people and it has grown according to His will. And according to our will [*nach unserem Willen*] it shall remain and never shall it pass away.

—Speech of 31 July 1937, Breslau

I believe that it was God's will that from here [Austria] a boy was sent into the Reich and that he grew up to become the leader of the nation.

—Speech of 9 April 1938, Vienna⁷²

Hitler did not like to be told that the ways of God were not always revealed to him. On one occasion an aide noted that "God does not let people look at the cards He holds" [*Der liebe Gott lässt sich nicht in seine Karten sehen*]. Hitler immediately broke forth into such a paroxysm of fury that he himself feared a heart attack. He gave orders that the aide never repeat the offensive phrase.⁷³

The feeling that he was being specially guided from on high grew more intense through the years. On 16 September 1935 he said, "What was denied to millions of men was given to us by Providence, and our work will be still remembered by the last members of posterity." In a speech in his hometown of Linz, 12 March 1938: "When I once departed from this city, I carried with me the very same confession of faith that fills me today. . . . If Providence once then called me from out of this city . . . then Providence must thereby have given me a mission. . . ."⁷⁴

His convictions were reinforced by miraculous escapes from assassination. After the failure of the bomb plot of 20 July 1944 he told a naval aide, "Now the Almighty has stayed their [assassins'] hands once more. Don't you agree that I should consider it as a nod of Fate that it intends to preserve me for my assigned task." His valet remembers that Hitler was very calm, saying, "That is new proof that I have been selected from among other men by Providence to lead greater Germany to victory." And again, "Because I have been saved while

1936, 1938

The Image and the Man

others had to die, it is clearer than in my hands."⁷⁵

His version of human history mythology. He believed that a purely early Garden of Eden. But this pure made incarnate in the form of the "the Jew is the personification of the reached his conclusion that in fight of Almighty God. In Hitler's theology the one committed in the biblical G races is the original sin [*Erbsünde*] sins against blood and race are the thought of World War II in eschatological commander of the forces of good and the forces of Satan. "Often it seems by the Devil and Satan, and we must we finally obtain ultimate victory."

He did not view the Party and zations. "I consider those who are greater than those who establish a Party," he had written in *Mein Kampf*, "We are not a movement, rat

The institutional pattern he used the Roman Catholic Church, which a boy he had dreamed of being a however, he raised his sights and sought an apostolic succession. He announced in the Brown House during 1930 my successors in the leadership of, fallibility. I hope the world will grow has to the claim of the Holy Father."

He also fancied himself as a man world he planned to conquer. "I'm here. Soon I'll be the great chief of the Third Reich are mingling my name with their pra

Hitler saw striking parallels between and Enlightenment and the Church of the Faith (*Congregatio de Propaganda*) task was not to communicate knowledge conditional faith." He viewed the 25 of our faith" and the "rock" upon which proclamation of the "Thousand Year Reich" was also fond of speaking of the Third Reich, and Volk. As the sign and chose a special type of cross, and this Hakenkreuz.

* D. R. I told him absolutely that, together, translation is

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

ferent versions of the time and occasion when he stopped smoking. He told his secretaries that as a young boy he smoked "a long porcelain pipe . . . like a chimney . . . even in bed," but had given it up at an early age. To others, however, he confided that he had not quit smoking until years later when, in Vienna as a young man, it occurred to him that money spent on tobacco might be better invested in food. But he also said on another occasion that he quit smoking in 1922 because he was afraid that it would impair the quality of his speaking voice.¹⁰⁰

His entourage knew how much he delighted in reading Karl May and other novelists he recommended, but he said, "I never read a novel. That kind of reading annoys me."¹⁰¹

Hitler's memory was incredibly precise. But curiously he forgot—or failed to tell the truth about—generally known facts of his personal life. A long letter of 29 November 1921 contains patent inaccuracies about his family, describing his father, for example, as a "postal official" when actually he had been a career customs inspector. Years later, in the *Tischgespräche*, Hitler's father was made out to be a local judge.

Hitler's father and mother—and their ancestors, as far as we can tell—were born in Austria and were citizens of the Austrian or Austro-Hungarian Empire. Hitler, on at least two occasions, tried to give a different impression. In a public speech on 22 February 1933 in Forstheim, Bavaria, he told his audience, "I myself by my descent, my birth, and family am a Bavarian . . . for the first time since the founding of the Reich the inheritance of Bismarck is in the hands of a Bavarian [*eines Bayern*]." In front of leading English and German diplomats who knew better, on 23 September 1938 in Bad Godesberg, he attempted to persuade Neville Chamberlain that he too was Anglo-Saxon, saying that since his own ancestors "came from Lower Saxony [*Nieder sachsen*]" he and the British prime minister could perhaps "claim common ancestry."¹⁰²

Why did Hitler feel it necessary to dissimulate about his family ancestry?

Realism and Fantasy

Hitler was a hard-headed pragmatist with a remarkable capacity to deal effectively with the realities of political life; he was also a person who lived in a fantastic dream world. When as a boy he dreamed of rebuilding his hometown, his plans became reality for him. As his only friend and confidant of those years recalled, "Hitler lived so much in his vision of the future Linz that he adapted his day-to-day habits to it; for instance he would visit the 'Hall of Fame,' the 'Memorial Temple' or our 'medieval open-air museum.'" As a teenager he fell in love with a girl named Stefanie. Although she never knew that he existed, he built a villa for her—in his fantasy—and furnished it with infinite care. He was particularly concerned about the

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placement of the piano in the halls.

Years later, he had other described by Speer. Another invasion of Norway in 1940 a colossal resort with mile up The swimming pools of the bath life of the future of on the continent would swim, from hydroelectric sources in during the short Northern (ming pools. Although his a million of important war plan detailed plans for the entire a to connect the resort with the

Hitler's extraordinary career. In his memoirs, and lovingly over what he believed first important political speech ruary 1920. He recalled the event, asserting that he pers care and that he converted an night that proved him an or victory, it was also the most struggling little German Wo fitting close for the first vol by . . . people united by a . . . A fire had been lighted, come some day the sword wh manic Siegfried and the life with the coming rise, I sense exorable Revenge. . . . Thus ment took its course."¹⁰⁴

That Hitler's fantasy do been carefully documented. T at all, but a Dr. Dingfelder; Party advertisements announce ter was less than enthusiastic one sentence on an inside pa was the hated Marxists who p crowd left the meeting, the *Internationale*.¹⁰⁵

Such is the "historical tru that a more important historic about himself. He believed in of history.

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ated with glowing as-
and immortality. Thus,
than one or two divi-
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of the book [actually
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mastered all history led
a book he planned to
Hett (Monumental His-

of the Wehrmacht on 23
the special importance
that my own person is
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gith of my brain and my
alent entirely upon me."
as the personification of
acks of the enemy. That
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my because I have created
I am boundlessly proud
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ashing about him as he
his own suicide—he still
eel. In his last political
he had made "the most
man." And when a secre-
ing up this last testament
survive after his death,
"The German people
movement. Perhaps in a
ideas and National So-
the ashes." He assured
him and the other im-
place if after my death
some sort of Olympus. I
and spirits of all times."¹³⁵
fter making assertions of

omnipotence and infallibility, he worried about failure and defeat. His memoirs recall how many times during the early days of the Party "I had forebodings and was filled with a depressing fear." Fear followed him after he attained power. Constantly he was "obsessed by frightful nervous apprehension" that he was going to fail. He tried to reassure himself by insisting that he had absolutely no such fears, feeling it necessary to say, for example, "I have no fear of annihilation. . . . Cities will become heaps of ruins. Noble monuments . . . will disappear forever. . . . But I am not afraid of this!" He compressed his thinking into a familiar disjunctive which included the alternative of disaster. "There are two possibilities," he said in 1936, "to win through with all my plans or to fail. If I win I shall be one of the greatest men in history. If I fail I shall be condemned, despised, and damed."¹³⁶

At the very height of prewar success, failure was on his mind. On 10 November 1938, for example, he addressed the German press in what should have been a moment of triumph. His first big pogrom against the Jews in the *Kristallnacht* had just been completed with the acquiescence of the German people. Preceding months had marked a series of other victories: reintroduction of universal military training; occupation of the Rhineland; a highly successful plebiscite approving his withdrawal from the League of Nations; *Anschluss* with Austria; and most recently, the triumph of the Munich agreement. And yet this speech of 10 November is studded with foreboding. The words *Angst*, *Rückschlag*, *Niederlage*, and *Misserfolg* keep reappear-
ing:

*a great
set-back defeat*

I must tell you that I often have one single *misgiving*. . . . I become almost *anxious*. . . . I have had nothing but successes but what would happen if I were to suffer a *failure*? Yes, gentlemen, even that can happen. . . . How would [the masses] act if we had a *failure*? Formerly, gentlemen, it was my greatest pride that I built up a Party that even in time of defeat stood behind me. . . .¹³⁷

Even in the Declaration of War speech of 1 September 1939 he was thinking of the defeat of 1918 and insisting that he never knew the word "capitulation." He also felt the need of naming successors:

Once again I have put on that tunic which to me is the holiest and dearest of all. I will only remove it after the victory or I will not survive the end. If anything should happen to me in this battle my successor will be [Field Marshal] Göring. If anything should happen to [him] his successor will be Hess. . . . One word I have never learned and that word is capitulation. . . . A November 1918 will never be repeated. We recognize again only one basic fundamental goal; it is completely unimportant if we live, but it is necessary that our people, that Germany, lives.¹³⁸

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son. Indeed, one sentence can be read to support Jetzinger's conclusion: "During the last months of her suffering I had gone to Vienna to take my entrance examination at the Akademie." He then hurries on to describe his heartfelt disappointment at his rejection.¹⁴²

The most reliable testimony comes from three people who would have been in a position to know about Adolf's conduct: the family physician, the helpful neighborly woman, and Hitler's sister. In November 1938, Dr. Bloch was asked by a Nazi Party archivist to write a memoir of Klara Hitler and her son. The statement, which may now be found in a file marked Gestapo Reports in the Party archives, asserts that young Hitler did indeed return from Vienna to nurse his mother: "During my house calls [on Klara Hitler] I had many opportunities to observe the Führer. He stayed close by his mother's side, with the deepest love, watching her every movement in order to be able to extend to her quickly little services that might help alleviate some of her pain. His usually saddened eyes lit up when his mother was not suffering." And he was present at her death bed. Indeed, Bloch clearly remembered that Adolf stayed alone in the room to draw a picture of her emaciated body; and Dr. Bloch concluded, "In my nearly forty years of medical practice I have never seen a young man so heartbroken and filled with sorrow as the young Adolf Hitler was in the days after the burial of his beloved mother, when he came to thank me for my care."

When Adolf went back to Vienna after the funeral, he did not forget the doctor's kindness and sent him two carefully painted postcards expressing his gratitude. Dr. Bloch noted that over the years he had received countless thank-you notes from grateful patients, and he asked rhetorically why he had kept and cherished these particular cards. He answered, "Because I saw in them the signs of the future greatness of the Führer? No! I kept them as souvenirs of a fine and exemplary son who bore such a deep love and concern for his dear mother which one finds on this globe only in extremely exceptional cases."¹⁴³

It may well be objected that the statement made by the intimidated Jewish doctor in 1938 was a futile and pathetic attempt to ingratiate himself with the Nazis by painting their Führer in the most flattering light. Yet in the safety of his American exile in 1943, when he had no reason whatever to please the Nazis, Dr. Bloch still stood by his story of the solicitous Adolf who loved his mother with such great devotion.¹⁴⁴

We also have the testimony of the postmaster's widow, whose name seems to have been Frau Prezemeyer. In an interview with a Nazi reporter, she recalled that she too had received a thank-you letter from the Führer and that he had helped her when she was ill. In important lines that biographers may have missed because they are blurred by a fold in the paper, she also asserted that it was she who had written Adolf in Vienna about his mother's relapse and that Adolf immediately "interrupted his studies and hurried to the sick bed of his mother."¹⁴⁵

Again, it may be objected that Frau Prezemeyer's testimony should

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The Child As Father to th

be discounted as an effort necessary for her to demonstrate his gratitude; easily have paid generous making specific ref

The third witness conducted by U.S. Army that "Adolf . . . stayed a

Psychological evidence seem to support the structure of the house and the wall would, at the time of acute guilt feelings. Heings by a visible displacement, in addition to his convince himself and dutiful son.

He composed the Koldindorffer:

Adolf and Paula Hitler surviving relatives unforgettable motif Klara Hitler, the Widow who was t

The funeral took place buried at the side of Leonding. Relatives had home, but the miserable vitality. He confided "Stefanie"—that is, to be alone all evening, as he

His mother's death ward, he said, he hated shroud.* When he became of Christmas into a holiday was to be changed Night" (Mutternacht).¹ an obvious and tradition manently for all to see. It is strange that this beloved mother's grave.

* It may also have been shroud. We know that there 1900, the day young Hitler

* he might have said
relatives or friends

*the
reasons
of his
face.
He does
not tell
Guerin
this
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obverse.*

Hitler made her undress. . . . He would lie down on the floor. Then she would have to squat over his face where he could examine her at close range and this made him very excited. When the excitement reached its peak, he demanded that she urinate on him and that gave him his sexual pleasure. Geli said the whole performance was extremely disgusting to her and . . . it gave her no gratification.²⁰⁰

One might well raise questions about the reliability of Otto Strasser's testimony on anything. In particular, one might well wonder whether Geli would be likely to confide in him over such intimate matters. Langer and his associates, however, reported that other informants—whose names are not mentioned—gave similar testimony about Hitler's perversion.³⁰⁰

Long before Dr. Langer and his colleagues drew up their report, a Catholic priest provided evidence which tends to support their findings. This priest, Father Bernhard Stempfle, had befriended Hitler and helped edit *Mein Kampf* for publication. He asserted that in 1929 Hitler had written Geli a shockingly compromising letter which explicitly mentioned his masochistic and coprophilic inclinations. Geli no doubt would have been repelled by the letter, but she never received it. It fell into the hands of Hitler's landlady's son, a man named Rudolph. Hitler was saved from embarrassment—and conceivably from political disaster—by a remarkable person, a gnomelike eccentric named J. F. M. Rehse. For years this indefatigable little man, who was a close friend and confidant of Father Stempfle, had collected political memorabilia. His rooms were packed to the ceiling with cartons containing copies of official decrees, pictures, political advertisements, and thousands of newspaper clippings. One day Hitler sent the Party treasurer, Franz X. Schwarz, to Rehse and asked him to buy Hitler's incriminating letter from Rudolph with the excuse that he needed it for his collection. But Rehse, on the advice of Father Stempfle, saw an opportunity to profit from Hitler's embarrassment. He demanded that the Nazi leader assume financial responsibility for his beloved collection. Hitler yielded to this extortion and found the money to underwrite the Rehse collection, which still may be found in the archives of the Nazi Party, now largely on microfilm in the Hoover Institution and in the National Archives.

At any rate, the compromising letter—which probably never went through Rehse's hands at all—was delivered by Father Stempfle to Schwarz, who gave it to Hitler. It may well be that this service to Hitler helped make Schwarz one of the more influential though publicly obscure figures within the Nazi Party. Hitler further testified to his confidence in Schwarz when he made him sole executor of his personal will of 2 May 1938.

There is another bit of evidence that would seem to support Father

Stempfle's story of Hitler called Blood Purge, who were in a position to be found dead in the fores through his heart.³⁰¹

The idea that Hitler rent to women is further who, we can be reasonable committed suicide or hang herself in 1928; G tempted suicide in 1932 cessful suicide, as we Mitford's attempted sui political reasons.

But these are only support a conclusion th sion. Equally important fact: he displayed ot with this kind of per literature.³⁰²

Specialists in these traits are a prerequisite acre has concluded that Hitler's sadism scarcely widely recognized is th deep depression and sel As his worried friend Au and wallow "deeper an tion," until finally, after the most awful punishm up Stefanie!"—that is, h

As we noted in dis a tendency to stereotype of sadomasochistic in speeches he revealed h ochism (weakness, sub: tery). He would speak, of the better and the s worse and weaker."³⁰³

When told of Hitl experienced analyst fo Hitler's sadomasochism King Kong. It's easy to t that in part. He was al blonde. He was so infat helpless (masochistic), t

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

make his own feelings more bearable by shifting the finger of guilt away from himself and pointing it at the Jews. But this kind of projection does not really solve his problem. Indeed, it creates a kind of vicious circle: "The hated scapegoat is merely a disguise for persistent and unrecognized self-hatred. . . . The more the sufferer hates himself, the more he hates the scapegoat. But the more he hates the scapegoat, the less sure he is of his logic and his innocence; hence the more guilt he has to project."⁴⁶

The greater the guilt feelings, the more the scapegoat must suffer. Since Hitler's hatred of the Jews was monumental, his feelings of guilt and self-loathing must have been very great indeed. The specific accusations he projected onto the Jews are particularly revealing. In public speech and private conversation, his chief charge against them was that they were guilty of dark and evil sexual practices. Hitler made Jews directly responsible for almost every crime known to man, but "never did he become so emotional, so arbitrary and so absurd" as when he fulminated against Jewish sexual perversions. Jews are the kind of people, for example, who have sex with their mothers.⁴⁷

The question of Hitler's sexual relations with his own mother illustrates one way in which a historian's approach to a problem differs from that of the clinical psychologist. All the training and professional instincts of the historian focus on the question: Did it actually happen? Did this incest really take place? The psychologist is more interested in a different question: Did the patient actually have this fantasy—did he *believe* that it happened? It is doubtful that Hitler actually had sexual relations with his young mother, but psychological evidence indicates that he had fantasies about Oedipal fulfillment and that he felt guilty about them. By using the word "incest" so often, he showed that it was on his mind; he hung a portrait of his mother over his bed in all his bedrooms; a poem he wrote about her is redolent of sex and the death wish; his only bride, he said, was the Motherland, and he talked of "conquering" her. All the women with whom he had sexual relations, of one sort or another, were mother substitutes; all had attributes of age or physical qualities or family relationship or nicknames that reminded him of his mother and her relations with her husband. One can also surmise that Hitler had incestuous fantasies and felt uneasy about them because he found it so important to deny that he had them: it was not he, it was the Jews who practiced incest.

The Jews were also useful to Hitler in fulfilling his need to blame someone else for his own uneasiness about sexual perversion. One incident will serve as an illustration. In 1938 he professed absolute moral outrage when he discovered that General Blomberg, the minister of defense, had married a former prostitute. Hitler had the Gestapo collect incriminating evidence against Frau Blomberg. They supplied him with photographs showing her profession by participating in various forms of deviant sexual activity. (A man who has

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* a scene which is of the Hitler philosophy

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From Private Neurosis to Public

seen the photographs has written depravity.") What concerns us examining the pictures. He says photos "must have been of the incident believed that Hitler the wildest anti-Semitic fulminations credence to the finding which produced feelings of require urgent projection.

As we have noted, the emperor might have had a Jewish grandfather. Hitler talked incessantly about to get rid of his own blood; his grandmother and his illegitimate by the thought that he himself was simply unbearable. Psychology on the projection of his own onto Jews. Politically, he had of the superiority of the Aryan Jews," and the terrible threat get rid of his awful suspicion. lawyer and then his secret plot to prove positively that he could. But they could not prove the identity of his paternal grandfather shall shortly suggest, he tried away—a way that would have given

HISTORIC CONSEQUENCES OF ANTI-SEMITISM

Political Value of a Private

Hitler's personal need for political asset in helping him soon shared by thousands of other people. One simple explanation for all parties also offered scapegoat Hitler's. The Communists offered

OD: ADOLF HITLER

From Private Neurosis to Public Policy

ing the finger of guilt. But this kind of proof, it creates a kind of disguise for persistent sufferer hates himself, he hates the scapegoat, hence the more guilt

scapegoat must suffer. tal, his feelings of guilt indeed. The specific ac- ticularly revealing. In ef charge against them practices. Hitler made ne known to man, but ary and so absurd" as rversions. Jews are the heir mothers.⁴⁷

with his own mother ach to a problem differs raining and professional n: Did it actually hap- psychologist is more in- t actually have this fan- otful that Hitler actually but psychological evi- pal fulfillment and that d "incest" so often, he trait of his mother over about her is redolent of id, was the Motherland, men with whom he had mother substitutes; all nily relationship or nick- her relations with her incestuous fantasies and o important to deny that s who practiced incest. filling his need to blame sexual perversion. One 8 he professed absolute d Blomberg, the minister Hitler had the Gestapo Blomberg. They supplied er profession by partici- tivity. (A man who has

seen the photographs has written that they were of the "most shocking depravity.") What concerns us is Hitler's immediate reaction upon first examining the pictures. He said at once that the male partner in the photos "must have been of Jewish extraction." The writer who reported the incident believed that Hitler then became "absolutely convulsed by the wildest anti-Semitic fulminations."⁴⁸ A reaction as violent as this lends credence to the finding that Hitler himself had a perversion which produced feelings of guilt and self-loathing so intense as to require urgent projection.

As we have noted, the evidence is strong that Hitler believed he might have had a Jewish grandfather (see Chapter 3, pp. 126-131). Hitler talked incessantly about blood poisoning by Jews; he sought to get rid of his own blood; he destroyed the village he associated with his grandmother and his illegitimate father. In short, he was terrified by the thought that he himself might be "part Jewish." Such a suspicion was simply unbearable. Psychologically, he had based his very identity on the projection of his own feelings of guilt, inadequacy, and failure onto Jews. Politically, he had staked his entire career on the principle of the superiority of the Aryans, the inferiority of the "sub-human Jews," and the terrible threat of the "Jewish peril." He simply had to get rid of his awful suspicion. First, we recall, he ordered his personal lawyer and then his secret police to investigate his ancestry in order to prove positively that he could not possibly have any Jewish blood. But they could not prove it because they could not determine the identity of his paternal grandfather. And that is one reason why, we shall shortly suggest, he tried to establish his innocence in a different way—a way that would have ghastly historical consequences.

HISTORIC CONSEQUENCES OF HITLER'S ANTI-SEMITISM

My enemy is Germany's enemy: always and only,
the Jew!

—Adolf Hitler

Political Value of a Private Scapegoat

Hitler's personal need for a scapegoat proved to be a distinct political asset in helping him come to power. For Hitler's phobia was soon shared by thousands of Germans who desperately wanted to find one simple explanation for all their manifold woes. True, other political parties also offered scapegoats; but they were not nearly so good as Hitler's. The Communists offered "the exploiting middle class," "feudal

his the phobias

ency came into his voice and
his response in me.
that he was talking to a sub-
in aspects of my work, warn-
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ch during the years that fol-
on of him. This man was the
Nazi régime revolved. The
ided indirectly by his force-
all his political colleagues and
vast intelligence machine of

whom I met when he was
must recall something of his
World War he joined the
then served in the cruiser
Canaris as his command-
rank of Lieutenant, but
especially his affairs with
Officers' Court of Honour and
the Service.

succeeded in 1931, through
introduction to Himmler,
to him the drafting of a plan
come the Party's 'security

perception of the moral,
nesses of others and he also
uation in its entirety. His
ever-watchful instincts of a
ger and ready to act swiftly
pin-pointed as useful, he
sary, dropped with equal
ut or to offer the slightest
ut.

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He was inordinately ambitious. It seemed as if, in a pack of
ferocious wolves, he must always prove himself the strongest and
assume the leadership. He had to be the first, the best, in every-
thing, regardless of the means, whether by deceit, treachery, or
violence. Untouched by any pangs of conscience and assisted by
an ice-cold intellect, he could carry injustice to the point of ex-
treme cruelty.

Towards his assistants and colleagues and towards the higher
Party leaders, such as Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy, Martin Bor-
mann, Chief of the Reich Chancellery, and the Gauleiters, he
operated on the principle of 'divide and rule', and even applied
this to his relations with Hitler and Himmler. The decisive thing
for him was always to know more than others, to know every-
thing about everyone, whether it touched on the political, pro-
fessional, or most intimate personal aspects of their lives, and to
use this knowledge and the weaknesses of others to render them
completely dependent on him, from the highest to the lowest. It
was this that enabled him to hold and manipulate the balance of
power in a milieu full of intrigue and cross-currents of personal
ambition, rivalry and animosity, while he himself remained in the
background. He was a master at playing antagonists off one against
the other, feeding each one, under an oath of strict secrecy, with
detrimental information about his rival, and getting still more
damaging information in return. Heydrich was, in fact, the puppet
master of the Third Reich. *Acme*

He made Hitler dependent on him by fulfilling all his most
insane schemes, thus making himself indispensable. He supplied
Himmler with brilliant ideas so that he could shine in conferences
with Hitler, Hess, Bormann, and the General Staff, and yet would
do this so tactfully that Himmler never suspected that these ideas
were not his own. *Ac.*

Heydrich's only weakness was his ungovernable sexual appetite.
To this he would surrender himself without inhibition or caution,
and the calculated control which characterized him in everything
else he did left him completely. But in the end he always regained
sufficient mastery over himself to prevent serious repercussions.

In February 1938, Heydrich found himself in conflict with the
Commander-in-Chief of the German Army, General von Fritsch.

One of the shadier characters in his service, Chief Inspector Meisinger, a former Munich police detective, brought Heydrich what he considered to be conclusive evidence that General von Fritsch had been guilty of serious moral offences. It was quite likely that Heydrich was delighted to accept at its face value incriminating evidence against the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army. Be that as it may, he passed the material on to Himmler and Hitler without checking its validity. By the time he realized that Meisinger had made a serious mistake it was too late, and he decided to maintain the accusation before his superiors. He was willing, in fact, that the General should be unjustly accused as long as his own mistake could be covered up.

But the Court of Honour summoned by the Reichswehr, over which Goering presided—one result of this affair was serious tension between Goering and Heydrich—brought the truth to light. The chief witness for the prosecution gave certain evidence about homosexual practices, but it was evidence that concerned not von Fritsch the General, but a cavalry officer called von Frisch—an incredible blunder to have made. The court established the innocence of General von Fritsch beyond any doubt. Yet in spite of this Hitler used the incident to force von Fritsch to resign 'for reasons of ill-health'. Von Brauchitsch, later promoted to Field-Marshal, replaced him as Commander-in-Chief of the army.

During the von Fritsch case I witnessed for the first time some of the rather strange practices resorted to by Himmler through his inclination towards mysticism. He assembled twelve of his most trusted SS leaders in a room next to the one in which von Fritsch was being questioned and ordered them all to concentrate their minds on exerting a suggestive influence over the General that would induce him to tell the truth. I happened to come into the room by accident, and to see these twelve SS leaders sitting in a circle, all sunk in deep and silent contemplation, was indeed a remarkable sight.

The SS organization had been built up by Himmler on the principles of the Order of the Jesuits. The service statutes and spiritual exercises prescribed by Ignatius Loyola formed a pattern which Himmler assiduously tried to copy. Absolute obedience

was the supreme rule; each and every without question.

The 'Reichsfuehrer SS'—Himmler—the SS—was intended to be the counte of the Order, and the whole structure adopted from these studies of the hierarchy.

A medieval castle near Paderborn structured and adapted to serve as a kind called 'Webelsburg'. Here the secret assembled once a year. Each member had an engraved silver name-plate, and each a ritual of spiritual exercises aimed mainly

Himmler was born in 1900, son of a greengrocer and a former tutor at the brought up in the strictest observance soon drifted away from the Church, poor despot father, though not until after dare to leave the Church. His father had a farmer, but having served as an ensign he joined the Hitler movement after G. in 1926 he was Reichsfuehrer der Schutz the Security Echelon—Hitler's bodyguard.

Before the sitting of the Court of I General von Fritsch, I was told to report myself with a service pistol and an ample When I arrived, Heydrich invited me to office. On the way to dinner he said, 'I cellent shot with a pistol.' I said that I was

We sat down, Heydrich, his Adjutant : Though I was mystified by the whole affair questions, for Heydrich was obviously in sion. After dinner he took a large nun suddenly he said, without any preambles marching from Potsdam during the next greatest danger will have passed.'

Gradually he became more relaxed and Through informants within the army, Hey

his service, Chief Inspector Detective, brought Heydrich evidence that General von Morol offences. It was quite to accept at its face value Commander-in-Chief of the passed the material on to its validity. By the time he serious mistake it was too late, sation before his superiors. General should be unjustly could be covered up. d by the Reichswehr, over f this affair was serious ren- brought the truth to light. ave certain evidence about lence that concerned not officer called von Frisch— The court established the nd any doubt. Yet in spite nce von Fritsch to resign htsch, later promoted to mander-in-Chief of the

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was the supreme rule; each and every order had to be accepted without question.

The 'Reichsfuehrer SS'—Himmler's title as the supreme head of the SS—was intended to be the counterpart of the Jesuits' 'General of the Order', and the whole structure of the leadership was adopted from these studies of the hierarchic order of the Catholic Church.

A medieval castle near Paderborn in Westphalia was reconstructed and adapted to serve as a kind of SS monastery, the so-called 'Wehlsburg'. Here the secret Chapter of the Order assembled once a year. Each member had his own armchair with an engraved silver name-plate, and each had to devote himself to a ritual of spiritual exercises aimed mainly at mental concentration.

Himmler was born in 1900, son of a daughter of a Savoyard greengrocer and a former tutor at the Bavarian Court. He was brought up in the strictest observance of the Catholic faith but soon drifted away from the Church, possibly out of hatred of his despotic father, though not until after his father's death did he dare to leave the Church. His father had intended him to become a farmer, but having served as an ensign in the First World War, he joined the Hitler movement after Germany's defeat. Already in 1926 he was Reichsfuehrer der Schutzstaffel (SS) or Chief of the Security Echelon—Hitler's bodyguard.

Before the sitting of the Court of Honour that was to try General von Fritsch, I was told to report to Heydrich and to arm myself with a service pistol and an ample supply of ammunition. When I arrived, Heydrich invited me to dine with him in his office. On the way to dinner he said, 'I've heard you're an excellent shot with a pistol.' I said that I was.

We sat down, Heydrich, his Adjutant and I, and ate in silence. Though I was mystified by the whole affair I was careful not to ask questions, for Heydrich was obviously in a state of extreme tension. After dinner he took a large number of aspirins. Then suddenly he said, without any preamble, 'If they don't start marching from Potsdam during the next hour and a half, the greatest danger will have passed.'

Gradually he became more relaxed and then began to explain. Through informants within the army, Heydrich had learned that

officers of the General Staff, outraged at the shameful proceedings against their popular Commander-in-Chief, were contemplating the strongest counter-measures, and that the officers in Potsdam had even discussed a resort to force against the régime. Heydrich knew that if they were going to strike they would do so that night. He had, of course, taken the fullest security precautions but remained so nervous, that, knowing of my prowess as a marksman, he wanted me near him that evening.

Some time after one o'clock in the morning I was allowed to go. Walking out of the building with me, the Adjutant said softly, 'There has been no evidence of great heroism tonight.' I shook my head.

This affair certainly damaged Heydrich's position for a time and it took all his skill and cunning to re-establish himself. He immediately replaced Meisinger, appointing Dr Best as Investigating Criminal Director of the Gestapo.

From the first Heydrich had been impressed by my work and my reports, and as our working relationship progressed and I grew to know him better I began to be aware of his intentions. Basically, his attitude towards me was the same as to all his subordinates. It was a sort of cat-and-mouse game, played in terms of trickery and deception, Heydrich always playing the part of the cat, never resting until he had got the mouse completely in his power, to be struck down at the slightest sign of escape.

In my case, he met with no success at first. Outside my work I came to be of some personal value to Heydrich as a means towards social contacts in spheres which he would not otherwise have got into—the intellectual and cultural circles of Berlin society. His wife, a cool Nordic beauty, not without pride and ambition of her own, yet completely enslaved by Heydrich, was glad to find in me someone who could satisfy her hunger for the better things of life—her longing for more intelligent and cultivated society in the world of literature and art.

When Heydrich first became aware of his wife's cultural aspirations, he was suspicious. But in spite of the subservience to which he had reduced her, Frau Heydrich retained a strong personality. Eventually Heydrich gave in with a good grace and took up riding, went to concerts and the theatre, which the three of us

enjoyed together, and began to frequent society.

Unknown to me, however, he was between his wife and me to set a trap, or evenings playing bridge, in what of the family circle, where he would husband, and the very next evening from him—his voice now assuming 'This evening we must go out together dinner somewhere, and then "go play

During dinner his conversation would try to make me drunk as we p I always excused myself on the ground the mark, and he never succeeded.

One evening he conceived the idea thing for the SD to set up an establishments from other countries could be atmosphere and where they would be companionship. In such an atmosphere might be induced to unbend and reveal

Not long afterwards I received orders such an 'institution', as the incoming foreign diplomats and their entourage almost a social necessity. The establishment 'Salon Kitty'.

Through an apparently innocuous was rented in a fashionable district of decoration were supervised by a team of technical specialists went to work. Do incorporation of microphones. The automatic transmission to tape recorders word spoken throughout the house. technical experts, bound by oath, and apparatus. The ostensible owner of the necessary domestic and catering staff be able to offer the best service, food

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enjoyed together, and began to frequent the best circles in Berlin society.

Unknown to me, however, he was using this new relationship between his wife and me to set a trap. We would spend afternoons or evenings playing bridge, in what he called 'the dear intimacy of the family circle', where he would act the part of the devoted husband, and the very next evening I would get a telephone call from him—his voice now assuming a suggestive leer—saying, 'This evening we must go out together—in mufti. We'll have dinner somewhere, and then "go places".'

During dinner his conversation would become obscene. He would try to make me drunk as we prowled from bar to bar, but I always excused myself on the grounds of not feeling quite up to the mark, and he never succeeded.

One evening he conceived the idea that it might be a good thing for the SD to set up an establishment where important visitors from other countries could be 'entertained' in a discreet atmosphere and where they would be offered seductive feminine companionship. In such an atmosphere the most rigid diplomat might be induced to unbend and reveal useful information.

Not long afterwards I received orders from Heydrich to establish such an 'institution', as the increasing number of visiting foreign diplomats and their entourages made some such place almost a social necessity. The establishment was to be called 'Salon Kitty'.

Through an apparently innocuous businessman, a large house was rented in a fashionable district of Berlin. The furnishing and decoration were supervised by a leading architect, and then the technical specialists went to work. Double walls were built for the incorporation of microphones. These were connected by automatic transmission to tape recorders which would record every word spoken throughout the house. Three of our department's technical experts, bound by oath, were put in charge of this apparatus. The ostensible owner of the house was provided with the necessary domestic and catering staff for the establishment to be able to offer the best service, food and drink.

The next problem was to find hostesses. I refused to have anything to do with this. As I pointed out to Heydrich, my depart-

ment supplied only the most valuable of women agents and I could not afford to assign them to such work.

One of Heydrich's underlings, Arthur Nebe, Chief of the Criminal Police, who for many years had worked in the vice squad, agreed to take on the task. From all the great cities of Europe he recruited the most highly qualified and cultivated ladies of the *demi-monde*, and I regret to say that quite a few ladies from the upper crust of German society were only too willing to serve their country in this manner.

'Salon Kitty' certainly brought results—the most surprising information was yielded by some of the guests. They were mainly diplomatic secrets which Heydrich, with his usual astuteness, would use against Ribbentrop and his Foreign Ministry, for no one, not even Ribbentrop himself, knew to whom the 'Salon Kitty' really belonged. One of the biggest catches was the Italian Foreign Minister, Count Ciano, who went there with other important diplomats.

Heydrich, of course, missed no opportunity for what he described as a 'personal inspection' of the establishment, but on these occasions I was given special orders to turn off the listening and recording apparatus. Out of this came one of Heydrich's characteristic intrigues.

Having told Himmler about 'Salon Kitty' and of the importance of the information picked up there, he went on to complain that during one of his 'inspections' I had not turned off the recording apparatus, in spite of strict orders to do so. Afterwards he called me into his office and said, 'I don't know how Himmler has got hold of the information, but he says that in spite of my orders you had the listening apparatus on when I inspected "Salon Kitty".'

This plan misfired, however, as I immediately got sworn statements, which I put before Heydrich, from the entire technical staff, showing that I had carried out his orders.

His next plot against me was more dangerous. There was a conference of SS and police leaders on the island of Fehmarn in the Baltic Sea. Heydrich's wife came from the island, where they owned a lovely summer villa. After the conference Heydrich, who had been a fighter pilot, flew back to Berlin in his own

plane. I, still having one free day, remained. Frau Heydrich asked me to drive with her. It was a harmless excursion. We had coffee, literature and concerts—in fact, all those things she had so much of and which she had so little of at other times. Before it grew dark we dined.

Four days later in Berlin I was told by Mueller, Chief of the Gestapo, that Heydrich was out with him 'in mufti'. I thought it was a usual escapade and accepted the invitation although at that time I was not exactly sure of Mueller. As is often the case with people whose lives are in danger, I was superseded by an uncomfortable premonition about the Heydrich at his most charming and this was not pated. He did not want to hear, as he usually did in espionage cases, but said that for once service matters at all.

After supper at a well-known restaurant near the Alexanderplatz. I noticed the most sinister individual. Mueller ordered me mine. Our conversation was casual, in a private plane, until suddenly Mueller said it at the Ploener Lake? Did you have a fight with Heydrich: his face was very pale. I quickly asked him if he wanted to know about his wife.

In a cold, sibilant voice he said, 'You are a poison. It could kill you within six hours. I will give you the complete and absolute truth, I'll give you an answer to the truth.'

I did not believe a word of it—Heydrich was making just such a grisly joke with a perfect yet . . . I felt the tension within me explode though my heart was about to burst. But and speaking as calmly as I could I told him the events of that afternoon.

Mueller listened to what I had to say and

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plane. I, still having one free day, remained there. In the afternoon Frau Heydrich asked me to drive with her to the Ploener Lake. It was a harmless excursion. We had coffee and talked about art, literature and concerts—in fact, all those things which interested her so much and which she had so little opportunity to talk about at other times. Before it grew dark we drove back.

Four days later in Berlin I was told by SS Gruppenfuehrer Mueller, Chief of the Gestapo, that Heydrich wanted us to go out with him 'in mufti'. I thought it was going to be one of his usual escapades and accepted the invitation without a thought, although at that time I was not exactly on good terms with Mueller. As is often the case with people who continually feel their lives to be in danger, I was superstitious and had a rather uncomfortable premonition about the evening. But I found Heydrich at his most charming and this feeling was soon dissipated. He did not want to hear, as he usually did, about the latest espionage cases, but said that for once we would not speak of service matters at all.

After supper at a well-known restaurant, we went to an obscure bar near the Alexanderplatz. I noticed that the barman looked a most sinister individual. Mueller ordered the drinks and handed me mine. Our conversation was casual, mainly about Heydrich's private plane, until suddenly Mueller said to me, 'Well, how was it at the Ploener Lake? Did you have a good time?' I looked at Heydrich: his face was very pale. I quickly pulled myself together and asked him if he wanted to know about my excursion with his wife.

In a cold, sibilant voice he said, 'You have just drunk some poison. It could kill you within six hours. If you tell me the complete and absolute truth, I'll give you an antidote—but I want the truth.'

I did not believe a word of it—Heydrich was quite capable of making just such a grisly joke with a perfectly straight face—and yet . . . I felt the tension within me expanding till it seemed as though my heart was about to burst. But I had nothing to hide, and speaking as calmly as I could I told him truthfully about the events of that afternoon.

Mueller listened to what I had to say very carefully. Once he

interrupted me: 'After you had coffee, you went for a walk with the Chief's wife. Why do you hide that? You must realize surely that you were being watched all the time?'

Again, as truthfully as I could I described our fifteen-minute walk, and the conversation that took place.

After I had finished, Heydrich sat motionless and withdrawn for several minutes. At last he looked at me with glittering eyes, and said, 'Well, I suppose I must believe you, but you will give me your word of honour that you won't attempt this sort of escapade again.'

By this time I had managed to get hold of myself and I said, quite aggressively, 'A word of honour secured in this sort of way is just an extortion. First I must ask you to let me have the antidote'—it was always best to be on the safe side in dealings with Heydrich—'then I'll give you my word of honour. As a former Naval Officer would you consider it honourable to act in any other way?'

Heydrich eyed me narrowly. He hated an appeal to his honour, but he nodded, and I was given—somewhat to my surprise—a Dry Martini. Was it my imagination, or did it taste peculiar? Certainly it seemed to have an added dash of bitters. I gave Heydrich my word of honour, then in view of what had passed between us I begged to be excused. But he wouldn't hear of it, and we had to continue the evening's merrymaking. Once more he had failed to entrap me.

In the end it was entirely by my own doing that I put myself in his power. In 1940 I was engaged to be married for the second time, and as a member of the SS I had to submit *Ahnennpapiere* or racial heredity certificates. Then I discovered that my fiancée's mother was Polish. To get official approval for such a marriage was bound to be difficult, for I knew only too well how the Party leadership felt by now about Poland. So at the end of one of my routine reports to Heydrich I asked him for his help in a personal matter and told him of my difficulty. Rather to my surprise, he agreed to do all he could to persuade Himmler to give his official permission. He told me to send him all the heredity documents of my fiancée's family and to include two photographs of her.

Within four days I received a copy of an order from Himmler

to the *Rasse und Siedlungshauptamt* [the Office], giving me official permission to make the order with his best wishes. (He also photographs, on which Himmler had colored eyebrows with green pencil and added a note 'exaggerated'.) I wondered what had induced me this special dispensation so quickly.

I had been married about six months when my secretary handed me a folder marked 'Geheim, Business of the Reich'. This was the high then in use, employed, mainly, for confidential chiefs of departments. But as at least eight through my hands every day, I opened it of course. There lay a secret report from the address personally to Mueller, the Gestapo's detailed surveillance report on my wife. Among other things it contained a reference to my law's sister, who was married to a Jewish man. I had finally succeeded in gaining a hold over him. Strange twist of fate it was I who had given him what he was satisfied and stopped all other efforts.

But in tracing the course of Heydrich's marriage I have gone ahead of my narrative, and must

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to the *Rasse und Siedlungshauptamt* [the Race and Settlement
 Office], giving me official permission to marry. Heydrich handed
 me the order with his best wishes. (He also returned my fiancée's
 photographs, on which Himmler had coloured her lipstick and
 eyebrows with green pencil and added a note describing them as
 'exaggerated'.) I wondered what had induced them both to grant
 me this special dispensation so quickly.

I had been married about six months when one day my secre-
 tary handed me a folder marked 'Geheime Reichssache' [Secret
 Business of the Reich]. This was the highest secret classification
 then in use, employed, mainly, for communications between the
 chiefs of departments. But as at least eighty such folders went
 through my hands every day, I opened this one as a matter of
 course. There lay a secret report from the State Police in Posen
 addressed personally to Mueller, the Gestapo Chief. It was a
 detailed surveillance report on my wife's family in Poland.
 Among other things it contained a reference to my mother-in-
 law's sister, who was married to a Jewish mill-owner. Heydrich
 had finally succeeded in gaining a hold over me, and through a
 strange twist of fate it was I who had given him the means. Now
 he was satisfied and stopped all other efforts to entrap me.

But in tracing the course of Heydrich's machinations against me
 I have gone ahead of my narrative, and must return to 1939.

D THE RED ARMY

*German and Russian Staffs—
Treaty—Rohstahl Ge-
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the best possible contacts in

China. (Madame Chiang Kai-shek, for instance, is a member of this family.) Later he also developed valuable contacts with the Japanese Secret Service.

During the First World War Jahnke worked for the German Secret Service. The great strikes of the dock and transport workers in the east coast harbours of the United States resulted from his activities. When later he returned to Germany, he became Rudolf Hess's expert on intelligence and espionage. Politically he was interested only in questions of major importance. He was a big, heavy man with the thick skull of a Pomeranian peasant and when he sat opposite you, impassive, with his eyes half closed, he gave an impression of reticence and cunning. He liked to live in great style.

After I had assembled my material I made a verbal report to Heydrich at his hunting lodge—it was almost in the nature of an historical lecture. The subject was one that grew in importance in the later years of the Nazi régime: the basic conflict in German policy between an orientation towards western Europe, and towards Russia.

This was not a new problem. Indeed, the pro-Russian feeling in German Army circles, among the Staff Officers and the junker caste after the First World War, has often been called the 'Spirit of Tauroggen'—in reference to the alliance aimed at Napoleon that was concluded in 1812 at the East Prussian village of Tauroggen between the Prussian General, Yorck von Wartenburg, and the Russian Army, against the express command of the King of Prussia. It is interesting that the military build-up of Prussia against Napoleon had been prepared by Freiherr von Stein and Clausewitz from Russia, where they had found refuge under the protection of the Czar. The continuation of this policy of co-operation with Russia was vital to Bismarck's conduct of foreign affairs. After the First World War the Treaty of Rapallo in 1923 marked a return to this policy and ended Germany's isolation after her defeat.

This new co-operation between what was now Soviet Russia and Germany was not initiated, surprisingly enough, by the Social Democratic leaders of the Weimar Republic, Ebert and Noske, but by army officers of the General Staff.

Febr. 1938

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IV

THE OCCUPATION OF AUSTRIA AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Preparations for the Anschluss—Hitler's reception in Vienna—A bomb on the route—Hitler's visit to Mussolini—Security precautions in Italy—Attitude of the Sudeten Germans—Secret order for the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia—Germany assumes 'protectorship' over the Czechs

AT THE beginning of 1938 I was instructed to assemble and edit all the reports that were to be submitted to Hitler on the attitude of Italy towards the contemplated annexation of Austria and its incorporation into the German Reich. Great importance was also attached, of course, to the attitude of the other Western Powers towards this matter. The decisive event was the resignation of Anthony Eden. We soon learned that his successor at the Foreign Office, Lord Halifax, did not view the Anschluss of Austria with hostility. This attitude must have influenced Hitler's decision considerably.

The intelligence material from Austria itself was so plentiful that the main problem was how to cope with it. The thousands of Nazis who had recently fled from Austria provided us with all the contacts we needed.

On February 12, 1938, Kurt von Schuschnigg, the Austrian Chancellor, conferred with Hitler at Obersalzberg. He promised to limit and repress the activities of the anti-German 'Fatherland Front'. When it proved obvious, as it soon did, that he could not see his way to carrying out this promise, Hitler decided to force the pace. To forestall invasion by the German Army Schuschnigg resigned on March 11. Seyss-Inquart, the leader of the Austrian Nazis, at once took over the government. The order to march was given to the German Army by Hitler during the night of March 12.

The same night I was ordered to fly to Vienna with Himmler. We had with us a company of Waffen SS, the purely military

OCCUPATION OF AUSTRIA

formation of the SS, and some in 'Legion' which had been formed. We took off from Berlin-Tempelhof. It was a rather unpleasant flight, loaded and weather conditions were lost sight of the ground and also

During the flight Himmler discussed administrative problems which had arisen out of the new 'Ostmark'—as Austria then on. We had gone aft in the plane engine noise and Himmler was noticed that the safety catch was might have opened under the. He grasped him by his coat and jerked furiously, but when I showed him the catch he thanked me and said that if the only way to be happy to do as much for me.

We finally landed in Vienna. The administrative change-over took place at that very moment and the German Government was firmly established. The Austrian Government of the Austrian Chancellor was in tremendous activity. There was a great deal of haggling for those government offices filled.

A huge crowd filled the square. The duties had already been taken over by the men wearing white arm-bands. Almo Miklas, the President of the Austrian Republic, left the building.

Meanwhile, Heydrich had arrived in the situation and he told me to secure the Chief of the Austrian Secret Service papers that I found were not very interesting material on December 12. He himself expressed his willingness to work for the Secret Service.

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as if it were midday, and the
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Rome: Hitler and Mussolini
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The intelligence material was
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special telegraph lines running direct to Berlin had to be installed
at two points on the German-Czech frontier.

Heydrich had a special department whose task it was to main-
tain a continual check on the Sudeten German Party and on Hen-
lein, for the Party was by no means united in its aims, nor at that
time completely under Hitler's control. The Nazi wing of the
Party, led by Karl Hermann Frank, who was later Minister of
State of the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia, pursued a policy
that aimed at the entire destruction of the Czechoslovak Republic,
while Henlein, at this point, only demanded autonomy for the
three million Sudeten Germans. But after considerable pressure
from Heydrich and other German quarters, Henlein capitulated
completely to Hitler's demands at the conference held in July 1938.

There was a serious divergence of opinion between Berlin and
the leaders of the Sudeten German Party regarding the much-
discussed fact-finding and mediation mission of Lord Runciman.
The British Secret Service was quite well informed about this and
one of their agents, Colonel Christie, who had already conferred
several times with Henlein, met him again at the beginning of
August 1938, in Zurich. I received a special order from Heydrich
to investigate their conversations, and to keep Henlein under close
observation. This surveillance was to be carried out in such a way
that Henlein should be aware of it—for the chief purpose was to
remind him of his promises to Hitler.

When Colonel Christie saw how completely the Sudeten leader
had given way to Hitler's demands, he was astonished. At their
meeting Henlein declared that to wait any longer would be im-
possible, both for the Sudeten German Party and for Hitler, and if
necessary the problem would have to be solved by force. It was at
this time that Hitler made his famous Nuremberg speech,
threatening the Czechoslovak Government and rejecting any
solution based on the establishment of an autonomous Sudeten
state.

There followed the historic visit of Neville Chamberlain to
Berchtesgaden on September 15, 1938, the British-German con-
ference at Godesberg, and then—Munich.

The preparations for taking over the administration of the
Sudeten territories were carried out mainly at the Hotel Dreesen

→ can never reach a pleasant
beyond a certain point.

Summer 1938

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V

ACTIVE ESPIONAGE

My first 'field trip'—An assessment of Dakar—Practical problems of espionage—Prelude to the sinking of the Royal Oak—The case of Lieutenant-Colonel Sosnovski—A Polish spy ring uncovered

DURING the summer of 1938, Hitler's thoughts were turning more and more to the approaching war with the West. He discussed the situation with Himmler, who in turn discussed it with Heydrich, and Heydrich with me. Hitler spoke contemptuously of President Roosevelt, and called America 'a Jewish rubbish heap'. He was sure that once the war had started Germany would overrun the West, but he did concede the possibility that Great Britain, together with the United States, might attempt a counter-attack against the European Continent from North Africa. But he concluded that the west coast of Africa hardly offered sufficient harbour facilities for such an action; nor did North Africa provide a suitable hinterland for the deployment of modern machines of war.

It was this last point of Hitler's rambling exposition that turned out to be of immediate consequence to me. Himmler, always eager to see directives for concrete action in Hitler's remarks, at once decided, in consultation with Heydrich, to survey the situation of the West African coastal region and its harbours. And so in the autumn of 1938, I was given my first job of active espionage. Heydrich wanted me to compile a full report on the harbour at Dakar, the chief French naval station in Africa. No one, he warned me, not even my immediate family, must know of my assignment. It would be officially camouflaged—ostensibly I would be going on a 'business trip' round Germany for about eighteen days. I promised Heydrich that no one should know the true nature of my job, and until this moment I have never revealed it.

Heydrich wanted me to find out about the condition and nature of the harbour installations and whether they could be extended

ACTIVE

and enlarged fairly easily. He had harbour authorities charts, maps, documents I could lay hands specially designed for the job, identity of the son of a Dutch wound up his business affairs foreign currencies. Everything—my itinerary, the flight schedule, Madrid and Lisbon. Finally I

During the long flight I was and tried to prepare myself, beginning I had accepted the but now I began to have misgivings.

At the airport I met my specially constructed Leica camera, customs officers and it required considerable financial outlay.

My contact in Lisbon was Japanese—and a close friend, which in later years proved correct. He discussed the practical problems, advised me not to take the Leica, but instead to get another camera that on missions of this nature possible and never to carry large plans with him, they had another. My first encounter with of work made me realize that spot to what they had seemed.

On arriving at Dakar I went to a gypsy family of Jewish descent, gold and diamond trade, and were working for us. He had through 'business correspondence' everything for my arrival.

After five days of hard work I secured valuable details of the harbour authorities. These were posted

just think of England

by his wife, Adolf
and harsher plan for
Mussolini's Italy with-
Hitler announced that

1938

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EMBASSY — MINISTRY — MUNICH — KRISTALLNACHT 1938-1939

*Will My Adorable Austria
Become Nazified?*

THE DOWNHEARTED and pessimistic von Ribbentrops returned home for Christmas and New Year's of 1937-1938. They were accompanied by a substantial group from the embassy. An expense voucher of March 1938 notes that Mitropa, the German sleeping-car company, had charged the Foreign Office for thirty first-class tickets and sixteen second-class tickets. The tickets cost 3166 marks.¹

Christmas was spent at Sonnenburg, the country estate the von Ribbentrops had just bought near Berlin. There was never any shortage of money. Between the von Ribbentrop Büro and the embassy, most of their travel, entertainment, and living expenses were paid, including the constant use of D-AMY. At the same time, the wine business still flourished. The von Ribbentrops were a wealthy couple. Much of their money was earned privately and not through the party, in contrast to other party people.

Hitler made a vast fortune through the massive forced sales of *Mein Kampf*. Göring earned large sums for administering his party-sponsored industrial complex, the Hermann Göring Works, with its 600,000 employees, founded in July 1937.²

Certainly the purchase of the Sonnenburg estate caused no financial strain, but von Ribbentrop was always careful to play down his personal fortune in front of the Nazi elite. He was willing to boast of his political or party achievements and power, but never of his personal wealth.

A few months later, after he became foreign minister, he was lunching at the Führer's table in the Chancellery with a group of Nazi highnesses, including Dr. Goebbels. Reinhard Spitz, hovering dutifully in the background, overheard the following interchange:

GOEBBELS: Herr von Ribbentrop, is it true that you just bought a grand estate and you are now going to renovate it?

VON RIBBENTROP: Yes, the place must be straightened out agriculturally and the house should be renovated if I want to use it for some of my work as foreign minister, or if I should wish to vacation there.

GOEBBELS: Oh, agriculture? Do you know anything about it? For instance, can you tell an ox from a steer?

Grins appeared around the table while an amused silent Hitler bent over his dish of noodles and poked around. Ribbentrop gave a pained laugh and tried to be a good sport.

GOEBBELS: Herr von Ribbentrop, you seem to be making quite an investment. Is it true you are building a private golf course?

This did not sit too well with the Nazi bigwigs at the table, who had little patience with such plutocratic affectations.

VON RIBBENTROP: Well, it's only a few holes and greens, hardly worth mentioning. I need it for those guests who like to play golf, and it relaxes me after the office routine.

GOEBBELS, going for the jugular: And all this on a government salary?

There was much laughter until Hitler, smiling briefly, changed the subject while Ribbentrop stared angrily at the table and stopped participating in the conversation. He left soon after.

The von Ribbentrops probably bought Sonnenburg with their own money, so why did von Ribbentrop not tell Goebbels to go to hell; how he spent his own money was nobody else's business? The reason was obvious. He would not play the role of rich man among these revolutionaries. He wanted to be one of them, accepted as an "old fighter." He had a lot to overcome: his good looks and careful grooming, his title, though "adopted," his international life, his beautiful houses, his aristocratic friends, his rich wife, and his money. Among the Nazi Party stalwarts, he was still an outsider.

Goebbels once said, "Ribbentrop bought his name, married his money, and cheated himself into his job." But it was a jealous Goebbels who said so, always eager to be foreign minister, always hating anyone Hitler admired.

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Jan '38

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After weeks of being ignored by Hitler, in those first days of 1939, von Ribbentrop might have thought his career was over. His patron had turned from him. But the fates had worse in store for him; soon they would return him to the very center of Adolf Hitler's favor and attention.

It began on January 12, oddly enough at a wedding. That day, in the presence of the Führer, Field Marshal Werner von Blomberg, minister for war, was married to Miss Eva Gruhn, his former secretary. Miss Gruhn was not really a suitable match for the aristocratic von Blomberg; she came from a simple, lower-middle-class Berlin background. Nevertheless, everyone approved of the decision of the tall, sixty-year-old marshal, long a widower and known as a great flirt. He adored beautiful young women, and now he was about to marry one. His friends smiled and shrugged their shoulders. Why keep him from a chance to regain his youth? Even Göring had urged him to go ahead with the wedding, though Miss Gruhn was known to have had several affairs in the past. According to the historian Joachim Fest, Göring even paid off a rival for Miss Gruhn's affections to clear Blomberg's path.⁴

Within a few days, police files revealed that the new Frau von Blomberg was not only a *femme fatale*, but had actually practiced prostitution and had been arrested after posing for pornographic photographs, now in the possession of a Belgian military attaché.

It was a major dilemma. The Führer had given his tacit blessing to this *mésalliance* by being present at the wedding, and the military leadership of the Reich was now in the hands of a man who had shown a complete lack of judgment in the conduct of his personal life.

After originally expressing uncertainty about the Nazis, von Blomberg had often demonstrated his loyalty to Hitler. He helped to plan the Rhineland occupation and after von Hindenburg's death had approved switching the military oath of allegiance from the Reich to the person of Adolf Hitler. Hitler had always been able to count on him, but that was no longer enough. Now von Blomberg had offended Hitler's lower-middle-class prejudices. A German aristocrat did not marry a prostitute. And how dare von Blomberg make him, Adolf Hitler, an unwilling partner to such immorality! There was also the satisfaction of teaching all those gentry in Army headquarters who was really in charge. He would make the noble generals shake in their well-polished boots. If only Röhm had not been such a clumsy fool! Of course, Röhm was absolutely right. Germany needed a new people's army.

Feb 1938

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Hitler had always insisted on Poland and Russia. Von Neurath alleged "danger" that the East of Germany's southeastern

Austria's hunger for union had reasons to doubt it. All loyalty to National Socialism unknowingly agreed with Hitler, not frank, but lazy, a liar, and he did not join the party. It was Himmler's gesture to be involved in anti-Semitic that took little National So-

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minister because he had Goebbels, and Gö- rding mission in 1934. He was propaganda. Göring was al- ways like Ulrich von Hassell in- stead were professional diplo- mats. Von Neurath. Von Papen could be opportunist and, as a Roman Catholic, he had never expressed his Ribbentrop, his adviser and ambassador to Germany's most

ly unaware of his impend- ing fate and depended on Hitler against von Ribbentrop's policy. Von Neurath had put the dirty work, like bribing the press, and it was welcome to

such functions. The gentlemen of the Foreign Ministry preferred to keep their hands clean.

Besides, the Führer had just celebrated von Neurath's sixty-fifth birthday by personally coming to congratulate him and to present him with a superb piece of medieval art. As von Neurath had told his former colleague Paul Schwarz, "I always respected the amount of knowledge a simple man like Hitler was able to accumulate, without the right schooling and the right opportunities. If Hitler had the chance for traveling abroad, if he had received proper education, he really would have become one of the world's greatest statesmen."

On the morning of February 4, 1938, von Neurath was a contented man. Lulled by the recent birthday celebration and gift, the von Neuraths decided on a holiday on their estate, Leinfelderhof, in Württemberg, in the south of Germany. His wife began to pack for the trip. At noontime of that day, the Führer's state secretary informed von Neurath that Hitler wished to see him at 3 P.M. He attended a long meeting with the Führer on foreign policy; von Ribbentrop was present. When it was over, von Neurath walked through some gardens to his ministerial villa, accompanied by Hitler's and von Ribbentrop's best wishes for his holiday. When he arrived at home there was a message asking him to return "for a few minutes" to the Chancellery. Hitler met him in the garden behind the Chancellery, linked his arm through von Neurath's as they strolled together. In gentle tones he said that von Ribbentrop would be the new foreign minister, and that von Neurath would become president of a secret privy council, which had just been created. "This is my fondest wish," said Hitler.

The stunned von Neurath returned to his villa, no longer the foreign minister. Two days later, Frau von Neurath was told that her servants were to report to the von Ribbentrop villa in Dahlem and that the tableware was property of the Reich. Then von Ribbentrop's people asked when the villa would be vacated.

It is difficult to muster sympathy for von Neurath, because his presence contributed little to what remained of German sanity. Von Hassell and dozens of others had first served their strange and vicious new master and then rebelled against his monstrous ways. Von Neurath simply went along. He was a man of the world, *un homme du monde*. He knew right from wrong, and he willingly continued to serve the wrong. His subsequent career as Protector of Bohemia and Moravia and his occasional "housekeeping" stints in the field of diplomacy reflected no honor on him. He was eventually sentenced to fifteen years as a war criminal.

Suddenly, after thirty days of abject depression, during which he had neither word nor gesture from his master, the emotionally drained and embittered Joachim von Ribbentrop found himself foreign minister, and Annelies was the wife of a man of cabinet rank. In Wiesbaden, Käthe Henkell would ask, "Why did the most stupid of my sons-in-law achieve the biggest success?"

Many things needed to be arranged. The entire London household had to be returned to Berlin. A new ambassador had to be assigned to London. What was to become of the Büro? The short month of February was crowded with the new foreign minister's unfamiliar duties. Von Neurath made absolutely no provisions for his former subordinates in the ministry, and these gentlemen now awaited the new regime of party stalwarts with much anxiety. It fell to Kordt to handle the details of the transition as best he could. Along with von Neurath's came the dismissal of several aristocratic ambassadors, among them von Hassell.

Adolf Hitler's attention now focused on his homeland, Austria. Almost as a side issue he ordered the diplomats to prepare Germany's recognition of Manchukuo, Japan's new puppet state in China. It was also propitious that Anthony Eden, now the "difficult" British foreign minister, was replaced by the easy-to-please Lord Halifax, or Lord Halali as the Berliners called him. (*"Halali!"* was Germany's old hunting yell, and Halifax had recently been Göring's guest for the hunt.) But no matter what happened elsewhere in the world, nothing would or could divert Hitler's attention from Austria.

A week after his appointment, von Ribbentrop attended his first international meeting as foreign minister. An urgent call from the Berghof told him to report immediately to his Führer at the Bavarian retreat for a meeting with Austria's Chancellor Kurt von Schuschnigg and the German ambassador to Vienna, the indestructible Franz von Papen.

Von Ribbentrop was in the dark about the state of German-Austrian affairs, and quite unprepared for the meeting. Curiously, von Papen had only just been fired from his Vienna ambassadorial post, along with all the other dismissed nobles, but since it was he who had arranged the von Schuschnigg meeting, he was reinstated. Luring von Schuschnigg to Hitler's Berghof, and into the lion's den, had been no small achievement. Von Papen deserved credit of sorts. As Sir Nevile Henderson wrote, "Going to Berchtesgaden at all was the first of von Schuschnigg's mistakes."

Meanwhile, the Führer's bidding joined by a senior SS expert on Austrian politics, they met in Berchtesgaden, they met with the Austro-German agreement about the subject of Ribbentrop took von Papen's standpoint, since he was being aggressive."

They arrived at the Berghof. Next came von Schuschnigg's interview with the Führer. It was conducted by his host. It was a study of Hitler's attitude. Several supported chief of staff were supposedly to discuss the threat.

February in the Berghof was a snow-seeded mountain retreat for the Austrian Chancellor, as well as Schuschnigg's Guards Regiment, an most unwelcome to von Papen. He wore white stockings. Austrian Nazis now lived on the conference, were called.

The paladins of the Austrian government waited. Conversation between the two governments were not on their corner or in combat so the protagonists were Austrian. The simplest of background lives and fates of their a harsh meeting and beaten. He had to accept.

* Austria's Nazis were wearing white farmers' stockings.

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Meanwhile, the new foreign minister was on his way south to do the Führer's bidding. He was accompanied by Spitzzy, and they were joined by a senior SS officer named Wilhelm Keppler, who was Hitler's expert on Austrian political and economic matters. Arriving in Berchtesgaden, they met with von Papen, who showed them his draft for an Austro-German agreement, but von Ribbentrop knew next to nothing about the subject of Austria. Nevertheless, according to Spitzzy, von Ribbentrop took von Papen's draft and "hardened" it from the German standpoint, since one "never did oneself harm with the Führer by being aggressive."

They arrived at the Berghof on February 12, promptly at 10 A.M. Next came von Schuschnigg, who was met halfway up the flight of stairs by his host. The pale and tired Austrian chancellor was introduced to Hitler's associates, and the two chiefs of state then retired to Hitler's study. Several generals, led by the newly minted Führer-supported chief of staff, Keitel, had also been ordered to attend, supposedly to discuss Spain, but more probably to project a military threat.

February in the Bavarian Alps can be cold, gray, and whipped by snow-seeded mountain winds. It must have been a threatening scene for the Austrian chancellor, his foreign minister, Guido Schmidt, as well as Schuschnigg's secretary, who was an officer of the Austrian Guards Regiment, and an Austrian detective. Also on the scene, and most unwelcome to von Schuschnigg, were two semi-uniformed (they wore white stockings) representatives of the thirty thousand illegal Austrian Nazis now living in exile in Germany.* Spitzzy, who reported on the conference, was also an "illegal," as the exiled Austrian Nazis were called.

The paladins of both sides could do nothing but sit around and wait. Conversation between the exiled Austrian Nazis and the Austrian government officials was halting at best. No doubt their minds were not on their conversation, but on the two men locked in agreement or in combat somewhere upstairs in the sprawling Berghof. Both protagonists were Austrians, one from a titled family, the other from the simplest of backgrounds, and they were playing poker with the lives and fates of their fellow Austrians. Most observers believe it was a harsh meeting and that von Schuschnigg was threatened and browbeaten.⁷ He had to accept measures and conditions that must have

* Austria's Nazis were banned and could not wear uniforms. They improvised by wearing white farmers' stockings instead of brown suits.

been repugnant to him. Probably to ease his pain, Hitler later made a well-publicized declaration that he wished an *evolutionary* solution to the Austro-German future, and he replaced the head of Austria's Nazi Party.

Von Schuschnigg was forced to add the Austrian Nazi politician Arthur Seyss-Inquart to his cabinet. Hitler also bludgeoned von Schuschnigg into granting amnesty to all Nazis imprisoned in Austria, and insisted on free return for all "illegal" Austrian Nazis, as well as compensation for them. At one point during the conference, Hitler made a big show of consulting privately with General Keitel just out of von Schuschnigg's hearing, but not out of sight. It was certainly an implied threat. At 10 P.M., the end of that disastrous day for von Schuschnigg, his Austrian detective bade his German hosts goodbye with "Heil Hitler!"

Eventually, von Schuschnigg could not and would not go through with the odious deal that had been foisted on him. On March 9 he declared a national Austrian plebiscite to determine whether Austrians preferred their independence or wished to become part of the German Reich. Word of the unexpected plebiscite soon reached Hitler in Berlin and set off an attack of Hitlerian rage. His victim had dared to betray him! The deal was unraveling. Austria now had only a few days left to live as an independent nation. Austrians played a curious but important role in the life of National Socialism. The popular notion in Germany was that Germans made better Nazis but Austrians made better anti-Semites. Quite aside from their Austrian Führer and his German brand of spoken Austrian, with its rolled *r*'s and anachronistic style, they had strong influence. They were only 8 percent of the total German population, but they were 14 percent of the SS. The Einsatzgruppen, the SS death squads, had more Austrians than Germans. Forty percent of the extermination camp staff members were Austrians.⁸

Colonel Adolf Eichmann, the SS "Jew expert" who organized the execution of the Final Solution, had been reared in Austria. Seventy percent of his staff was Austrian. Chief of the SS-SD (the party section of the Gestapo) Ernst Kaltenbrunner was an Austrian. Odilo Globocnik, overall commander of the death camps in Treblinka, Sobibor, and Belzec, was an Austrian. General Alexander Löhr, a war criminal who had ordered the murder of Greeks, Slovaks, Yugoslavs, and Jews, was Austrian.

(There were also great Austrian heroes. Among them were Anton Schmidt, an Army sergeant in Vilna, executed for helping Jews, and Ewald Kleisinger, an Army officer who hid Jews in Warsaw. Fifty

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Von Ribbentrop edy without being expertise. On that have shaken quite assemble for a q

speech from the new minister, who was dressed in his SS uniform. By now, von Ribbentrop had worked out a makeshift persona for himself, somewhat in the imagined style of a statesman in ancient Rome: dignified, measured, stern, assured, and a devoted servant of Adolf Hitler and of National Socialism. His staff at the London Embassy had often heard his dinnertime harangues, proclaiming the need for a "new nobility" in Germany, a new elite, founded on Aryan roots and on National Socialist teaching.⁹ The old titled families who considered the Foreign Service their private club had to relinquish command. He insisted, "It is not so important to speak foreign languages. The others will soon have to learn German." Both his adopted dignity and seeming assurance were soon to be put to the test. Von Weizsäcker and Kordt persuaded him to return to London in order to take his formal leave of Whitehall after his sporadic and careless performance as ambassador to the Court of St. James's. Perhaps they felt a courteous gesture might salve wounded British feelings.¹⁰

While he was back in London, he met with Lord Halifax and asked him to tone down unfriendly newspaper pieces. Amazingly, Halifax did try to reason with the papers. On the same day, Kurt von Schuschnigg suddenly announced his plebiscite and a furious Hitler unleashed his troops.

The day after, von Ribbentrop appeared at Buckingham Palace to bid a formal farewell to the King, this time without any Hitler salutes. At this exact time, far to the east, von Schuschnigg announced a postponement of the referendum on Austrian independence and his own resignation. It can only be assumed that von Ribbentrop had paid no attention to events in Austria. Certainly he was not informed, although Kordt, who was with him, seemed *au courant*. Exactly one month had passed since the cruel Berghof meetings with von Schuschnigg. On March 11, von Ribbentrop was attending a luncheon at 10 Downing Street, hosted by Neville Chamberlain, the new prime minister, and his senior cabinet ministers. Winston Churchill was also there. Suddenly news of the German military entry into Austria was handed to Mr. Chamberlain. Understandably, the luncheon soon ended, but there was no discussion of these events. Every British official present must have thought that Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop knew exactly what was happening in Austria and was playing the innocent, and one can imagine their disgust with him. No one would have believed that von Ribbentrop had been purposely left in the dark by Hitler or that the military move had been a sudden whim of the Führer's and that there was no way that word could have reached his foreign minister, who had been visiting all over London.

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Hitler knew how insecure von Ribbentrop was. He wanted to prevent the foreign minister's sudden departure from London. He needed his "England expert" to be near to 10 Downing Street so that he could gauge the British government's reaction to the Anschluss (Unification).

He had virtually trapped von Ribbentrop in London.

To add insult to injury, von Neurath was instructed to be caretaker at the Foreign Ministry in Berlin.

Lord Halifax paid a visit to the German Embassy in London after the luncheon at 10 Downing Street and expressed his deep concern to a falsely cheerful and reassuring von Ribbentrop, who asked when next he might see Halifax in Berlin. "Lord Halali" answered tersely, "I doubt if there'll be a hunting exhibition soon."¹¹

A thoroughly nervous, disturbed, and anxious von Ribbentrop was now stuck in London while his place at the Führer's side was being filled by others. He had left Spitzky behind in Berlin to look after some of his interests, but Adolf Hitler's decision to reactivate von Neurath during these events seemed ominous. What did "temporary charge" mean? Von Ribbentrop was still not aware of Hitler's strategy. A letter from the Führer had been carried to Mussolini by Prince Philipp of Hesse to make sure of Mussolini's friendly reaction to the Anschluss, because the Duce had played Austria's "protector" for years. Now Hitler wanted to keep von Ribbentrop in London so that Mussolini would think an accommodation about Austria was being worked out with Chamberlain.

As he had so often, von Ribbentrop felt isolated and feared he had lost the Führer's confidence. The morning after these events, he begged Kordt, almost tearfully, to fly to Berlin to "save what he could." Von Ribbentrop whined, "Please see that Neurath is no longer involved." Kordt flew to Berlin, but von Neurath was nowhere in sight.

Von Ribbentrop finally managed to phone Spitzky, who, it turned out, had accompanied Hitler to Vienna. The young former "illegal" Austrian Nazi could not resist his Austrian Führer's personal invitation to join him. They were now two returned patriots. Vienna's Cardinal Innitzer greeted Adolf Hitler with the Nazi salute one day after his arrival and assured him of Catholic support if the church received "the same freedom as the German Catholic churches."¹² (He was referring to the concordat of September 10, 1938, between the Catholic Church and the Nazi regime, which was eventually breached by Hitler.)

Spitzky obtained Hitler's permission for von Ribbentrop to leave London and return to Berlin. Most officials of the Foreign Ministry were ordered by von Ribbentrop to greet him at the airport, a forced

April 1938

show of false devotion and loyalty designed to assuage his wounded ego. But before leaving Britain, von Ribbentrop had to wait for the arrival of Spitzzy, who carried a personal order from Adolf Hitler requesting von Ribbentrop's equally personal report of British reactions. It was a bitter pill for the foreign minister: at the moment, even his young secretary was closer to the Führer than he was. That may have been why he ordered the full Foreign Ministry reception committee.

First reports of the brutal treatment of Vienna's Jews, of old Jewish men forced to scrub the streets on their hands and knees while the crowds jeered and spat on them, soon reached London.¹³ It reduced former British sympathizers of Adolf Hitler's Germany to those who only wished to appease. What remained of British enthusiasts for Hitler soon shrank to a tiny hard core. The *Times* of March 15, 1938, headlined THE RAPE OF AUSTRIA, and reported the debauches against both anti-Nazis and Jews.¹⁴ Even the pacific Lord Lothian called for conscripted National Service. Only a few diehard British apologists still carried on.¹⁵ Lord Redesdale said in the House of Lords on April 15, 1938, "Hitler avoided civil war and bloodshed in Austria," and Lord Londonderry blamed Britain because "we failed to hold out the hand of friendship." Chips Channon, now a parliamentary aide, heard the news in 10 Downing Street. He considered it a setback for the Chamberlain government and then, reverting to the sophisticated traveler, asked, "Will my adorable Austria become Nazified?" And, prophetically, "People are saying Czechoslovakia will be next."¹⁶

By the time von Ribbentrop reached Vienna, he was part of the "second wave." Hitler and Göring had already left. Only Schacht was still there to deal with immediate financial and economic problems. The Austrian official who greeted von Ribbentrop was Guido Schmidt, von Schuschnigg's former foreign minister who had been to Berchtesgaden with him. Schmidt was now devotedly on the side of the Germans while his former chief was on his way to Gestapo jail and then to a concentration camp. Eventually, Guido Schmidt was appointed to run the immense Hermann Göring Industrial Works for the fat marshal, a profitable reward for his treachery. Von Ribbentrop quickly visited the Austrian Foreign Ministry, took charge, and appropriated the great Metternich's world globe for removal to his Berlin office.

André François-Poncet reported one of the most startling reactions to the Anschluss. According to him, Eduard Beneš, the Czechoslovak

president, said, "T'burgs."¹⁷

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* Ribbentrop underestimated parties and reception better than he understood nations.

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to Adolf Hitler and fulfilled his purpose. Every time one of the old party faithfuls criticized the foreign minister, Hitler, who often joked about him, rallied to his defense. Though it is probably apocryphal, several sources claim that Hitler called von Ribbentrop the "second Bismarck." This is either a form of self-congratulation ("Any man who works for me becomes a great man") or Hitler's sign of disdain even for his nineteenth-century predecessor, Prussia's Iron Chancellor.

When von Ribbentrop had been in office a mere three months, he realized that the Foreign Ministry's organization needed rudimentary patching. Hans Georg von Mackensen, who had preceded von Weizsäcker as state secretary of the Foreign Ministry, was appointed ambassador to Rome. He was von Neurath's son-in-law, and von Ribbentrop was suspicious of him but found him pliable. Dr. Woermann, who was von Ribbentrop's deputy ambassador in London, now became head of the political department of the ministry, replacing von Weizsäcker. The bespectacled, schoolteacherish-looking Herbert von Dirksen was shifted from the embassy in Tokyo to the Court of St. James's. Von Dirksen was related to the chairman of I. G. Farben Industry, Georg von Schnitzler, and came from an old diplomatic family. In London he found a difficult atmosphere. After two years of von Ribbentrop, London was suspicious of the "new" German style of diplomacy. Von Dirksen would soon have to face the shock of events to come, such as Germany's grim November pogroms, while he tried to maintain some semblance of amity with his British hosts. In June 1938, Albrecht Haushofer, a friend of Hess and the son of Professor Karl Haushofer, the political thinker who had been a major influence on Hitler, sent a pessimistic memorandum to the Führer and his foreign minister. He flatly stated that the chances for Anglo-German rapprochement were slim and fading fast.²³ His opinions were dismissed; knowing this, von Dirksen found it more diplomatic to play the optimist for Berlin. Von Ribbentrop's "ear" at the Chancellery was still Walter Hewel. Everyone liked Hewel, but he was weak and had fallen totally under Hitler's influence.

The actual running of the Foreign Ministry was the job of the new state secretary, von Weizsäcker. Von Ribbentrop rarely attended the morning meetings of the department heads because that was the hour of his attendance at the Chancellery, where the Führer usually made his first daily appearance around 11 A.M. The men in Hitler's coterie had to be present to guard their precarious place. As Erich Kordt wrote, "If a minister was not present, an assignment could go to the competition."

Of the "problems," the "return to the Reich" of Austria had now

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speaking population lived in the Erz Gebirge, just south hatreds. During the First side. The mutual dislikes and Germans were as old as men were often accused of its ancient university were to a source of German pride, some upper-class Czechoslovaks, particularly in Prague or Marienbad, to "avoid being Germans, in turn, felt that they government and that they

res, there was some basis of antipathies simmered and citizens, encouraged by blatant border, decided that their their eyes and in the eyes of prior people, neat, clean, con a word, German. The Germanly and inefficient is "Polish

farm" (*Polnische Wirtschaft*). This was the classic anti-Slav slur. Another term for a mess was *Böhmisches Dorf*, a Bohemian village.

The Sudeten Germans had chosen a leader, the head of the SdP, the Sudeten deutsche Partei, a former gymnastics teacher named Konrad Henlein. Under his leadership, the SdP represented the majority of Czechoslovakia's German-speaking, non-Jewish citizens. By 1935, the SdP had become the second biggest party in Czechoslovakia. The country also had an ancient Jewish population, who spoke careful High German, unlike the regional accents of the Sudeten Germans, and were among the country's leading citizens.

Henlein's original profession was no coincidence. Gymnastics (*Turnen*) implied much more than mere exercise. It was also political. The gymnastic movement begun by Friedrich Jahn in the early nineteenth century represented a pre-Hitler, pre-"Aryan," idealized picture of the battle-hardened German. It was a derivative of the Greco-Roman *mens sana in corpore sano* concept and usually closely blended with German nationalism. For Henlein, the German ideal was the Nazi, so the SdP became a Czechoslovak Nazi party after the Czechoslovak government banned Czechoslovakia's German Nazi Party.

Hitler fanned the flames of the dispute. He considered himself the destined champion of all Germans, no matter where they lived. On March 3, 1938, Henlein paid a secret visit to the Berghof and then returned to his home country, reinforced both ideologically and financially by the big brother at Obersalzberg. As Hitler once said, "Wherever in the world there is a fire, I shall use it to warm the German soup." Henlein's demands multiplied. He insisted on self-rule for the Sudeten Germans, though still within a loose Czechoslovak federation. He also hinted broadly of threats from the bully across the border.

The Czechoslovak government reacted sternly. There were bloody clashes between Sudeten Germans and the Czech police, particularly in the resort town of Teplitz.

Following another Henlein visit, Hitler announced, on March 28, that he intended "to solve the Czechoslovak question in the near future." He urged Henlein to stiffen his demands still more. Von Ribbentrop had attended the Henlein meetings, and now he entered the arena. On the thirty-first he informed Czechoslovak Ambassador Vojtech Mastny that Germany did not intend to interfere directly, but "that the fate of the Sudeten Germans must change radically." Then the Czechoslovak stew was allowed to simmer quietly on the back of the stove. There were more pressing matters at hand. On April 16, the

Italians signed a Mediterranean naval agreement with the British. The rumor was that the French would be next. Obviously, Mussolini was still nursing the pain of the Anschluss.

The state visit to Rome by Adolf Hitler lay just ahead. Elaborate safety preparations were taken by Reinhard Heydrich of the Gestapo long before May 3, 1938, when Adolf Hitler set foot on the platform of San Paulo station in Rome, which had been especially prepared for this visit. Six thousand suspects had been arrested by the Italian police, some of them German Jews in exile.²⁴ Heydrich's foreign specialist, Walter Schellenberg, was sent to Italy, where he traveled every yard of the route the Führer was to take with Mussolini. Eighty Gestapo plainclothesmen were placed at key points. The preparations also gave Heydrich a chance to infiltrate Italy with German agents. Schellenberg devised teams of linguists to travel through Italy in the guise of tourists.²⁵

Hitler had accepted the new Foreign Ministry uniforms for the trip, but he insisted that no one in his delegation wear a white tunic lest it seem that the Germans were treating the Italians as "exotic or colonial."²⁶

On arrival, Hitler, von Ribbentrop, Goebbels, Hess, Himmler, the legal aide Hans Frank, SS General Sepp Dietrich, General Keitel, and the German press corps were met by the King and the Duce. Hitler seemed shocked that the King and his entourage greeted him while Mussolini stood off to the side in respectful attendance. Who was running Italy? This was not how Hitler had envisioned Mussolini's place in the Roman scheme of things.²⁷

Mussolini at last greeted the Germans, and Hitler stepped into the King's horse-drawn parade carriage ahead of the sovereign, raising the ire of the little King, who disliked having to entertain the former corporal. Without speaking, they rode through Rome, lighted into an artificial ocean of flame and fire. At the huge old Quirinal Palace, there were no Fascist uniforms in sight, only court liveries and the courtiers of the royal family.

The Italian royals barely hid their distaste for the visiting Nazis, and Mussolini constantly deferred to his King, heightening Hitler's disdain. There was no place in his revolutionary's mind for the regal trappings of the ancient House of Savoy. Long after the visit, Hitler complained that he was "compelled to have contact with the arrogant idlers of the Italian aristocracy." The British politician and historian Ivone Kirkpatrick wrote that whenever Hitler was accused of keeping his Italian allies in the dark, he invariably blamed it on the Italian royals and their lack of dependability.

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The King called Hitler a psychopath and spread a story that the Führer insisted he could not sleep unless a woman had made up his bed instead of the male servants of the royal family. So Hitler watched while a maid borrowed from a nearby hotel made his bed in the early hours of the morning.²⁸

L'Osservatore Romano, the Vatican newspaper, pointedly ignored Hitler's visit. The Pope closed the Vatican to all visitors and moved to Castel Gondolfo, his summer residence.²⁹ "A cross other than Christ's Cross has been raised over Rome," the Pope complained. He also felt that "the air in Rome was difficult to breathe." The Holy Father and Cardinal Innitzer of Vienna seemed to disagree. Certainly the Pope, a former Papal Nuncio in Berlin, was familiar with the Nazis.

The next day Mussolini mounted a vast parade. Italian troops were now goose-stepping in the Italian version of the German *Parademarsch*. Curiously, there were still Jewish officers among the parading Italian units.³⁰ Italian Jewry's archenemy, Roberto Farinacci, a leading Fascist anti-Semite soon to be minister of state, had not yet convinced his Duce of the "dangers" of Italy's Jews. On May 8, Farinacci was awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of the German Eagle by his German friend Adolf Hitler, and his star was on the rise.

The vast caravan moved on to Naples, where everyone witnessed an intricate and picturesque naval review. Hundreds of Italian submarines dived and surfaced in unison. That night, an immense HEIL HITLER signal shone from the Naples waterfront. Italian Fascism was very operatic.

At the end of that day came Hitler's great "debacle of the full dress suit." He attended the opera with the King. Shortly after the end of the performance he was scheduled to be in the stand at a military parade. Twenty minutes and a special private room had been set aside at the Opera House so that he could change into his Nazi uniform to review the Italian troops. But the royal chief of protocol apologized abjectly that there was not enough time for Hitler to change clothes, and a fuming Hitler found himself reviewing the troops while wearing his civilian evening suit. The old combat soldier had wanted to present a properly martial appearance, and there he was, garbed in a tailcoat like a gigolo at the Eden Hotel in Berlin, while the King at his side pranced around in his marshal's uniform with all his ribbons, sashes, medals, and crosses.

Von Ribbentrop, who had stayed glued to his Führer's side during the trip, bore the brunt of the explosion that followed. Back on their private train, he was called into Hitler's private car and berated for his carelessness and lack of attention to detail. He managed to channel

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When this order was received on May 30 by General Ludwig Beck, the Army's chief of staff, it did not have the effect Hitler desired. General Beck, a devoutly anti-Hitler officer, realized that the time had come for a military revolt against the man he detested. Like many other senior officers, Beck had begun the Nazi era by enthusiastically applauding Germany's rearmament. He hoped that his country would once more become a great nation, with strength and dignity. Then he recognized Hitler's voracious appetite for conquest, and he wanted no part in furthering his ambitions.

Beck now became the center of the anti-Hitler opposition in the military. He tried to convince von Brauchitsch, the Army's commander-in-chief who had followed the disgraced von Fritsch, but he got a tepid response. Six years later, the anti-Hitler plotters even slated Beck to become Germany's head of state.

As soon as Hitler ordered Case Green to be readied, von Brauchitsch asked for a meeting with von Ribbentrop, from which the latter emerged depressed and nervous. Von Brauchitsch had told him the German Army was not ready for military confrontations. Kordt also begged von Ribbentrop to influence the Führer to pull back. "You are the foreign minister! You know the French and the British. For heaven's sake, tell him to keep the peace!"³⁷ Von Ribbentrop shuddered at the idea of being made responsible for influencing Hitler's decisions. "The Führer will know what to do!" he said. Later, he complained that Kordt was "a good diplomat but lacked nerve."

Von Ribbentrop and Kordt rushed to where Hitler was in residence. A letter arrived from Lord Halifax, earnestly urging that "nothing irreparable be done." Von Ribbentrop and his aides returned to Berlin without any notion of Hitler's plans.

Only a few Germans were openly distressed by Hitler, although the Nazis' control over "Aryan" Germans had tightened. Many people learned to glance over their shoulder in cafés, restaurants, theaters, and hotels. Had anyone overheard what one had said? Could it be misunderstood? One could get into a lot of trouble, even at a friendly dinner party.

Jewish citizens were subjected to far more painful degradation, and it intensified each month. Even former combat soldiers were harassed. Their appeals for help, if any appeals could be made, were usually to former regimental comrades or commanders. In a sense, the Jewish former front-line soldier was one of the Nazis' most pathetic victims. The percentage of German-Jewish soldiers who had died in the First World War exceeded that of their Christian comrades, and a large number had been decorated for bravery. In a country where

combat soldiering brought lifelong respect and admiration, the Jewish veterans were barely able to comprehend that their sacrifices had been for nothing. The actual figures tell the story. During the First World War:

100,000 German Jews (about 18 percent of the total Jewish population) were soldiers;
80,000 were front-line soldiers;
35,000 were decorated;
25,000 got field promotions, of whom
2000 became officers;
12,000 were killed in action (about 12 percent).
Many of these former combat soldiers died in Nazi concentration camps.³⁸

During 1938, further cruelties were added to the many that had been imposed since 1935. Jews had to declare all foreign holdings. This pertained as well to non-Jews married to Jews. Jews could no longer attend universities. All Jews who had ever been convicted of any offense were arrested. Jews were barred from all financial exchanges. Jewish physicians were decertified. Newborn Jewish babies could no longer be given "German" first names, such as Arnim, Siegfried, or Sieglinde. Those who already bore such names had to add *Israel* or *Sarah* to their given names. Jewish lawyers were decertified. The passports of all Jews were stamped with J. Even German-Jewish exiles had to preserve their German passports to validate their residency as exiles in their host countries. The passports, which had to be revalidated by German consulates every six months, were to have *Israel* or *Sarah* added, and the photo page was to be marked with a large red J. Every such addition was dated and initialed by a consular clerk. This was the responsibility of the Consular Service of the Foreign Ministry, so von Ribbentrop was surely aware of it.

Worse things were to follow, but by the time of the Czech crisis many Germans knew of all these measures. They were published in the *Völkische Beobachter*, the party paper, read by almost every German. Most people realized the pain these measures caused but chose to shrug their shoulders; "it was not their concern." Fewer than one of each hundred German citizens was Jewish. What happened to this minority was of small concern to most German citizens. But the von Ribbentrops had Jewish relatives in the Henkell family; that should have given them reason to think carefully about what was happening. Yet Hitler's furious reaction to von Ribbentrop's Hotel Aldon luncheon for his Jewish acquaintances in April 1933 must have smothered

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ered sympathy for the Jews. The von Ribbentrops were neither brave
enough nor secure enough to risk the Führer's displeasure.

Austria seemed orderly and manageable. Now the Führer could turn
his full attention to Czechoslovakia. At a tense meeting on May 30,
he advised all his senior staff that it was his "unshakable intention to
wipe Czechoslovakia from the map."

General Beck then composed a paper, which he distributed to
other senior generals, asserting his disagreement with Hitler's deci-
sion, and expressing his anger that the Army could be committed by
one man without consulting Germany's military leadership. By mid-
July several officials of the Foreign Service also voiced their resistance
to Hitler's goals. The lead was taken by State Secretary von Weiz-
säcker and Captain Fritz Wiedemann, ex-Corporal Adolf Hitler's war-
time company commander. In an ironic reversal of roles, Wiedemann
was now one of the Führer's aides. The wartime relationship gave him
a certain leeway with his former company runner. To von Weizsäcker,
a man of judgment and common sense, it was clear that Hitler, intent
on conquest, was willing to provoke a war, and that such a war would
be fatal for Germany. He had no doubt about what should be done,
only about how to do it. In the classic manner of the diplomat, he
began with all the leverage available to his position. He drew Erich
Kordt into his confidence; then he suggested to Sir Nevile Henderson
and to Bernardo Attolico, the respected ambassador from Italy, that
Hitler intended conquest. He also indicated that tough words from
London and a firm "don't" from Mussolini might have desirable
results. He convinced some diplomats in Hungary of Hitler's lust for
war and got their assurance that they would never help the Führer,
although he had asked for their collaboration.

Von Weizsäcker also met with Generals Beck and Halder and with
Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, the head of Military Intelligence, and
briefed them about his diplomatic efforts. He wanted to discredit
Hitler by showing him to be the war-lusting Tartar he was, and he
hoped for a military boycott to back up his effort. But the plan began
to collapse when the conciliatory Chamberlain asked for a meeting
with Hitler.

The brothers Erich and Theo Kordt had done their best to stiffen
London's attitude toward Berlin. At great personal risk, they had
appealed to senior politicians, but to no avail.

William Manchester wrote that Henlein, before his "mysterious"
visit to Churchill in May 1938, was briefed by von Weizsäcker on
how to reassure and calm British fears. That is not likely. It is prob-

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able, however, that Henlein on his own, or under orders from Hitler, played down the demands made on Beneš. Henlein may have been invited to London at the suggestion of Vansittart, seconded by a well-meaning von Weizsäcker. From August 18 to 24, there was in incognito visit to London by Ewald von Kleist-Schmenzin, a Pomeranian noble, who took a great risk. The message he carried from General Beck was: "If England is willing to fight, I shall end this regime." He met with David Lloyd George, Robert Vansittart, and Churchill. But his visit came to naught. Chamberlain, who did not meet with him and who was briefed verbally by others, would not or could not give the response General Beck had requested.³⁹

Meanwhile, Beneš offered Henlein a role for his country modeled on the Swiss canton, but it was not enough.

Earlier that year Fritz Wiedemann had made his own effort at conciliation.⁴⁰ As Hitler's aide-de-camp, he flew to London on a well-publicized "fact-finding" mission, and returned to say the British were prepared to negotiate or, if necessary, to fight. Hitler and von Ribbentrop were not happy with his report. The visit had been initiated by the controversial but well-connected Princess Stephanie Hohenlohe, the very handsome Captain Wiedemann's lover and a friend of Göring's. She used the good services of her friend Lady Snowden, who had Halifax's ear. The Viennese Princess Hohenlohe, daughter of a Jewish dentist, was an ugly but charming woman, and an enigma. Captain Wiedemann lied to Hitler that the British had made contact with him through the princess, but Göring had been told the truth by her, and he cooperated to assure that every effort was made for a peaceful solution. Wiedemann, in turn, implied to Halifax at the latter's 88 Eaton Square residence that he was there at Hitler's suggestion. Everyone was prepared to use whatever influence he could.

An angry von Ribbentrop, who scorned these extracurricular efforts, immediately discredited Captain Wiedemann with information supplied by the Gestapo. He felt that Wiedemann was using his connections as a Hitler intimate to meddle in foreign affairs. After all, he had brought the Jewish Princess Stephanie Hohenlohe into Hitler's Aryan presence. In fact, Hitler had spent a lot of time on several occasions in conversation with the amusing Princess Steph.

On his return from London, Captain Wiedemann was immediately removed from the Führer's presence and sent to San Francisco as consul general. Was he to build an espionage network? Was he to help Lindbergh and the isolationists? Or, most likely, was the move just to get him out of Adolf Hitler's and von Ribbentrop's way?

Now the Kordt assured Vansittart a military one. They to the hated Stalin, but Anglo-Russian pact. conquest of Czechoslovakia. preferred the risk of destruction through would "soon conclude relieved.

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Even Henlein begged bring about a world war to desist from a military Sudeten German who for Henlein, also tried necessary.

By now the *soigné* minister's comments: lent."⁴² Obviously, the antipathies. Also in June request of the Prague finder, Lord Runciman out of his depth. Along the whole thing as a "B

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work the things he had learned as a small boy and "try, try, try again." It was a noble and courageous performance — by a man in his late sixties who looked much older, with his unfashionably high collars. In fact, he looked like the headmaster of a second-rank, small private school.

There was no way the Austrian former corporal could have penetrated past this neo-Victorian mask to the sporting soul of Neville Chamberlain. It was difficult for Adolf Hitler to see beyond the umbrella. Nothing in his experience had taught him about this species of externally eccentric British statesman. Meanwhile, von Ribbentrop, who lumped Chamberlain with the leisurely upper-class group in Whitehall which he detested, had no intention of "selling" Chamberlain to Hitler. But it is doubtful whether he could have made a difference, or whether von Ribbentrop had more than marginal influence, on the Nimmersatt plans of voracious Adolf Hitler. *insatiable*

Von Ribbentrop still had some helpers in Great Britain, people who, for reasons ranging from blind anti-Semitism and anti-Communism to deep British patriotism, joined groups like Sir Barry Domville's Link. This group grew between March 1938 and June 1939 from eighteen hundred to forty-three hundred, though it contained many of the same English names and faces that had been staunchly pro-German since the Nazis came to power.⁴⁷ But they were only a small voice, only a small minority of votes.

Adolf Hitler had the advantage of the revolutionary. He was willing to gamble. Like the street drifter who accosts the well-dressed man, he counted on the self-protective instincts of the other. Britain was tired of war and of losing her young men in battle. Her wish for peace was real, and her leadership expressed that wish. Germany's masses were no different. They too wanted to live in peace, but they were dazzled by their powerful leader, who seemed to achieve *without bloodshed* everything he had promised. Their self-preservative instincts were dulled by propaganda and all the trappings of nationalistic success and blind faith. Hitler was their hero, their shining knight. Yet the average roadside citizen of Munich cheered Chamberlain with much enthusiasm because he was their *Friedensbote*, their messenger of peace.⁴⁸ Dr. Paul Schmidt wrote that they cheered Chamberlain more than they had cheered Mussolini in 1937.

Chips Channon's reaction to Chamberlain's mission was typical of London society's prejudice, snobbery, and cheerful innocence.

15 September. This morning Neville, accompanied by one or two experts, left London for Berchtesgaden. Of course, some Jews and

many of the shady pressmen who hang around Geneva are furious. No war. No revenge on Germany — and they say that Hitler will insult, browbeat him as he bullied Schuschnigg. No fear.

This evening I dined with Maurice de Rothschild at a dinner of seventeen in his rich house, full of amazing Boldinis and medium Tiepolos. Dinner was indifferent but the wines staggering. One claret was sixty-nine years old, the same age as Neville, as I pointed out. Everyone was a touch tipsy with Rothschild wine and admiration, even hero worship, for Chamberlain.

Hitler's special train came to Munich to fetch Chamberlain and his group as well as von Ribbentrop and Neville Henderson. By coincidence or design, the train was continually passed by armored troop trains. Waiting in the fog and drizzle, the Führer greeted the British prime minister at his mountain chalet. In a symbolic gesture of respect, Adolf Hitler stood at the very foot of the long flight of stairs to lead Chamberlain from the big Mercedes up to the Berghof. As soon as they had doffed their coats and hats, after a short exchange of halting banalities about the weather and the views from the Berghof, Hitler asked whether he could speak to Chamberlain alone, with only the interpreter Schmidt present. This, according to Schmidt, had been secretly worked out by von Weizsäcker and Ambassador Henderson long before the meeting, to avoid the presence of von Ribbentrop. The plan had the full knowledge of Hitler, who feared that von Ribbentrop might be a disturbing influence. It also had Göring's enthusiastic endorsement.⁴⁹

Schmidt, the only eyewitness to the first Chamberlain-Hitler talks, wrote about the moment when the irascible Hitler threatened to solve the Sudeten question "one way or the other" (Schmidt's translation of Hitler's much more ominous "*so oder so*"). Chamberlain reacted with uncharacteristic firmness. "As I understand it," he said, "you intend to move against Czechoslovakia one way or the other. In that case I may just as well return to England. There doesn't seem to be much left to be done here." To Schmidt's amazement, Hitler immediately reacted. Suddenly calm, he said that he "would be satisfied with a solution to the Sudeten problem."⁵⁰

That night at the Grand Hotel in Berchtesgaden, when Schmidt tried to practice a routine diplomatic courtesy by turning over a copy of his notes to a foreign negotiating partner, an angry von Ribbentrop appeared in his room and rudely told him not to give the notes to the British. "You are no longer in Geneva, where everyone was chummy. Your notes are for the Führer only!" With great regret, Schmidt informed Chamberlain and Henderson of his new instructions. Under-

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Hitler was de claims on Czechs. To add across the border they were temporary Germans were in deutsche, only strange Slavic ac

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Chamberlain told the
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The Beck-Witzleben

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eager to save "his" war.⁵⁹ He did not succeed. Czechoslovakia's Sude-
tenland was amputated.

Munich drowned in beer when the pact was announced. As the
joyous taxi driver told Kordt on his way to the Hotel Vier Jahreszei-
ten, "Sale of beer has been incredible ever since they announced there
would be no Schlamassel," which was, ironically, the Yiddish word
for misfortune. The street in front of the Vier Jahreszeiten, which
housed senior Nazis as well as Édouard Daladier, the French prime
minister, was besieged by crowds shouting the rhyme "*Daladier! Vive
la paix!*" Daladier, with tear-filled eyes, stood at his window overlook-
ing the Maximilianstrasse.

Looking into the future, Sir Nevile Henderson wrote to Chamber-
lain:

Millions of mothers will be blessing your name tonight . . . oceans of
ink will flow hereafter in criticism of your action. The day may come
when we may be forced to fight Germany again. If we have to do so, I
trust that the cause may be one in which the morality of our case is so
unimpeachable [and] the honour and vital interests of Britain are so
clearly at stake, as to insure us of the full support of the united British
people, of the Empire, and of world opinion.

Sir Nevile concluded that this would not have been the case in
1938.

Shortly before he returned to London, Chamberlain had asked
Hitler, at the end of the meeting in the Führer's private Munich
apartment, to sign a note declaring that all future Anglo-German
disputes would be resolved through peaceful negotiations. Hitler
shrugged and signed. It was this paper which Chamberlain triump-
hantly waved when he spoke the famous phrase "peace for our
time." Spitzzy reported that a short while after the agreements were
concluded and the "paper" was signed, he followed Hitler and von
Ribbentrop down the stairs at the Führerbau. He was close enough to
overhear them. Von Ribbentrop petulantly criticized the agreement
and the special "paper" for Chamberlain, whereupon Hitler said
softly, "Well, you don't have to take it so seriously. This paper is really
of no great importance" (*Ach, das brauchen Sie nicht alles so ernst zu
nehmen. Dieses Papier hat doch weiter keinerlei Bedeutung*).⁶⁰ Spitzzy,
a long-time Hitler worshiper, was stunned.

This is the text of the famous "Peace for our Time" paper:

We, the German Führer and Chancellor and the British Prime
Minister, had a further meeting today and are agreed in recognizing

Nov 1938

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large map of poor Czechoslovakia spread before them. Eventually,
Hungary received her booty, though it was smaller than she wished.

On November 7, 1938, a murder took place in Paris that set off a
series of events which would shock the civilized world. That day,
Herschel Grynszpan, a seventeen-year-old German-born Jewish refu-
gee, shot and killed a German Embassy official named Ernst vom
Rath. Grynszpan was born in 1921 in Hannover, where his Polish-
Jewish parents had moved to escape Polish anti-Semitism. To help
their son evade the Nazis, the Grynszpans sent Herschel to Paris in
1936. The senior Grynszpans stayed behind, hoping for the best, until
the Nazis passed a law that Polish-born Jews, even if they were
nationalized German citizens, would be expelled to Poland. But the
Jew-hating Polish government refused to readmit them.

Thousands of these unfortunates were left to fend for themselves
in the icy fields and woods of the no man's land along the Silesian
border with Poland. They were virtually nonpersons, victimized by
both German and Polish frontier policy. It was brutal and inhuman.
Herschel Grynszpan's parents were among those expelled. Young
Grynszpan heard about their fate and decided to avenge them. He
planned to shoot the German ambassador in Paris, where he was
living the precarious life of the refugee, subject to the chauvinistic
Paris *flics*, who issued the sainted, obligatory *carte d'identité* of the
French government. It was grim irony that the inexperienced young
Grynszpan mistook vom Rath for the ambassador when he was
shown into the minor official's office in the embassy and that at the
time vom Rath was under Gestapo surveillance as "politically unreli-
able."

Most 1938 observers blame the events that followed on the "poi-
sonous dwarf" of the Nazi hierarchy, Dr. Joseph Goebbels, and on the
cooperation of the SA commanders. There were also some SS in-
volved, although Himmler seemed unhappy with the spectacle of his
"black knights" performing these vulgarities side by side with the SA.
He need not have been so squeamish. A year later Himmler's SS would
begin to perform tasks that revolted even some top Nazis with cast-
iron stomachs.

On November 9, 1938, starting early in the morning, Nazi bands
roamed throughout Germany and set fire to 171 synagogues, broke
the windows of 7500 Jewish shops and department stores, wrecked
homes and apartments, murdered 91 Jews, and arrested 26,000 oth-
ers, who were transported to concentration camps. The shattered glass
shards in city streets from broken windows and storefronts were the

Nov 1938

cause for the bitter black-humor term Kristallnacht, an ugly joke. All of this destruction was a "spontaneous demonstration" of the "righteous anger of the people because of the foul murder committed in Paris."

Jewish citizens were paid insurance compensation of about a hundred million marks, which they had to turn over to the government. Next, the sum of a billion marks was demanded from Germany's Jewish community as "penalty" for the murder of vom Rath.

Although several senior Nazis, including Göring and von Ribbentrop, uttered faint protests against these actions, they did so only because they feared upsetting foreign business and diplomatic dealings. No one questioned the moral issue. The pogrom continued through the tenth of November.

Most of the Jewish men who were sent to concentration camps on that November 9 were battered and beaten but eventually released. Even the most optimistic and proud Jews in Germany now tried to flee the country of their birth.

The pogrom represents one of the ugliest stains on the honor of Germany, although it was but a gentle hint of things to come. Yet according to a recently published eyewitness report, an infuriated Goebbels called in Count von Helldorf, Berlin's police chief, and howled at him that this sort of crude nonsense "is not the way to solve the Jewish problem." He blamed the debauches on "that thick-necked moronic idiot in Munich [Streicher], the schizophrenic vulgarian. Because of him Germany has made a fool of herself all over the world."

Crystal Night was not ignored abroad. On November 15, Chips Channon chronicled from Belgrave Square, "The pogroms in Germany and the persecutions there have roused much indignation everywhere. I must say Hitler never helps, and always makes Chamberlain's task more difficult."⁶⁷ One of the foulest of Adolf Hitler's crimes was the subversion of ordinary German decency. From a non-Jewish, British eyewitness* in Berlin:

The streets were a chaos of screaming, bloodthirsty people lusting for Jewish bodies. I saw Harrison of the *News Chronicle* trying to protect an aged Jewess who had been dragged from her home by a gang. I pushed my way through to help him and between us we managed to heave her through the crowd to a side street and safety. Next, the object of the mob's hate was a hospital for sick Jewish children, many of them cripples or consumptives. In minutes, the windows had been smashed and the doors forced. When we arrived, the swine were

*A British journalist, probably a Scot.

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driving the wee mites out over the broken glass barefooted and wear-
ing nothing but their nightshirts. The nurses, doctors, and attendants
were being kicked and beaten by the mob leaders, most of whom were
women.⁶⁸

Disgusted foreign correspondents like the American Louis Lochner
reported the bestiality despite Gestapo censors.

President Roosevelt recalled Ambassador Hugh Wilson in pro-
test.*

This time there were hundreds of outraged newspaper editorials
all over America. The *New York Times* of November 11, 1938, wrote
about "scenes witnessed yesterday . . . which no man can look upon
without shame for the degradation of his species."

One of the few whimsical results of the terror: Mayor Fiorello
LaGuardia of New York, who was half Jewish, assigned a twelve-man
squad of Jewish policemen, commanded by Captain Max Finkelstein,
to guard the German consulate.

The newly named National Conference of Christians and Jews
founded the Volunteer Christian Protest Committee to boycott Nazi
Germany, although, despite editorials and threats of boycott, the
United States did not increase its immigration quota for the German
refugees (about twenty-seven thousand to thirty thousand Germans
annually).

Isolationists, like the anti-Semitic, anti-Roosevelt "radio" priest
Father Charles Coughlin, grew even stronger. Coughlin's national
weekly broadcasts had a wide audience. Another clergyman, the Rev-
erend Gerald L. K. Smith, and his hate sheet *The Cross and the Flag*
also prospered.

Eventually, in what was described as a rawdry public relations
move, President Roosevelt called for an international conference on
the Jewish refugee problem.⁶⁹ Representatives of thirty-two nations
convened at Evian les Bains, the old French spa, between July 6 and
14, 1939, but the conference led nowhere. No one agreed to accept
immigrants from Nazi Germany. Each government, beset with its own
economic ills, was fearful of adding foreigners to its population.
Eventually only the British took steps, and admitted about forty thou-
sand. Franklin Roosevelt, the man who had called the conference,
refused to antagonize his domestic opponents, the isolationists.

*The recall was postponed for four days pending the results of a public opinion
poll. It showed that four out of five Americans did not wish to admit immigrant
refugees from Germany. Nevertheless, at the urging of Sumner Welles, the number
two man in the State Department, the recall was carried out.

April 1938

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Wilhelmstrasse or, for that matter, in the Speer renovation of Berlin's former Presidential Palace, which von Ribbentrop was soon to use as his official residence. After Hitler's open breach of the 1938 Munich Agreement, von Ribbentrop was shocked when Polish Ambassador Lipski arrived with a message from Warsaw that "brusquely" turned down Hitler's Danzig and Polish Corridor suggestions and even declared that "any further pursuit of these German plans, particularly those concerning Danzig, would mean war."⁷⁹ He gingerly told Hitler about this "threat," but, uncharacteristically, Hitler asked him to put it to the Polish ambassador that no form of settlement would be found if the word "war" was mentioned.

When the Poles concluded a preliminary mutual defense agreement with Britain on April 6, von Ribbentrop was doubly shocked. After all, it was Chamberlain who had insisted on and drafted the very paper which stated that Germany and Britain would not enter future political agreements without mutual consultation.⁸⁰

Apparently von Ribbentrop had not been listening carefully when his Führer assured him in Munich, on the steps of the Führer Building, that this paper "meant next to nothing." But now it puzzled von Ribbentrop that Chamberlain, the man who had complained so bitterly in his Birmingham speech about the betrayal of the Munich Agreement, had signed a Polish agreement without consultation. Britain also planned to introduce conscription, more loftily known as National Service, probably yet another blow to the closed-eyed and closed-eared Joachim von Ribbentrop. He would have been even more surprised if he had learned of the convoluted untruths and failed purposes that preceded the British guarantee to Poland.

Both Lord Halifax and the prime minister firmly believed that Poland was a first-rate military power, able on its own to rebuff any German assault. That was their first miscalculation, largely the result of the swagger of Colonel Josef Beck, Poland's foreign minister. Beck assured them that Germany had never been truly insistent about Danzig and had never contested Polish rights there: another delusion.⁸¹ Chamberlain had also hoped that a guarantee given to Poland would ensure Polish help in defending neighboring Romania, but Beck would promise no such thing.

As William Manchester wrote, His Majesty's Government "had been had!" The fate of Britain's vast empire, from a military standpoint, was now in the hands of little Poland.⁸²

Worse, knowing that the eventual political guarantee against German aggression would need the cooperation of Soviet Russia, Chamberlain and Halifax now discovered Beck's implacably anti-Soviet

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constantly on the alert. In contrast, there were over forty documented attempts on Adolf Hitler's life. A very eccentric one was planned for his fiftieth birthday, on April 20, 1938.⁸³ The man who conceived of the deed and wanted to execute it was Colonel Noel Mason-Macfarlane, military attaché at the British Embassy in Berlin, a leather-tough son of a military family. Painful polo and automobile injuries had almost crippled him but never kept him from living an energetic life.

The colonel knew that a vast review of troops and party formations was planned for the occasion and that the reviewing stand would be a short 110 yards from his flat on Sophienstrasse. This stand was traditionally where Hitler received the birthday salute of the parading units. Enormous crowds always massed all along the route of march, climbing onto anything from tables to tree limbs. The colonel thought that, under the cover of these yelling crowds, he could shoot Hitler from the flat's bathroom window. He had no trouble finding a hunting rifle with a telescopic sight and a silencer. Even a poor shot could not miss at such short range, and Mason-Macfarlane was an expert. Ever the loyal soldier, he went to London to seek permission from Whitehall. The idea was turned down as "unsportsmanlike." The details are in the colonel's notes on deposit at the Imperial War Museum. Obviously, Chamberlain was not the only representative of the Victorian view of the world.

Probably to clear up any further designs Mussolini might have after his first Balkan conquest, von Ribbentrop attempted to convince Prince Paul of Romania and his prime minister to enter the German camp, but the Romanians managed to evade him. Next came Turkey. An even more forceful session of wooing and coercion took place at the von Ribbentrop country estate, Sonnenburg. Schmidt, who was there to interpret, described the almost athletic agility with which Memenencoglu, the Turkish foreign secretary, eluded his persistent host's thrust.

Then, at last, something to present to the Führer. On May 22 in the Great Hall of the new Chancellery, with Hitler in godfatherly attendance, von Ribbentrop and Ciano, the Ducellini, signed the ill-named Italo-German Pact of Steel.

It was Hitler's countermove to the newly revived Anglo-French friendship, and it probably frightened every Italian except Mussolini. Even Ciano was described as looking "scared of his own courage,"⁸⁴ and he spoke to Hitler and von Ribbentrop of "a future peace-filled, three-year cooperation." In what must have been a supremely cynical mood, Hitler congratulated von Ribbentrop on the swift conclusion of nonaggression pacts with Denmark, Estonia, and Latvia, probably

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recollected for the Nazi Archive in 1938: "The day after the funeral he came . . . to thank me for the pains I had taken with his departed mother. In nearly forty years of medical practice I have never seen a youngster so ineffably saddened with grief and sorrow as young Adolf Hitler."¹²⁵ Bloch failed to recollect that it was Christmas Eve and that, as his record shows, he then collected his final 300 crowns. In a reminiscence of 1941 he disingenuously redated the scene with Hitler "a few days after the funeral" and added: "Looking into my eyes, he said: 'I shall be grateful to you forever.'"¹²⁶ Hitler redated the scene the same way by implication in explaining to his valet why yuletide depressed him: "My mother died on a Christmas Eve."¹²⁷

Hitler's experience of his mother's last illness looms behind his later tireless diatribes against the Jewish cancer, the Jewish poison, the Jewish profiteer. All his lesser anti-Semitic epithets fall in with those three. The Jewish parasite linked the first and third. The Jewish bacilli, tuberculosis, and syphilis were variants of the first, for in 1907 it was the dominant view that cancer was, like tuberculosis, caused by bacilli and that syphilis was cancerous.¹²⁸ "How many diseases have their origin in the Jewish virus!" exclaimed Hitler himself.¹²⁹ A good primer for Hitler's Bloch complex in political guise is a passage of *Mein Kampf* arguing that even before the war the profit motive (read: Bloch's) was winning out over the ideal of self-sacrifice (read: his own) in the German people's (read: his mother's) struggle for survival against "forces of decay flaring up in truly frightful numbers like will-o'-the-wisps brushing up and down the national body or, as poisonous abscesses, eating into the nation now here, now there. It was as if an endless stream of poison were being driven by a mysterious power into the outermost blood vessels of this once heroic body, gradually impairing the reason and the very instinct of self-preservation." For all that, the Germans failed to "gain a clear perspective on the destroyer of their existence," namely the Judaic "world pest," Marxism. "Sometimes they doctored around the disease, but then they confused its forms with its instigator, whom they did not, or did not want to, recognize as such. Thus the struggle against Marxism amounted only to bun-

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1909, 1918, 1934, 1938

gling quackery."¹³⁰ Consciously Hitler bore Bloch no grudges, quite the contrary, from the hand-painted card he sent Bloch from Vienna with "the most cordial New Year's wishes"—presumably for 1909—"from your ever grateful Adolf Hitler"¹³¹ to the request, after the Anschluss of 1938, for Bloch to be photographed in his consulting room in Linz¹³² and a decree granting Bloch "all possible alleviations, including monetary."¹³³ Even unconsciously he exonerated Bloch again and again from his own unconscious charges against him. Thus he answered for a political bloodbath of 1934 by telling Germany: "I... gave the order to burn out the abscesses of our inner well-poisoning and of the foreign poisoning down to the raw flesh."¹³⁴ Decoded, this cleared Bloch in respect of the breast cancer ("inner well-poisoning") and the iodoform treatment ("I... gave the order") while also blaming him for them through a dissymmetrical phrase covering both at once ("of the foreign poisoning").¹³⁵ Abusing "the Jew" was for Hitler a means of abusing Bloch, while knowing better. This supercharged conceptual device, "the Jew," shaped up and developed latently with Hitler over the decade before it surfaced in October 1918. For in those years he was motivated against a run of evils and evildoers that were disconnected except in having been linked to Jewry in the Austrian and German anti-Semitism of the time. In the men's hostel in Vienna in early 1913 his two cues for fury were "ever and again... the Reds and the Jesuits";¹³⁶ in a letter of 5 February 1915 to an acquaintance in Munich he looked ahead to a victorious Germany rid of "foreignism" and "internal internationalism";¹³⁷ in his last days at the front he would scream like crazy against "pacifists and shirkers."¹³⁸ Again, he conspicuously avoided naming Jews when, in his first years in his regiment, he "would rail against the Dual Monarchy, in which every Czech, every Hungarian, every Pole, Croat, and Bosnian, counted for more than a German."¹³⁹ The anti-Semitic subliterature that proliferated in Hitler's Vienna must have prompted his choice of "the Jew" as a fall guy for Bloch, what with its big themes of parasitism, poison, and concealed malevolence.¹⁴⁰ This was the truth to his untruth that he left Vienna "as an

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guishing imaginary from real appears to have failed him. It may be to the point that "his friends from his student days . . . always considered it possible that he would someday take his life."⁷⁴

Forster's treatment of Hitler found its way via the Café Royal into Ernst Weiss's novel *Der Augenzeuge* (The Eyewitness). According to Walter Mehring, Schwarzschild's coterie had picked Weiss as the "witness" that Forster sought in July 1933.⁷⁵ Weiss was a Czech Jew who had trained as a surgeon in Vienna and studied under Freud along the way. By 1914 he had given up surgery for letters, though he then served in World War I as a doctor. He settled in Germany after the war, emigrated when Hitler took power, and killed himself in Paris in June 1940 rather than flee any farther. *Der Augenzeuge*, his last work, was begun late in 1938 and completed the following summer.⁷⁶ It centers in the "miracle cure" at "P." of "A.H.," stricken with "hysterical blindness." A.H. claims to have been hit by mustard gas while on a "run of duty up front" and plays the incapacitated war hero while deflecting scarce medical provisions from "real" sufferers. He attracts attention by the trouble he gives ward mates less fired than he by the losing German cause. The chief psychiatrist, repelled by his personality but intrigued by his pathology, draws A.H. out in a lengthy nighttime consultation, then calculates how to utilize his fanaticism to cure his blindness. At a second nighttime consultation he examines A.H.'s impaired eyes and pronounces them medically incurable, but then suggests to him in the darkness that with his preternatural force of will he can cure them for himself. A.H. thereupon strains to see a lighted match, then a pair of candles, while being told: "You must believe in yourself blindly. Then you will cease being blind," and "Germany now needs men like you with energy and blind faith in themselves. Austria is done for, but not Germany," and finally "FOR YOU EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE! GOD WILL HELP YOU IF YOU HELP YOURSELF!" At this point his eyesight is fully restored and he is put into a dreamless hypnotic sleep until the next morning.⁷⁷

Weiss's hero is "pure Forster" in everything germane to Forster's encounter with Hitler. He is an innovator in brain sur-

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gery apart from his special interest in hysteria. He holds hysteria to be all-out simulation that fools the simulator himself. Of A.H. he remarks: "In his lying he believed he was telling the truth"—which matches Forster's "These hysterics talk of their love of country and their courage until they are carried away with themselves like the actor who, in playing Hamlet, takes himself for the Prince of Denmark."⁷⁸ He comes to P. from the western front in 1918 with Forster's rank and Forster's Iron Cross First Class; he leaves immediately after the revolution and "miracle cure." The sequel revolves around his notes on A.H., which he takes with him from P. along with some other case histories: "They could be useful if in a scientific study I wanted to give examples."⁷⁹ A democrat with close Jewish associations, he is threatened by A.H.'s takeover,⁸⁰ the more since A.H. has glimpsed his case notes during the "miracle cure." Even before the takeover a Nazi contact has invited him to hand over his official and unofficial papers "on him" so as to avoid trouble.⁸¹ "I had not taken the official ones along," he specifies in his narrative voice.⁸² He guards his notes as a possible weapon against A.H., yet rejects the thought of publishing them—"not from fear of the consequences, which I could not foresee, but from respect for the medical secret."⁸³ Nor will he destroy them as his wife urges. Instead he drives to Basel in the summer of 1933 and deposits them in a bank safe there. Just as his wife goes to meet him in Bern, he is tricked into returning to Germany and hauled off for thirteen days of interrogation—and to a concentration camp afterward. He "had resolved to resist the temptation of suicide" for his wife's sake.⁸⁴ She, though, surrenders the notes in exchange for his being allowed to escape abroad. A bitter life of exile in Paris ensues in which he is slowly estranged from her and their two children. The interrogation represented Forster's real fate as Weiss visualized it, the incarceration the fate Forster had feared, the exile the fate Forster had rejected. Weiss joined his own fate to Forster's for that final sequence. Then he in turn chose suicide rather than flight when France fell. His manuscript containing Forster's secret survived as a rejected entry in an American contest for the best novel by a German emigrant.⁸⁵

which Hitler was still completely dominated by such resentments almost a decade after achieving power, though in fact there was not the slightest reason for concern about possible resistance on the part of his defeated adversaries.

It would be superfluous to discuss at any length the judgments which Hitler expressed at his table about kings and princes. He thought the crowned heads and their families rotten to the core, indescribably stupid, and hence not worth being taken seriously. He spoke condescendingly of the "Hohenzollern brood" and expressed the anger he still felt at the memory of his formal reception by the King of Italy in May 1938.⁸

As for Hitler's remarks about the "upper ten thousand"—a term he often used—or the bourgeoisie, these were similarly petulant. He spoke of the Saxon burgher class as "a riffraff of idiotic stupidity." "No segment of the population," he declared, "is more foolish when it comes to political matters than this so-called burgher class." In his opinion, the German burgher desired only tranquility and order and was politically cowardly. Only the Hanseatics, the citizens of the once independent north German seaports, came in for an occasional compliment in Hitler's conversation. There is no way to account for the fact that he remained so prejudiced against the middle classes, for without their efficiency in commerce and industry Germany would never have been able to recover so swiftly from the misery of the years before 1933. Moreover, "Führer and Reich Chancellor"⁹ Hitler had won over a large part of the bourgeoisie,

⁸On May 2, 1938, Hitler set out with four special trainloads of functionaries to visit Italy, responding to an invitation which Mussolini had extended during a visit to Germany the previous autumn. Hitler was disgusted "by the fact that protocol required him, as Head of State, to stay with the King in the Quirinal. The formality of his reception at the Palace irked him and left him with a permanent dislike of the Italian Royal House" (Alan Bullock, *Hitler, A Study in Tyranny*, p. 444).—ED.

⁹On January 30, 1933, Hitler was named *Reichskanzler* by *Reichspräsident* Paul von Hindenburg, who died on August 2, 1934. Thereupon Hitler united in himself the functions of chief of state (president) and head of government (chancellor), assuming the formal title *Führer und Reichskanzler*, an act confirmed by 84 per cent of the voters in a plebiscite on August 19, 1934. Although this figure reflects duress and manipulation, there is no question but that the great majority of the German people did endorse him.—ED.

perial in Vienna I encountered the sordid hidden side of the rejoicing over the *Anschluss*. Many bigwigs from the Reich, such as Berlin Police Commissioner Count Helldorf, had hurried there, lured by the well-stocked shops. "They still have good underclothing. . . . Wool blankets, as many as you like. . . . I've discovered a place for foreign liqueurs. . . ." Scraps of the conversations in the hotel lobby. I felt repelled and limited myself to buying a Borsalino. Did any of this concern me?

Shortly after the annexation of Austria, Hitler sent for a map of Central Europe and showed his reverently listening entourage how Czechoslovakia was now caught in a "pincers." For years to come he would recall how magnanimously Mussolini had given his consent to the invasion of Austria. He would remain eternally grateful to the Duce for that, Hitler said. For Austria had been an invaluable buffer zone for Italy. To have German troops standing at the Brenner Pass would in the long run cause a certain strain. Hitler's Italian journey of 1938 was partly intended as an assurance of friendship. But he was also eager to see the monuments and art treasures of Rome and Florence. Resplendent uniforms were designed for the entourage and shown to Hitler. He loved such pomp; that his own dress was modest was a matter of careful strategy. "My surroundings must look magnificent. Then my simplicity makes a striking effect." About a year later Hitler turned to the stage designer Benno von Arent, known for his sets for opera and operettas, and had him design new uniforms for diplomats. He was pleased by the frock coats laden with gold braid. But wits remarked: "They look like a scene from *Die Fledermaus*." Arent also designed medals for Hitler; those too would have looked great on the stage. Thereafter I used to call Arent: "Tinsmith of the Third Reich." *Der Blechschmied von dem Dritten Reich*

Back from Italy, Hitler summed up his impressions: "How glad I am that we have no monarchy and that I have never listened to those who have tried to talk me into one. Those court flunkies and that etiquette! It's awful. And the Duce always in the background. The best places at all the dinners and on the platforms are taken by the royal family. The Duce was always kept at a remove, and yet he is the one who really runs the government." By diplomatic protocol Hitler, as Chief of State, was treated as of equal rank with the King, Mussolini only as Prime Minister.

Even after the visit, Hitler felt obliged to do something special

to honor Mussolini. He decided that Berlin's Adolf Hitler Platz would bear Mussolini's name after it had been incorporated into the major urban renewal project for Berlin.⁸ Privately, he thought this square appalling, disfigured as it was by "modern" buildings of the Weimar Republic. But: "If we rename it Mussolini Platz, I am rid of it, and besides it seems like an exceptional honor to cede my own square to the Duce. I already have designed a Mussolini monument for it!" Nothing came of the project, since the rebuilding plans were never carried out.

The dramatic year 1938 led finally to Hitler's wresting the consent of the Western powers for the partition of Czechoslovakia. A few weeks before Hitler had put on an exceptionally effective performance at the Nuremberg Party Rally, playing the enraged leader of his nation; and supported by the frenzied applause of his followers, he tried to convince the contingent of foreign observers that he would not shrink from war. That was, judged with benefit of hindsight, intimidation on a grand scale. He had already tested this technique in his conference with Schuschnigg. On the other hand, he loved to sharpen his mettle by such audacities, going so far that he could no longer retreat without risking his prestige.

This time he wanted even his closest associates to believe in his feint. He explained the various considerations to them and stressed the inevitability of a military showdown, whereas his usual behavior was to veil his basic intentions. What he said about his resolve for war impressed even Brückner, his chief adjutant of many years. In September 1938, during the Party Rally, I was sitting with Brückner on a wall of Nuremberg Castle. Wreathed in smoke, the old city lay before us, in the mild September sunshine. Downcast, Brückner remarked: "We may be seeing this peaceful scene for the last time. Probably we shall soon be at war."

The war Brückner was predicting was averted again more because of the compliance of the Western powers than because of any reasonableness on Hitler's part. The surrender of the Sudetenland to Germany took place before the eyes of a frightened world and of Hitler's followers, now completely convinced of their leader's invincibility.

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tion to the war effort. Every one-dish meal cost me fifty or a hundred marks.

Goebbels was the most prominent guest at table; Himmler seldom came; Bormann of course never missed a meal, but like me he belonged to the inner group of courtiers and could not be considered a guest.

Here, too, Hitler's conversation at table did not go beyond the very narrow range of subjects and the limited point of view that made the Obersalzberg talk so wearisome. In Berlin he tended to phrase his opinions more harshly, but the repertory remained the same; he neither extended nor deepened it, scarcely ever enriched it by new approaches and insights. He did not even try to cover up the frequent repetitions which were so embarrassing to his listeners. I cannot say that I found his remarks impressive, even though I was still captivated by his personality. What he said rather sobered me, for I had expected opinions and judgments of higher quality.

In these monologues he frequently asserted that his political, artistic, and military ideas formed a unity which he had developed in detail between the ages of twenty and thirty. That had been intellectually his most fertile period, he said; the things he was now planning and doing were only the execution of the ideas of that period.

In the table talk much weight was given to experiences in the First World War. Most of the guests had served during the war. For a time Hitler had been in the trenches opposite the British forces, whose bravery and determination had won his respect, although he also often made fun of their idiosyncrasies. Thus he liked to relate with heavy irony that they were in the habit of stopping their artillery fire exactly at teatime, so that he as a courier was always able to carry out his errands safely at that hour.

In 1938 he expressed no ideas of revenge upon the French; he did not want a rerun of the war of 1914. It was not worth waging another war, he said, over that insignificant strip of territory constituting Alsace-Lorraine. Besides, he would add, the Alsations had become so characterless due to the constant shifting of their nationality that it would be a gain to neither side to have them. They ought to be left where they were. In saying this, of course, Hitler was assuming that Germany could expand to the east. The bravery of the French soldiers had impressed him in the First World War; only the officer corps was

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Those who took par man without cosmopo Germany; if one of the was discussed at Hitler question was considere nothing of the world a standing of it. Moreov education. Of the fifty leadership, only ten ha attended university cla gone beyond seconda tinguished himself by ever. Almost all displ educational standard c expected of the top le

morally enfeebled. "With German officers the French would be a splendid army."

He did not exactly repudiate the alliance with Japan—from the racist point of view a dubious affair—but he took a tone of reserve toward it as far as the more distant future was concerned. Whenever he touched on this theme, he implied that he was somewhat sorry about having made an alliance with the so-called yellow race. But then he would remind himself that England, too, had mobilized Japan against the Central Powers in the World War. Hitler considered Japan an ally that ranked as a world power, whereas he was not convinced that Italy was in the same class.

The Americans had not played a very prominent part in the war of 1914–18, he thought, and moreover had not made any great sacrifices of blood. They would certainly not withstand a great trial by fire, for their fighting qualities were low. In general, no such thing as an American people existed as a unit; they were nothing but a mass of immigrants from many nations and races.

Fritz Wiedemann, who had once been regimental adjutant and superior to Hitler in his days as a courier and whom Hitler had now with signal lack of taste made his own adjutant, thought otherwise and kept urging Hitler to have talks with the Americans. Vexed by this offense against the unwritten law of the round table, Hitler finally sent him to San Francisco as German consul general. "Let him be cured of his notions there."

Those who took part in these table conversations were almost to a man without cosmopolitan experience. Most had never been outside Germany; if one of them had taken a pleasure trip to Italy, the matter was discussed at Hitler's table as if it were an event and the person in question was considered a foreign affairs expert. Hitler, too, had seen nothing of the world and had acquired neither knowledge nor understanding of it. Moreover, the average party politician lacked higher education. Of the fifty Reichsleiters and Gauleiters, the elite of the leadership, only ten had completed a university education, a few had attended university classes for a while, and the majority had never gone beyond secondary school. Virtually none of them had distinguished himself by any notable achievement in any field whatsoever. Almost all displayed an astonishing intellectual dullness. Their educational standard certainly did not correspond to what might be expected of the top leadership of a nation with a traditionally high

satisfaction, that even classical antiquity had not been free of megalomaniacal impulses. The Greeks of the colonies were obviously departing from the principle of moderation so praised in the motherland. Compared to these temples, all the examples of Saracen-Norman architecture we encountered paled, except for Frederick II's wonderful hunting castle, the octagonal Castel del Monte. Paestum was another high point of our trip; Pompeii, on the other hand, seemed to me further away from the pure forms of Paestum than were our buildings from the world of the Dorians.

On the return journey we stayed in Rome for a few days. The Fascist government discovered the real identity of our illustrious traveling companion, and Italian Propaganda Minister Alfieri invited us all to the opera. But we found it hard to give a plausible explanation for the fact that the second lady of the German Reich was traveling abroad without her husband and therefore set out for home as quickly as possible.

While we had been dreaming our way through Greek antiquity, Hitler occupied Czechoslovakia and annexed it to the Reich. Back in Germany we found a general mood of depression. Apprehensions about the future filled all of us. To this day I find it strange that a nation can have so right a sense of what is to come, so much so that all the massive propaganda by the government does not banish this feeling.

Nevertheless, it seemed a better sign that Hitler stood up to Goebbels one day when, at lunch in the Chancellery, the Propaganda Minister attacked former Foreign Minister von Neurath, who a few weeks earlier had been appointed Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia. Goebbels said: "Everyone knows von Neurath is a weak sneak. But what is needed in the Protectorate is a strong hand to keep order. This man has nothing in common with us; he belongs to an entirely different world." Hitler took issue with this. "Von Neurath was the only man for the job. In the Anglo-Saxon world he is considered a man of distinction. The international effect of his appointment will be reassuring because people will see in it my decision not to deprive the Czechs of their racial and national life."

Hitler asked me to report on my impressions of Italy. I had been most struck by the fact that the walls of even the villages were painted with militant propaganda slogans. "We don't need that," Hitler commented. "If it comes to a war, the German people are tough enough.

This kind of propaganda is another

Hitler had already addressed at the Municipal Hall. I had always been a fan of Hitler. In February 1938 he designed the picture gallery to make a speech.

But now, on the evening of the "West axis" in Berlin, the dedication. That and to make matter: dinner Hitler announced I can hardly wait to I

In the middle of the twenties of the city had the crowd massed by distance came cheering becoming a steady rhythm got out and greeted welcome of the dignified movie cameras began expectantly took up breath, then spoke report the completion itself!" There was a few sentences. Then down the five-mile long on his fiftieth birthday the Propaganda Minister seemed to me genuine

After we had reached

* In his speech to the Reichstag what he considered to be readiness: "Certain evidence shows the masses will way to redress this matter can't possibly let things

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This kind of propaganda may be all right for Italy. Whether it does any good is another question.*

Hitler had already asked me several times to deliver the opening address at the Munich Architectural Exhibition in his stead. Hitherto I had always been able to avoid such duties by a variety of pretexts. In February 1938 my evasions resulted in a kind of deal: I agreed to design the picture gallery and the stadium for Linz, if I did not have to make a speech.

But now, on the eve of Hitler's fiftieth birthday, a part of the "East-West axis" in Berlin was to be opened to traffic, with Hitler present at the dedication. That maiden speech could no longer be fended off—and to make matters worse in the presence of the Chief of State. At dinner Hitler announced: "A great event: Speer is making a speech. I can hardly wait to hear what he will say."

In the middle of the roadway, at the Brandenburg Gate, the dignitaries of the city had lined up, with me on the right wing and with the crowd massed behind ropes on the distant sidewalks. From the distance came cheers, swelling as Hitler's motorcade approached and becoming a steady roar. Hitler's car stopped right in front of me; he got out and greeted me by shaking hands, while responding to the welcome of the dignitaries merely by raising his arm briefly. Portable movie cameras began filming the scene from close up, while Hitler expectantly took up a position six feet away from me. I took a deep breath, then spoke these exact words: "*Mein Führer*, I herewith report the completion of the East-West axis. May the work speak for itself!" There was a protracted pause before Hitler replied with a few sentences. Then I was invited into his car and drove with him down the five-mile lane of Berliners who were paying tribute to him on his fiftieth birthday. No doubt it had taken an energetic effort by the Propaganda Ministry to bring this crowd here; but the applause seemed to me genuine.

After we had reached the Chancellery and were waiting to be

* In his speech to the editors in chief of the German press Hitler described what he considered to be the proper method of propaganda for creating war readiness: "Certain events should be presented in such a light that unconsciously the masses will automatically come to the conclusion: If there's no way to redress this matter pleasantly then it will have to be done by force; we can't possibly let things go on this way."

called to dinner, Hitler commented good-humoredly: "You put me in a fine fix with your two sentences. I was expecting a long speech and meant to use the time while you were talking to frame my answer, the way I usually do. But since you were finished so quickly, I didn't know what to say. Still I must grant you that it was a good speech. One of the best I have ever heard." In the following years this anecdote became part of his regular repertory, and he told it often.

At midnight the diners offered Hitler the proper congratulations. But when I told him that to celebrate the day I had set up a thirteen-foot model of his triumphal arch in one of the salons, he immediately left the party and hurried to the room. For a long time he stood contemplating with visible emotion the dream of his younger years, realized in this model. Overwhelmed, he gave me his hand without a word, and then, in a euphoric mood, lectured his birthday guests on the importance of this structure for the future history of the Reich. That night he returned to look at the model several times. On the way back and forth we would pass the former cabinet room where Bismarck had presided over the Congress of Berlin in 1878. Here Hitler's birthday presents were heaped up on long tables—pretty much a collection of kitsch sent by his Reichsleiters and Gauleiters: white marble nudes, small bronze casts of such well-known works as the Roman boy extracting a thorn from his foot, and oil paintings whose level matched the stuff exhibited in the House of Art. Hitler spoke well of some of the presents, made fun of others, but there was in fact not much difference between them.

Meanwhile matters had progressed between Hanke and Frau Goebbels to such a point that, to the horror of everyone in the know, they wished to marry. An ill-matched couple: Hanke was young and awkward, she was considerably older and a polished society woman. Hanke petitioned Hitler for his approval, but Hitler refused to allow the Goebbelses to divorce for *raison d'état*. At the beginning of the 1939 Bayreuth Festival, Hanke arrived at my house one morning in a state of despair. Magda and Joseph Goebbels had had a reconciliation, he reported, and gone to Bayreuth together. For my part I thought this was the happiest outcome for Hanke, too. But you cannot console a desperate lover with felicitations on his escape. I therefore promised him to find out what had happened in Bayreuth and left at once.

The Wagner family where Hitler and his guests were present. Hitler selected the festival, or even at the festival only a few guests would be sure would be present were almost always.

On this festival obviously felt at the festival to represent the festival to do even with the festival paternal to the children. Without Hitler been kept going. thousands of marks from the glory of the festival and as the friend of a dream which the festival dream.

Goebbels and I myself and, like I Goebbels looked was frightful, the beginning to recuperate. For three days longer stand it. He to take them away only for show. meet Karl private

What could he than, of all opera-bels, Frau Winifred box. Frau Goebbels performance. During trollably, in a corner to the window strenuously pretending. Next morning

The Wagner family had added a spacious wing to Haus Wahnfried, where Hitler and his adjutants stayed during the festival, while Hitler's guests were put up in private homes in Bayreuth. Incidentally, Hitler selected these guests more carefully than he did at Obersalzberg, or even at the Chancellery. Aside from the adjutants he invited only a few other persons with their wives, those he could be sure would be welcome to the Wagner family. Actually, these guests were almost always only Dr. Dietrich, Dr. Brandt, and myself.

On this festival days Hitler seemed more relaxed than usual. He obviously felt at ease in the Wagner family and free of the compulsion to represent power, which he sometimes thought himself obliged to do even with the evening group in the Chancellery. He was gay, paternal to the children, friendly and solicitous toward Winifred Wagner. Without Hitler's financial aid, the festival could scarcely have been kept going. Every year Bormann produced hundreds of thousands of marks from his funds in order to make the festival productions the glory of the German opera season. As patron of the festival and as the friend of the Wagner family, Hitler was no doubt realizing a dream which even in his youth he perhaps never quite dared to dream.

Goebbels and his wife had arrived in Bayreuth on the same day as myself and, like Hitler, had moved into the Wahnfried annex. Frau Goebbels looked very drawn. She spoke quite candidly with me: "It was frightful, the way my husband threatened me. I was just beginning to recuperate at Gastein when he turned up at the hotel. For three days he argued with me incessantly, until I could no longer stand it. He used the children to blackmail me; he threatened to take them away from me. What could I do? The reconciliation is only for show. Albert, it's terrible! I've had to swear never to meet Karl privately again. I'm so unhappy, but I have no choice."

What could have been more appropriate for this marital tragedy than, of all operas, *Tristan und Isolde*? Hitler, Herr and Frau Goebbels, Frau Winifred Wagner, and I heard it sitting in the big central box. Frau Goebbels, on my right, cried silently throughout the performance. During the intermission she sat, bowed and sobbing uncontrollably, in a corner of the salon, while Hitler and Goebbels went to the window to show themselves to the audience, both of them strenuously pretending to be unaware of the embarrassing episode.

Next morning I was able to explain to Hitler, who could not under-

stand Frau Goebbels's conduct, the background of the so-called reconciliation. As Chief of State he welcomed this turn of events, but in my presence he sent for Goebbels at once and in a few dry words informed him that it would be better if he left Bayreuth immediately with his wife. Without allowing him to reply, or even shaking hands with him, he dismissed the Propaganda Minister and then turned to me: "With women Goebbels is a cynic." He too was one, though in a different way.

WHENEVER HE CAME Hitler would partical headquarters of the dreds of years to con of Hitler. Just as the residence of the Fre minate in a group of political activities. I government were c Forces, where the pi services was concer mann), for protocc (Bouhler). The Rei but this in no way s to play any import chance that the ol there.

Jan 1938

28: Something about March

ONCE in 1937, Harald Quandt, now sixteen, tiptoes into his stepfather's study at Schwanenwerder and finds him writing in a diary. He sees three other diaries on the desk. Consumed by curiosity, in 1938 he picks the lock, rummages around, and finds one of the notebooks; to his disappointment the handwriting is illegible.¹

Joseph Goebbels has now filled sixteen such books, and he has begun a seventeenth, as usual with a motto: 'Don't look back, keep marching on!' This 1938 volume will cover 476 closely written pages.* Probably he himself no longer knows why he is writing a diary. Few diarists do. It would take a psychiatrist to explain the narcissistic self-pity, the recurring proclamations of dire physical exhaustion, and the broad hints at Magda's infidelities (which were clearly not intended for publication in this form.) The text is often stupefyingly banal, and he no longer reveals *all* to the diary that was once his 'dear therapeutic conscience.'² Thus the new 1938 volume will draw a veil across his politically subversive views, as well as his own familial misdemeanors. The diary tells us of his profound misgivings about Hitler's brinkmanship only *after* the Munich agreement has removed the threat of war; and we hear nothing of Lida Baarova at all.

THE first weeks of 1938 had brought an important reorganization of his ministry, originating in Hjalmar Schacht's replacement as minister of economics by Goebbels' Staatssekretär Walter Funk, a move which Goebbels himself had suggested.³ Funk had been the government's press spokesman, and Hitler appointed the party's press chief Otto Dietrich to the vacant position. 'I've just promoted you to Staatssekretär,' Hitler called out to Dietrich as he walked past. 'Minister Goebbels hasn't signed it yet, but he will—you can bank on that.'⁴ Goebbels moved swiftly—his dislike for Dietrich was by now notorious—and divided up Funk's old functions, promoting his trusted chief aide Karl Hanke to senior Staatssekretär along with Dietrich.⁵ To Hanke's old post as personal assistant Goebbels appointed at his recommendation on December 6, 1937 Dr

* Transcribed and annotated by the author on behalf of Arnaldo Mondadori Editore, Milan, this previously unknown Goebbels diary, February 11 to October 26, 1938, is published as *Der unbekannte Dr. Goebbels. Die geheimen Tagebücher 1938* by Focal Point, London, 1995.

Werner Naumann, the former chief of propaganda in Breslau.⁶

At the time, Naumann was only twenty-eight. Tall, slim, and athletic, he was a fanatical believer in National Socialism with the accent, where Goebbels too placed it, on the latter word. At seventeen he had already been concerned about the prevailing social injustices in Germany. A young man had invited him to a Nazi discussion evening and he had fallen in with them at once, joining the party late in 1928; in Berlin he had befriended Horst Wessel, and worked on Goebbels' propaganda staff in Berlin in 1929. Voluble and hard-working, self-assured but moody, Naumann would become Goebbels' closest confidant, outlasting all the others, and in the final days succeeding him as minister.⁷ His party record had in fact one serious flaw: In 1933 he had become commander of No. 9 S.A. Brigade in Stettin and at the time of the Röhm putsch he was an S.A. Standartenführer. After trying unsuccessfully to flee that day he was relieved of his command, and imprisoned for eight weeks accused of having known of the plot. 'Naumann,' his successor Friedrich spitefully reported, 'a §175er [homosexual], was introduced to Pomerania by Heines. He got No. 9 Brigade, Stettin, immediately. Heydebreck and Naumann were close friends.'⁸ (The S.A. commanders Heines, Heydebreck, and Spreti—all his friends—were shot.) Accused too of homosexuality and of permitting financial irregularities in his brigade Naumann had been expelled from the S.A., and then from the party on December 3, 1934. He had returned to university in 1935, studied oriental languages, and gained a doctorate in politics before being rehabilitated in 1936 when the principal accusations against him proved unfounded.

In his little speech introducing Hanke and Dietrich to their respective staffs, Goebbels made clear that Dietrich would have no say in the ministry, and that his preferred confidant was Hanke.⁹ His faith in Hanke, this handsome, dynamic Silesian, was unspoken and implicit. Hanke gained automatic in-and-out access to Hitler's chancellery.¹⁰ He was privy to Goebbels' tax affairs,¹¹ he had introduced him to the architect Albert Speer, he would undertake delicate missions for him.¹² Goebbels gave him the keys to his private dispatch box—an act of trust which ultimately led to his undoing, because Hanke became an even firmer friend and adviser of Magda too.

From now until 1945 Otto Dietrich was a thorn in Goebbels' flesh. He claimed to be not the subordinate of Reich minister Goebbels, as Staatssekretär, but his equal as Reichsleiter, with only Hitler having the authority to arbitrate between them; and since he was attached to Hitler's personal staff he—and not Goebbels—effectively controlled the essential political news output of the daily press. Nor was Goebbels' ministry later able to attach its own man to Hitler's headquarters as Ribbentrop, Rosenberg, and Göring had for example attached Hewel, Koeppen, Bodenschatz, and the military adjutants. The minister swore later that Dietrich was not even a real Reichsleiter—he had had a tailor run up a fantasy uniform for him as 'Reichspressechef' to which he had stitched

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The raise in invited others. Schwanenwerd Goldschmidt, d friend Dr Lipp forces Goldsch sale, Goebbels deco building, c into what he ca her tantrums. S explaining to M records to her.² à trois—as soo Schwanenwerde next door 'to ge

Naumann
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'We are all so happy,' he hypocritically informs his diary. 'The children are playing all around us. I am sitting in my new home in the next-door house. Deep snow lies round about. Slept in.'²⁶

Often that January of 1938 he drives out to Lanke where his villa is embedded in snow so deep that his new Maybach barely gets through. Is Lida out there? We don't know. Occasionally he drives into Berlin to see his family, to play some music, and deliberately lose a few hands of Black Peter to Helga before driving back to spend the night at Lanke or his ministry.²⁷ In his ministry too he is installing a little boudoir, so that he can devote more time to his work there; it is a tastefully furnished bachelor apartment with a bedroom, a bathroom, and an array of bell-pushes to inform his staff when he does not wish to be disturbed.²⁸

Simultaneously work will begin on the reconstruction of his official residence. On January 16 Hitler gives the go-ahead. The Goebbelses spend hours more or less happily poring over Professor Baumgarten's plaster model and blueprints; the funds are requisitioned, and on April 27 the wreckers and bricklayers move in. 'I say my farewells to these rooms I have loved so much,' writes Goebbels with false pathos: 'It really hurts. I clear things out and pack, and find manuscripts from my childhood that seem pretty ridiculous today. . . . So adieu, dear home! Now let the pickaxes swing.'²⁹

There is one snag. Lida Baarova wants to be no part of his planned ménage. Fearing that she is trapped, she momentarily goes to England to talk with the talent scouts that Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer have sent from Hollywood. Gustav Fröhlich persuades her to show them his photos too. Robert Taylor and Maureen O'Sullivan plead with her to leave Berlin. Nothing comes of it, but at the next gala gathering of the film world in the Kroll opera house in Berlin Goebbels will warn darkly that the German film industry is not a haven for Hollywood's cast-offs. 'If anybody else leaves for Hollywood,' he declares, 'they'll find they can't get back into Germany when they fail.'³⁰ Miss Baarova interprets this threat as directed against her. But Goebbels has others in his sights too, like Luise Ullrich, another popular star who has designs on Hollywood.³¹

Bulky with her new unborn child, Magda is stuck out at Schwanenwerder. She is hoping for another boy, to be called Hartmann or Harder.³² She seldom has enough funds for the household running costs and property taxes.³³ The purchase of the second property has strained their resources; early in 1938 Goebbels moves his mother in with Magda and there are always shoals of other house-guests. His visits to Schwanenwerder are punctuated by acrimonious scenes. The more he promotes his family-man image in the media however, the less time he actually seems to spend with them.³⁴

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HIS real close family was one man now, Adolf Hitler. More than once in January 1938 the Führer had long private consultations with Goebbels, on affairs well outside his fief—asking for example whom he should now appoint to the German embassies in Rome, Paris, and Bucharest

(Goebbels' appointment informed Goebbels was a 'zer Bismarck') now almost would receive Ludwig B. Fritsch as

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The crisis twenty-fifth unusually late.⁴¹ Hell that Blomberg photograph it was 'hair in a hideout the field marshal officer shot minister on bride (who

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the same badges of rank as a Reichsleiter; Hitler, said Goebbels, had good-naturedly allowed Dietrich his conceit.¹³ There is a ring of authenticity about the story.

As a storm rumbles and lashes the little lake at Lanke in August 1937, Goebbels finds it too melancholy there and drives back to Berlin where he sends for Lida's film *Patriots* once more.¹⁴ He and Magda are drifting apart. As in 1936, she stays away from the 1937 Nuremberg rally. Unhappy at the multiplying rumors of her husband's behavior, she accusingly sends him a copy of the communist *Red Flag* which contains the latest scandal. Goebbels splutters, 'A pack of bloody lies,' and buys her off with a silver coffee service.¹⁵ Despite all her doctor's warnings she has become pregnant again. Professor Walter Stoeckel, her gynecologist, urges her to withdraw entirely from social life and to rest out at Schwanenwerder.¹⁶ Goebbels spends more and more time out at Lanke, although Lida is not always there. Now approaching the apogee of her career, she often films in Prague as well as in Babelsberg.¹⁷ For whatever the reason Goebbels spends much of his time away from Magda and the children. His diary makes no explicit comment on this, but notes the days when he is with his home and family.¹⁸ No matter how late he arrives when visiting Schwanenwerder, he wraps his toddlers in blankets and shows them the latest movie. They become his best critics. He records Helga's cute praise for Mussolini, paying a state visit to Berlin: 'The other Führer's quite nice too!' she says.¹⁹

There is no doubt about his own favorite filmstar. In October 1937 he reads a film treatment of Dostoyevsky's novel *The Gambler*. The lead role goes to Lida Baarova. She signs up with the Tobis studios to play Rosalinde in a film version of *Die Fledermaus*. Simultaneously she makes a successful stage debut in Berlin, taking the title role in Hermann Bahr's *Josephine* in December. Goebbels rapturously leads the applause, and is enchanted all over again by his Liduschka's performance.²⁰ 'I have never loved another woman as much as you,' he confesses to her.

The raise in his ministerial salary has resolved some problems, but invited others.²¹ Magda has inspected a tempting neighboring lot at Schwanenwerder, Nos 12/14 Insel Strasse. It is owned by a Jew, Samuel Goldschmidt, director of the Goldschmidt-Rothschild bank.²² Goebbels' friend Dr Lippert, erstwhile editor of *Angriff* and now mayor of Berlin, forces Goldschmidt to sell it to the city for only 117,500 marks; after the sale, Goebbels emerges as the real purchaser.²³ He will rebuild this art deco building, converting its stables into a private cinema and the house into what he calls his *Burg* (citadel)—another refuge from Magda and her tantrums. Sometimes he will withdraw to his citadel with a guest, explaining to Magda with a heartless wink that he wants to play the latest records to her.²⁴ Thus all seems set in December 1937 for a ménage à trois—as soon as Lida is ready. On the eleventh he drives out to Schwanenwerder, talks things over with Magda, and decides to move next door 'to get some peace.'²⁵ They have been married for six years.

Jan 12, 1938

(Goebbels portentously started a card index for key future appointments).³⁵ When Hitler decided to replace his foreign minister he informed Goebbels two weeks before breaking it to the victim, Neurath.³⁶ Goebbels frankly warned him that Ribbentrop, the suggested successor, was a 'zero'.³⁷ When it came to naming their latest new battleship (the Bismarck) Hitler again consulted Goebbels.³⁸ During the major scandal now almost upon them, the Blomberg-Fritsch scandal, Hitler and Goebbels would be closeted together for hours on end. Surprisingly, Goebbels would recommend the ultra-conservative chief of general staff, General Ludwig Beck, against the radical Nazi Walther von Reichenau to succeed Fritsch as the army's commander-in-chief.³⁹

THE broad outlines of the Field Marshal Blomberg scandal are now well known. On December 14 the war minister, nearly sixty, had unblushingly revealed to Goebbels his intention of marrying a young girl of common stock. Seemingly not appreciating quite how common this twenty-four-year-old's stock had been, Goebbels wished him luck.⁴⁰ Both Hitler and Göring officiated as witnesses at the field marshal's hasty wedding on January 12 (the girl had told him she was pregnant).

The crisis burst upon them soon after. At Hitler's lunch table on the twenty-fifth Goebbels detected a certain tension in the air. Aided by an unusually jovial Göring he tried to cheer Hitler up, but it was already too late.⁴¹ Hellendorff, now police chief of Berlin, told his friend Goebbels that Blomberg's bride had a criminal record for peddling pornographic photographs featuring herself. He showed Goebbels the police dossier—it was 'hair raising.' Obviously Blomberg had landed Hitler and Göring in a hideous position. Goebbels was speechless with rage at the injury the field marshal had done to his idol. Twice he hinted that any honorable officer should shoot himself.⁴² But Blomberg merely resigned as war minister on the pretext of ill-health, and left on a world tour with his bride (who turned out not to be pregnant after all).

This was just the start of Hitler's problems. Who should succeed Blomberg? Göring? General von Fritsch? Himmler now charged that the latter, though the obvious candidate, had once been blackmailed as a closet homosexual. This scandalized Hitler. Since the Röhm affair, his eyes glazed at the slightest mention of homosexuality. Goebbels suggested that Hitler himself take over Blomberg's position, thus becoming supreme commander in one step.⁴³ Fritsch did not however stand aside without a fight. He denied the allegation of homosexuality, on his word as an officer, and he did not even crack under the Gestapo's grilling.⁴⁴ 'It's one man's word against another,' perceived Goebbels, fascinated by Hitler's dilemma: 'That of a homosexual blackmailer against that of the army's commander-in-chief.' But Hitler no longer trusted Fritsch, and there was the rub. Innocent or guilty, the general was doomed even though he refused, to Himmler's dismay, to confess.⁴⁵ 'Heydrich has conducted several all-night interrogations,' recorded Goebbels equally perplexed. 'Fritsch is taking it all on the chin, but standing up to him.'⁴⁶

Febr. 5, 1938

Goebbels' problems as propaganda minister were also beginning as juicy rumors washed around Berlin. He spent sleepless nights, he even saw Hitler in tears with worry.⁴⁷ He promised to keep the lid firmly on things. He suggested that it would help if Hitler chose now to carry out a reshuffle of both his Cabinet and armed forces. 'The damage that one woman can do!' gasped Goebbels, as the hit lists were drawn up. 'And that kind of woman too!'⁴⁸

Hitler announced his reshuffle to his ministers at eight P.M. on February 5, 1938. Goebbels' diary provides the only detailed record of this, the last formal Cabinet meeting ever held.⁴⁹ Struggling to do justice to both Blomberg and Fritsch and choking with emotion, Hitler spoke of the personal tragedies that had obliged them to resign. He announced that he himself would take over as supreme commander (as Goebbels had suggested).

For a few days the world's press seethed with fierce but ill-informed speculation—what Goebbels called 'horror stories.'⁵⁰ He directed his rough-and-ready lieutenant Berndt to scatter dust in the eyes of the press corps in Berlin.⁵¹ 'He had the nerve to tell us,' recorded an American journalist, 'that Blomberg's resignation was due solely to reasons of health (yet he was healthy enough to marry!)'⁵² To an equally skeptical Dutch pressman Berndt tactlessly flared, 'What would you say if our newspapers were to state that the baby just born to your royal family isn't really [Crown Princess] Juliana's baby!'⁵³ Unimpressed, the foreign journalists still churned out 'horror stories.' So Goebbels told Berndt to go the whole hog and plant rumors that Hitler intended invading France. The newshounds went yelping off after that scent instead. It all provided an interesting example of news-management. 'Anything is better than the truth,' reflected the propaganda minister, in a departure from his norm.⁵⁴

LAYING a second smoke screen Hitler briefly⁵⁵—as he imagined—and unexpectedly turned to Austria. He summoned Austria's chancellor Dr Kurt Schuschnigg to the Berghof on February 12. No formal record was taken of Hitler's blustering, ranting threats but he boasted with some relish to Goebbels afterward of how he had talked 'pretty tough' with Schuschnigg on a list of demands, and had threatened to get satisfaction by force ('guns speak louder than words').⁵⁶ 'It was not just an ultimatum,' summarized Goebbels. 'It was a threat of war. Schuschnigg was shattered.'⁵⁷ Under a secret protocol agreed between them Austria guaranteed to model her foreign and military policy on Germany's, and to call a truce in the press war; Schuschnigg was also to appoint the Austrian lawyer Arthur Seyss-Inquart (described by Goebbels as 'our man') as minister of the interior. In return Hitler agreed to refrain from interfering in Austria's domestic affairs.⁵⁸

Four days after the Berghof meeting, Schuschnigg's Cabinet agreed to Hitler's diktats. 'The world's press rages,' observed Goebbels, 'and speaks—not entirely unjustly—of rape.'⁵⁹ Hitler formally thanked Schuschnigg in the Reichstag on the twentieth. In private he added

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that he envisaged cutting a similar deal with Prague when the time came, although he warned Goebbels that the Czech president Edouard Beneš was a far more deadly opponent. 'a crafty, squinty-eyed little rat.'⁶⁰

For all his other sins, Hitler did adhere to the Berghof agreement. When two Austrian Nazi leaders visiting Munich on February 25 still talked of staging a coup, he forbade them to return.⁶¹ Schuschnigg was less scrupulous. After the newly re-emancipated Nazis staged big demonstrations in Graz and Vienna he called out the army against them, in violation of the agreement. Goebbels directed the German press to hold its tongue.⁶²

He had other things on his mind—principally the trial of Pastor Niemöller, arrested seven months earlier on sedition charges.⁶³ As the still overly conservative ministry of justice set aside a full two weeks for a public trial, all Goebbels' hatreds boiled over. 'Lawyers are all mentally defective,' he had written the year before.⁶⁴ He pleaded for a two- or three-day trial *in camera*, followed by Niemöller's swift and permanent removal from public view. Hitler himself had ruled that Niemöller was never to be turned loose again.⁶⁵ Was that not an edict simple enough for even the most petitfogging lawyer to understand? When the trial began on February 7, however, the court refused to impose reporting restrictions and allowed the pastor an entire day to reminisce about his career.⁶⁶ Goebbels persuaded the court to go into closed session. At this Niemöller's lawyers walked out.⁶⁷

These were the kind of tactics that Goebbels himself had used against the catspaw courts of the Weimar regime, and now, used against him, they stung. When a brave civil servant, Ernst Brandenburg, testified for the pastor, Goebbels had him dismissed from the party.⁶⁸ On March 2 the judges handed down a derisory sentence on Niemöller, allowing his immediate discharge. Exploding with wrath, Goebbels released only the briefest press notice.⁶⁹ Hitler directed Himmler to have the pastor removed by a back door from the courthouse and taken straight to Oranienburg concentration camp. 'He won't be set free again,' triumphed Goebbels.⁷⁰

HIMMLER's organs did have their uses. Mostly however Goebbels gave a wide berth to the Reichsführer now. 'His entire being breathes sterility,' he decided. 'He is a little man without an ounce of style. Ignore.'⁷¹ When Reinhard Heydrich, Himmler's executive chief, started sniping at Taubert, the minister fired off a terse rebuke. The police, he noted, might poke their nose in elsewhere, 'but not here!'⁷² Once, Helldorff warned him against his personal assistant Fritz Ehrhardt, pointing out that he also held the rank of Hauptsturmführer (captain) in Himmler's security service, the S.D. 'When I became police chief of Berlin,' explained Helldorff, 'I removed from my staff every S.S. officer who was working for the S.D. I advise you to do the same.'⁷³

Goebbels' doubt about whether Himmler had any code of ethics was

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March 10, 1938

soon resolved. After Helldorff revealed something of the Gestapo's spying techniques, Goebbels exclaimed in his diary, 'We're heading toward a world of informers and sneaks.'⁷⁴ Helldorff, Hanke, and Lutze told Goebbels that everybody was now surrounded by a vast network of Gestapo informers. All this informing—which seemed particularly to worry him—was not only stupid but despicable. 'It just begets cowardice, terror, and hypocrisy,' he felt. 'I just can't believe it all,' he wrote on March 1. 'The [Gestapo] methods in the fight against Fritsch are not very honorable.' The case exposed Himmler in all his treachery. The general had demanded a court martial to clear his name. The pre-trial investigation threw a most unsavory light on Gestapo methods. 'They can prove hardly anything against him,' wrote Goebbels. 'They should never have dragged in the Führer.'⁷⁵ Hitler expressed to him serious concern about the investigation. Goebbels learned that it was not going at all smoothly.⁷⁶ Goltz, now acting for the general, had established beyond doubt that the Gestapo had cynically framed him using the dossier of an army captain *Frisch*.

This really was a horror story, and it all came out when the court martial, which had been convened on March 10 and immediately adjourned (as we shall see), was resumed on the seventeenth. Goebbels wrote: 'The entire thing seems to be based on mistaken identity. Very nasty,' he wrote, adding with unconcealed satisfaction, 'above all for Himmler. . . . The Führer's quite annoyed.'⁷⁷ Fritsch was acquitted. Hitler sent him a handwritten apology and handsomely exonerated him in a speech to his generals.⁷⁸ Goebbels was delighted, both for Fritsch's sake and because it was 'a terrible put-down for Himmler.'⁷⁹

THE Fritsch trial had been held over from March 10, 1938 by dramatic new developments.

In the last few days Hitler and Goebbels had paid remarkably little attention to Austria; their private conversations had gyrated around Czechoslovakia instead. 'The Führer is pleased to see Prague being so intransigent,' Goebbels had recorded. 'All the more surely will she be torn to pieces one day.'⁸⁰ When Schuschnigg on March 9 broadcast his plan to hold a referendum on the Berghof agreement, Goebbels, diverted by a farewell party at the ministry for Funk, rated it merely a 'rotten trick.'⁸¹ Hitler however had seen his golden opportunity. He summoned Goebbels out of a meeting with editors later that evening: Over at the chancellery the minister found Göring called in too. By staging his 'stupid and crass plebiscite,' Hitler snorted, Schuschnigg was trying to outsmart them. Goebbels was fired by Hitler's enthusiasm for action. He suggested they send a thousand planes over Austria to drop leaflets, then 'actively intervene.'⁸²

His newly found 1938 diary makes clear how closely he consulted with Hitler over the next hours and days. In deliberations that would last until five A.M. on Thursday the tenth Hitler mapped out his 'very drastic' plans to Goebbels and the Austrian general Edmund von Glaise-Horstenaus.

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The latter, a Nazi, had been foisted on Schuschnigg's Cabinet by the Berghof agreement. He paled at the possible consequences of a German invasion, but not Hitler. 'He believes the hour has come,' wrote Goebbels. 'Just wants to sleep on it. Says that Italy and Britain won't do anything. . . . That the risk isn't as great as it was when we occupied the Rhineland.' Only France's reaction was unpredictable. After dozing for two hours, however, Goebbels awoke to the news that France's prime minister had resigned over unrelated domestic issues. That clinched it. 'Tally-ho,' he whooped. 'The imponderables are melting away.' Called over to the chancellery again that Thursday (the tenth) he found a hunched Führer, now brooding over maps.

They had two days before Schuschnigg's proposed referendum. Goebbels suggested this scenario: the two tame Austrian Nazis, Seyss-Inquart and Glaise-Horstenau, should stipulate that the referendum be based on the 1935 Saar referendum statute. Schuschnigg would of course refuse. The two Nazis would resign on Friday. On Saturday the Luftwaffe would send six to eight hundred planes to drop leaflets calling on the Austrian people to arise. 'The people do so. And on Sunday we march in.' S.A. Obergruppenführer Hermann Reschny, who had four thousand embittered Austrian 'legionnaires' (exiled Nazis) standing by, predicted that Schuschnigg's troops would open fire. But now there was no stopping Hitler. 'There has always been something about March,' mused Goebbels, setting his printing presses rolling. 'It has been the Führer's lucky month so far.'

At midnight Hitler sent for him again. He was speeding things up. The Wehrmacht would invade Austria on Saturday, not Sunday, and push straight through to Vienna. He himself would follow. 'In eight days'—this was Goebbels' sober estimate, with all the bloodshed that it implied—'Austria will be ours.'

The few remaining hours saw him at his best. At his desk until four A.M., he dictated leaflets, placards, and circulars and arranged with Heydrich for a police guard on the printing works—nobody was to be allowed out until the tanks began to move.⁸³ Once, Magda came briefly with the children to see their absentee father. At eight A.M. on Friday Hitler reviewed the leaflets. As the hours ticked away, Hitler, Göring, and Goebbels put their heads together, hatching plans on how to effect the actual Anschluss, political union with Austria. 'The Führer must be popularly elected as [Austria's] federal president as well,' was Goebbels' idea, 'and thereafter bring about the Anschluss little by little.' To legalize the invasion Seyss-Inquart would have to send a telegram from Vienna appealing for Wehrmacht troops. Hitler, Goebbels, and Göring dictated a suitable text. 'It arrives here soon after,' wrote Goebbels, somewhat prematurely, 'and thus we have the legitimation we need.'⁸⁴

The German troops rolled into Austria on Saturday March 12. Leaving Göring and Goebbels in Berlin, Hitler set off to follow them. Not a shot was fired.

The Austrians' overwhelming reception of the 'invaders' stunned even

Goebbels. Tears streaming down his cheeks he sat up until three A.M. listening to the radio broadcasts of the emotional scenes. Again and again Horst Wessel's hymn blared forth. Hitler and the rump Austrian Cabinet decided on Anschluss forthwith, which settled that problem. Thereafter things moved at breakneck speed. The Jewish-controlled newspapers in Vienna were banned—the Jews themselves were already routed, stampeding toward those few frontiers that still opened for them ('Where to?' commented Goebbels maliciously. 'As Wandering Jews into Nothingness').⁸⁵ Together with Lida Baarova and her bosom friend Hilde Körber, Goebbels sat glued to the radio in Veit Harlan's house on the afternoon of March 14 listening to the excited commentary as Hitler entered Vienna.⁸⁶ The forlorn British and French protests tailed away, blotted out by the totally unexpected sounds of jubilation from Austria.

To consolidate his masterstroke, Hitler called a joint Austrian-German referendum for April 10. Goebbels established a Reich Propaganda Amt (agency) in Vienna, shipped fifty thousand cheap Volks radios there to facilitate the referendum campaign, and prepared an epic reception for Hitler's return to Berlin. This was not easy because, at Berndt's request—he had deputized for Goebbels in Austria—the propaganda minister had just sacrificed Berlin's entire stock of flags and banners for Hitler's entry to Vienna.⁸⁷ But when the Führer landed back in Berlin at five P.M. on the sixteenth Goebbels outdid himself. He and Göring sat proudly in the Führer's open car as it slowly drove through the cheering millions to the chancellery.⁸⁸

The speed of events was now almost frightening. Unrolling maps, Hitler discussed with Goebbels and chief engineer Fritz Todt the new autobahns for Austria, and the rebuilding of his native Linz.⁸⁹ 'Astounding, the fresh plans he is already hatching,' wrote Goebbels—and it is clear that it was not just bricks and concrete that both men had in mind.⁹⁰

FOR a few days, after Warsaw had issued a short-fused ultimatum to Lithuania over disputed territories, Hitler stood by to claw back Memel—it is now Klaipeda—a little strip of once-German territory annexed years before by Lithuania.⁹¹ Nothing came of it, and the next major victim was to be Czechoslovakia.

Goebbels had long known that this was so.⁹² After the chief of the Czech general staff had boasted of how their fortifications would allow time for their allies to act, Goebbels pityingly commented: 'Poor fool!'⁹³ Several times he delivered to Prague's envoy in Berlin, Dr Vojtech Mastný, lofty homilies on the follies of allowing German émigrés to slander Hitler from the false sanctuary of Prague.⁹⁴ He knew all Hitler's plans. On March 19 the Führer invited him upstairs to his little study in the Reich chancellery, laid out a map of central Europe, and plotted their next moves, each man egging the other on. Germany would tackle Czechoslovakia next, Hitler confirmed. 'We'll share that with the Poles and Hungarians,' recorded Goebbels afterwards: 'And without further ado.' ('We are a boa constrictor, still digesting,' he added, as though apologizing

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to the diary for the necessary delay.) Then, the two men agreed, Germany would strike north-east into the Baltic countries, and west into Alsace and Lorraine. 'Just let France wallow deeper and deeper into her crisis,' he wrote. 'Let there be no false sentimentality.' How he admired Hitler. 'How stirring it is when he says his one desire is to live to see with his own eyes this great German, Teutonic Reich.'⁹⁵

Hearing that Göring, now a field marshal, had incautiously reassured Mastný about the sanctity of Czechoslovakia's frontier, Goebbels was distraught. 'Guaranteeing their frontiers! That's right out of line.'⁹⁶ A few days later, on March 24, Hitler repeated his innermost intentions to Goebbels and his new foreign minister Ribbentrop. 'The Führer declares,' recorded Goebbels, 'that he wants to adjust our frontier with France one day, but not that with Italy. He particularly does *not* want to reach the Adriatic. Our ocean lies to the north and east. A country cannot throw its weight in two directions at once. If it does, it will split in two.'⁹⁷

His diary reveals the cynical instructions which Hitler now issued to the Sudeten German leader Konrad Henlein: 'Keep demanding more than Prague can deliver. That will set the ball rolling.'⁹⁸

Thus the time-bomb began to tick beneath the Czechs. 'They haven't the foggiest notion of whom the bell is tolling for,' Goebbels chortled. And he repeated: 'Poor fools!'⁹⁹

HE had printed seven trainloads of propaganda material to persuade the voters, and his well-tempered election machinery began to hum. Only the actual ballot form proposed by Frick upset him. 'People can vote either Yes or No at will,' he observed. 'We didn't have that the last time'—in March 1936.¹⁰⁰ Hitler promised to look into it, but the final ballot still had space for a No vote.

Late in March 1938 the two men opened their separate campaigns, speaking in dozens of cities until their throats were sore and their vocal chords ached, and phoning each other each night to bandy details of their rhetorical triumphs. Goebbels spoke in Hanover, Dresden, and Vienna. 'To those who ask, "Why another plebiscite?"', he roared in Vienna's Nordwestbahnhof, decorated with huge swastika banners, 'we reply that we must put the world face to face with such an overwhelming vote as to close its mouth.'¹⁰¹ At Breslau, to ensure a capacity audience, his ministry announced that his speech would not be broadcast (but it was).¹⁰²

Soon the first results began to come in—Germans overseas casting their votes aboard German passenger liners in harbor gave Hitler ninety-nine percent backing.¹⁰³ The main ballot was to be on April 10, 1938. On the morning before that—proclaimed by Goebbels as the Day of the Grossdeutsches Reich—he took Hitler to Vienna's city hall for another brilliantly stage-managed pageant. As twenty thousand carrier pigeons fluttered up into the biting cold skies, as sirens wailed, and as the Luftwaffe's squadrons thundered over the rooftops, Hitler stepped out onto the balcony.¹⁰⁴ Vienna went wild. After supper, the crowds began

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to chant—no doubt wholly spontaneously—‘Dearest Führer, please won’t you / bring our Doctor out there too!’ Not doubting the outcome of the vote, Hitler told Goebbels he was planning to put Schuschnigg on trial. He would of course commute any death sentence that resulted. (‘Pity,’ observed Goebbels. ‘What has to be, has to be!’)¹⁰⁵ The next morning, as their train back to Berlin passed through Leipzig, Hitler mused out loud about the Jewish problem. He planned, he said, to ship them all off to, say, Madagascar—the first recorded reference by him to this scheme. Madagascar of course was French, but an hour later he reiterated that one day he was going to settle France’s hash too. ‘His life’s burning ambition,’ realized Goebbels.¹⁰⁶

They arrived back in Berlin at one-thirty P.M. It was now election day. Magda was waiting. The cameras whirled as their children handed over posies of flowers to Hitler, and they cast their own votes at a booth on the station concourse.

The voting results revealed a unanimity of almost embarrassing proportions for the new Grossdeutsches Reich. In Austria 99·75 percent of all voters had cast their ballots for Hitler; in Germany, 99·08 percent (Saxony had let them down). From Paris, London, and Prague a shocked silence greeted this extraordinary display of democracy running amok.¹⁰⁷

‘Germany,’ commented Goebbels, ‘has conquered an entire nation with the ballot paper.’¹⁰⁸

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T^{HA}_{five}_{thr} academy, w audience-ar He was a June 1937 h he called ‘a exhibition. / given him li exhibition b Hitler autho to stage an e Ziegler, a ra works of Ge Reich, provi bition.⁴ It op a gigantic s deadly blow. Rosenberg, ! protect, but ! purge all the The conce nt was stunning pinned the b has been abl to obscure al methods well circulate amo Professor / forked out si Hitler’s appro bels drafted a pensation.⁷ T the foreign cu million peopl Germany and

29: The Gambler

THAT Anschluss vote was the crowning achievement of his first five years as minister, but already he was preoccupied with other things. On March 18 Hitler signed a decree setting up a new film academy, which would offer courses on film history, propaganda, and audience-analysis—a subject close to his heart.¹

He was also preparing his onslaught on Junk Art (*entartete Kunst*). In June 1937 he had been shown some sorry examples of what at that time he called 'artistic bolshevism,' and he had begun planning a mocking exhibition. At first the mortified and effete world of art connoisseurs had given him little encouragement.² Speer had offered to help him stage the exhibition but later even he balked and changed his mind.³ On June 29 Hitler authorized Goebbels to confiscate all such works in all museums to stage an exhibition. Goebbels immediately instructed Professor Adolf Ziegler, a radical professor of art in Munich, to 'select and secure all works of German decadent art and sculpture since 1910 in German Reich, provincial, or municipal possession' for the purposes of the exhibition.⁴ It opened in Munich in July 1937. 'The "Junk Art" exhibition is a gigantic success,' recorded Goebbels on the twenty-fourth, 'and a deadly blow. The Führer stands fast at my side against all enmities.' Hess, Rosenberg, Speer, and other Nazis all had favorite artists they tried to protect, but Goebbels was merciless; the next day he phoned Ziegler to purge all the museums—'It will take three months, then we're clean.'⁵ The concentrated effect of so much that was grotesque and avant-garde was stunning. Although only six of the 112 exhibits were by Jews, Hitler pinned the blamed on them in his introduction to the catalogue: 'Jewry has been able,' he wrote, 'largely by exploiting its position in the press, to obscure all normal ideas of the nature and function of art.' Using methods well proven in the years of struggle, Goebbels hired actors to circulate among the crowds feigning disgust at the works on display.

Professor Ziegler told Goebbels that the Weimar government had forked out six million Gold marks to purchase this Junk Art.⁶ With Hitler's approval, and over the objections of Rust and Rosenberg, Goebbels drafted a law formally confiscating all of such works without compensation.⁷ The Reich sold them off to less discerning nations and used the foreign currency to buy in real Old Masters.⁸ Seen eventually by three million people, the junk art exhibition would visit thirteen cities in Germany and Austria, exhibiting works by Otto Dix, Emil Nolde, and

May 2, 1938

Oskar Kokoschka. A typical item was Kirchner's *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, showing him holding up a bloodied stump instead of a hand ('an insult to German heroes,' read the exhibition's tag). Georg Grosz's similar indictments of war were branded a deliberate sabotage of national defense.

THE glorious reunification of Germany and Austria has mellowed Goebbels and his platinum blonde wife. Foreign diplomats often speculate on his replacement, and rumors about his personal life abound.⁹ But often it is just like old times for them. He spends several Sundays out at Schwanenwerder with her. For a few days she has to go to the clinic—her heart is playing up again as the final weeks of this, her seventh pregnancy, begin to tell on her. 'I soon comfort her,' he records.¹⁰ Perhaps this is the occasion when he confesses that he does not find it easy to remain faithful, except now because Magda is pregnant.¹¹ Magda blissfully repeats these lines to her venomous sister-in-law Ello and adds, starry-eyed, 'Joseph and I are now just as close to one another as ever.'

He is probably telling the truth. Lida Baarova is being difficult. He visits Lanke twice alone in April; he plays the piano, sleeps, walks, indulges in some pistol practice, then repeats in his diary, 'I am all alone out here.'¹² On May 2 he leaves Magda to accompany Hitler on his state visit to Italy. 'I give her a gold medallion bearing my likeness,' he records. 'The dear thing cries at our parting.'¹³

As they waited for their limousines at the chancellery Hitler told him that he hoped to conclude a firm alliance with Mussolini which would keep him out of the anti-German front that London and Paris were cooking up.¹⁴

There is little point in dwelling on their week-long visit to Italy. Goebbels' newly discovered diary confirms anew the Nazis' contempt for monarchies. All were grimly agreed: 'Never again a monarchy!'¹⁵ The king of Italy treated Hitler's ministers like shoeshine boys, in Goebbels' words. 'This entire pack of royal toadies: Shoot the lot! They make you sick. They treat us as parvenus! ... Here's a tiny clique of princes who seem to think Europe belongs to them.'¹⁶ As for the Italian people, Goebbels observed that they seemed easily enthused. 'But only the future can show whether they will stand fast when push comes to shove.'¹⁷

Mussolini's study, Goebbels afterward found, was oppressively large, furnished with just one monolithic desk and a globe. In two long secret meetings with the Italian dictator on May 4, Hitler told him in confidence of his plans in the east.¹⁸ So far, so good, he indicated to Goebbels later that day: he had thanked the Duce for helping him get Austria, and promised to repay the favor. 'Over Czechoslovakia,' noted Goebbels, 'Mussolini has given us a totally free hand.' (Hitler had hinted in a secret letter to the Duce just before the Anschluss that he was going to deal with the Czechs next.) The final outcome was, as Goebbels put it, a

military all hoped.¹⁹

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WHILE ON signal forn P.M. that d suggested, will decide instead—A Gabler.²³

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May 20, 1938

military alliance of sorts—though not one on paper as Hitler would have hoped.¹⁹

The Führer rewarded Mussolini immediately. At their final banquet he ceremonially guaranteed their existing frontier, thus writing off the South Tyrol for ever. 'But it is correct,' conceded Goebbels lamely, as their train headed back north through Italy. 'And things won't work out otherwise.'²⁰ Through the train windows Goebbels fancied he could see clusters of weeping South Tyroleans whom his Führer had just betrayed.²¹ In Florence Mussolini took his leave of Hitler with the words: 'There is no power on earth that can drive us apart.'²²

WHILE on board the Italian flagship Conte Cavour Hitler has handed a signal form to Goebbels. Magda has given birth to another girl at two P.M. that day, May 5. 'Since today is our Navy Day,' Mussolini pompously suggested, 'You might name her "Marina".' Goebbels merely grins. He will decide at first to call the infant Hertha, but shortly opts for Hedda instead—Magda's mother has just seen a fine performance of *Hedda Gabler*.²³

A week passes before he is back in Berlin and sets eyes on his fourth daughter. Magda has had a difficult confinement. 'What women go through for children!' he sympathizes in his diary, and drives straight out to spend the next two nights at Lanke.²⁴ Perhaps her delivery has released him from his self-imposed constraints. Whatever; at his lakeside villa he plays music, reads, and relaxes, then lazes, reads some more, takes out the motor launch, basks in the sun, and enjoys 'some music and parlover,' so he is evidently not alone. By thought association his next diary entry mentions his spouse—'Magda is okay.'²⁵

The next five weeks probably destroy any illusions that Magda may have cherished. True, Goebbels writes about making plans with her for the future, but it is not certain that that future actually *includes* her.²⁶ There are bitter rows between them. Over the next five weeks he registers eleven 'parlavers' with her²⁷—and unequal bouts they must have been, conducted between Goebbels with all his rhetorical skills and his less sophisticated wife, with her Belgian convent accent still clinging thickly to her vowels and consonants. Probably Lida Baarova is the cause, because he has been out to Lanke again twice in mid-May before fetching mother and baby Hedda home from the maternity clinic on the seventeenth—and he goes out there again on May 20. His infatuation with Lida is now at its zenith. He spends so many hours on the phone to her that Goring's wiretappers have to assign extra staff to monitoring her line (because she is a Czech and thus a potential enemy alien).²⁸ The Gestapo is also involved. He meets Lida at Hilde Körber's villa in Grunewald, No. 1a Lassen Strasse; but she too is a Czech, and her nine-year-old son Thomas will remember Goebbels sending him to keep a look-out for Gestapo cars from the window.²⁹ Eventually Hitler mentions this to Goebbels and suggests he break off the affair—but it is only this security aspect that bothers him.³⁰

May 20, 1938

On the day after Goebbels once more visits Lanke in mid-June, he, Magda, and his sister all 'talk things over' in a little pub in Berlin's West End.³¹ Only twice in all those weeks does he escort Magda to public functions, in Charlottenburg (the diary logs another row that night), and Vienna: On their way back from Vienna, he sets her down in Dresden, where she is to take a cure lasting several weeks at her regular clinic. 'A heartfelt farewell,' writes Goebbels, and drives straight out to Lanke again.³² That summer one of the two swans on their little lake died. 'It's an omen,' says Lida. 'It's all over.'³³

scene

Magda puts up with all this only for so long. Once in his absence she spends an evening with Hitler and hints at these problems. Embarrassed, the Führer refuses to listen. Magda sniffs afterward to Ello, 'Once a corporal, always a corporal!'³⁴

While Magda is away in Dresden, Goebbels resolves to choose once and for all between her and Lida. It is not an easy choice. He spends a week that July out at Lanke, evidently alone. He decides not to allow anybody to visit.³⁵ Once after strolling through the rain-soaked woods he writes the exclamation 'Melancholy!' in his diary.³⁶ Visiting Schwanenwerder and the children, he takes girls out for boat trips a couple of times, but unforecast stormclouds are threatening his love life.³⁷ He is sleeping badly, his head in a whirl. On July 8, 1938, his diary suddenly erupts without warning: 'I've got such worries. They're fit to burst my heart.'³⁸

Goebbels invites Karl Hanke to talk sense into her. Hanke, over two years her junior, pampers Magda and teaches her how to ride; she blossoms in his company. But by no means is he blindly loyal to his minister. For Hanke, it is *Tristan and Isolde*. He sees Magda as a dreadfully wronged woman. A man of unquestionable courage, he becomes her knight in shining armor. Sexually there is probably nothing between them—she is far above this engine-driver's son in social station.³⁹ But she instinctively sees that with his unrestricted access to her husband's private mail Hanke may become a useful ally. He promises to keep his eyes open. Goebbels' problems are only just beginning.

HE often spoke with Hitler about the future. Seeking ways to thwart any restoration of the monarchy, Hitler had hinted in Cabinet early in 1937 at the creation of a constitutional senate to elect his successor when the time came.⁴⁰ Germany must remain a Führer state, he told Goebbels after their visit to Italy.⁴¹ 'The Senate,' predicted Goebbels in June 1938, 'will soon be nominated and convened. It will be incumbent on it to elect each Führer.' Three hours after that the S.A., S.S., and armed forces would swear allegiance to him.⁴² (No such elective senate was ever appointed however, as the turbulent events of that summer eventually led directly to war.)

Many of Goebbels' measures were already predicated on a coming war.⁴³ Meeting his new military liaison officer, Bruno Wentscher, on the last day of July he drew heavily on quotations from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*

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to back his views. 'We soon see eye to eye,' he wrote.⁴⁴ Beginning with Breslau, Goebbels erected thousands of loudspeakers in city streets so that he could address the multitudes at the flick of a switch. There was to be no escape from his relentless propaganda. He ordered German radio to extend its broadcasting hours until three A.M. to discourage Hitler's subjects from listening to foreign stations—a prospect that would soon become almost an obsession in Goebbels. Meanwhile he labored to increase movie receipts. Although he had not been able to prevent some resounding flops like Karl Ritter's *Capriccio*—Hitler called it 'premium-grade crap,' and Goebbels found it 'trivial, boring, frivolous, and devoid of style'⁴⁵—there were some box-office hits like *The Holm Murder Case*, filmed with police assistance, and Riefenstahl's now complete two-part film of the Olympics, a stunning work of cinematic art which premiered on Hitler's birthday in Berlin.⁴⁶ He proudly appeared at that premiere with Lida Baarova, not Magda, at his side.⁴⁷

Benevolent and brutal alike, Goebbels was adopting the airs of a Renaissance patron. He paid Riefenstahl a one-hundred-thousand-mark bonus from his secret funds.⁴⁸ He pruned the excessive salaries paid to some filmstars and doubled or even trebled others.⁴⁹ The world of music too trembled at his whim. Should the singing of Schubert's or Schumann's lieder be allowed at Viennese music festivals (the words were by Jews)? Goebbels decided that they should.⁵⁰ After hearing Richard Strauss conduct in Düsseldorf, he nodded to the great composer, as a hint that he was *persona grata* again ('He has now done penance enough').⁵¹ In August 1938 an author annoyed him: Goebbels had him incarcerated in a concentration camp, and brought back in a month later. 'A final warning! . . . One more transgression and he's for the high jump. Now we both know that.'⁵²

OTHER capitals followed Berlin's example in evicting the Jews from cultural life. Rome fired Jews from teaching posts. Warsaw enacted anti-Jewish nationality laws. In Bucharest the short-lived prime minister Octavian Goga forbade Jews to hire young female domestic staff.⁵³ 'The Jews,' applauded Goebbels, 'are fleeing in every direction. But nobody wants to let them in. Where to dump this scum?' He felt that he had the people behind him in hounding the Jews. 'You've got to knock out a few front teeth,' he reasoned, 'then talk.'⁵⁴ He had squelched earlier plans by Streicher to plaster Jewish businesses with garish placards naming people caught shopping there.⁵⁵ But he ordered that Jews be excluded from bidding for public works contracts in March 1938.⁵⁶ And talking with Hitler he argued that the Jews and the ethnic Czechs should be squeezed out of Vienna—'That way we shall be solving the housing shortage too.'⁵⁷ That a wave of suicides swept through the despairing Viennese Jews left him unmoved. 'It used to be the Germans killing themselves,' he recorded. 'Now the boot's on the other foot.'⁵⁸

Inspired by Vienna's example, he planned with Count von Helldorff, Berlin's police chief, a concerted effort to evict the Jews from the city.

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They outlined to Hitler in April various ways of harassing them, including restricting them to designated swimming pools, cinemas, and eating places, and identifying Jewish shops and businesses as such.⁵⁹ 'We'll put an end to Berlin's image as a happy hunting ground for Jews,' Goebbels privately swore. 'Madagascar would be the best place for them.' Hitler, who was less keen, asked them to wait until after his state visit to Italy in May. Helldorff arrested the first three hundred Jews on a pretext early in June; but then he went on leave and to Goebbels' dismay his legal staff released them all, apart from a handful with known criminal records.⁶⁰ (Helldorff's antisemitism was only skin-deep; a few weeks later Heydrich learned to his disgust that Helldorff had a Jewish dentist.)⁶¹ Recalling the count from leave, Goebbels explained that the object was to hound the Jews out of Berlin.⁶² He also spoke directly to audiences of police officers, expounding this policy. Hitler meanwhile had left Berlin to summer in Bavaria.

To coordinate the persecution with Goebbels' gau HQ, on June 13 Helldorff set up a special Jewish section (Dezernat).⁶³ Over the next few days, in a copybook harassment operation, the Berlin police rounded up 1,122 criminal, 445 'anti-social', and seventy-seven foreign Jews found without proper papers; sixty-six were imprisoned, 1,029 were thrown into concentration camps, the rest detained for days in police cells. Helldorff imposed steep fines on those found to have been disregarding Nazi price-fixing laws. Meanwhile his police seized 250 Jewish-owned automobiles pending safety tests; he also demanded that Jews give up their adopted German names, particularly those that implied aristocratic birth.⁶⁴ There were inevitably distressing scenes, some photographed by British newspapermen; Goebbels had their films confiscated.⁶⁵ Meanwhile Nazi hooligans placarded shops wherever their owners were Jews. As the uglier side of human nature came to the fore, even Helldorff asked Goebbels to call a halt, saying that 'unsavory elements' were getting out of hand, under the party's mantle.

It seems that Goebbels had under-estimated the gusto with which the Berlin lumpenproletariat would wade into the city's Jews if given half a chance. Belatedly he tried to apply the brakes.⁶⁶ In the light of later events his diary entry of June 22, 1938 deserves quoting:

The Jewish problem in Berlin has now got complicated. Probably at Helldorff's instigation the party smeared graffiti all over the Jewish shops. . . . There has been some looting too. Gypsies and other under-world elements have moved in on it. I have had them all thrown into concentration camps. Helldorff did precisely the reverse of what I ordered: I had said that the police were to act within the law, with the party just standing by as onlookers. The opposite happened. I summon all the party authorities and issue new orders. There are to be no illegal acts.

'Anyway,' he reflected, 'this type of rough justice does have its blessings. The Jews have been given one hell of a fright and they'll probably think

* Helldorff makes a secret fortune from underhand favours to rich Jews

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twice now before regarding Berlin as their Eldorado.⁶⁷

Göring was pained by the antisemitic excesses of June 1938, but Goebbels was unrepentant: 'The fight against the Jews goes on, with legal means, right to the last rung of the gallows.'⁶⁸ Although his handwritten diary and Helldorff's report leave no doubt that he had personally instigated the anti-Jewish drive of June 1938, he added a highly deceitful entry reading: 'Operation Jew has now died down. A police major and a Kreisleiter were to blame. . . . I take firm action to prevent a recurrence.'⁶⁹ He also righteously directed Helldorff to investigate reports that Jews were being manhandled at Sachsenhausen concentration camp.⁷⁰

Discomfited by the unfavorable foreign press reactions, Ribbentrop buttonholed him at the Kaiserhof hotel. Goebbels promised to tread more softly.⁷¹ A few days later, at Bayreuth, he carefully recorded that the Führer 'endorsed' (*billigt*) his Berlin operation. 'It is immaterial what the foreign press writes,' added Goebbels. 'The main thing is to squeeze out the Jews. Ten years from now they must all have been removed from Germany. But for the time being we intend to keep the Jews here—as pawns.'⁷²

DURING March 1938 Hitler had laid plans to seize the whole of Czechoslovakia, using the problems of the German minority as a pretext. He had directed the Sudeten German leader Henlein to state impossible demands. In April Henlein had warned Goebbels about the strength of the Czech fortifications.⁷³ Hitler told Goebbels to invite twenty thousand Sudeten Germans to the Breslau gymnastics display that summer.⁷⁴ On May 2, Goebbels had directed his newspapers to start the propaganda campaign, pouring oil on the already flickering flames.⁷⁵ Ribbentrop, alarmed, complained to both Hitler and Goebbels, but neither cared. 'Ribbentrop's a typical groveler,' scoffed Goebbels, enjoying every moment of his newfound strategic importance.⁷⁶ The first blood flowed as Czech gendarmes shot dead two Sudeten Germans on May 21 near Eger. In the ensuing uproar, Prague mobilized troops, while London and Paris taunted Hitler for inactivity: He bided his time down at the Berghof. Then, claiming the Führer's backing, Goebbels let the full press campaign rip, noting triumphantly: 'Ribbentrop is on the verge of tears.'⁷⁷ But the foreign minister immediately persuaded Hitler that their press must pull back, leaving an outraged Goebbels with more than a slight feeling of nausea. Hitler well knew that his Wehrmacht would not be ready to attack Czechoslovakia until October.

Goebbels was among those at lunch with Hitler in Berlin on May 27. He noted merely that Hitler had returned for military consultations.⁷⁸ He did not mince his words about Ribbentrop. 'Either we publish no more news at all on border violations,' he recorded, claiming once more that Hitler backed him, 'or we take countermeasures.' He saw Hitler pacing up and down and pondering. ('We have to leave him alone. He is brooding on a decision. That often takes some time.')79 The next day Hitler announced to his generals and ministers that it was his 'unshakable

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intention' to smash Czechoslovakia.⁸⁰ Less tense now that he had made up his mind, over lunch on the last day of May 1938 Hitler gave Goebbels a thumbnail sketch of the Czechs, calling them 'impertinent, mendacious, devout, and servile.'

'Spot on!' agreed Goebbels.⁸¹

Hitler said they should give Prague no respite at all that summer. Goebbels went further, pouring more oil on the flames, although the public soon tired.⁸² A clammy feeling spread that war was inevitable.⁸³ Even Goebbels was not immune to this apprehension, writing one day: 'We shall have to be on guard, otherwise we'll slither into a catastrophe—one which nobody wants but which comes along all the same.' When the embassy in London reported that the British did intend to put up a fight, Goebbels recorded further misgivings.⁸⁴ Other ministers began to share their fears with him. 'The Führer,' he however concluded, brightening, 'knows what he wants. So far he has always hit upon the right moment to act.'⁸⁵

WHILE Germany edges toward war during the summer of 1938, Goebbels' personal life also teeters on the brink. Magda, thirty-six, has left on June 20, blubbering, for her regular clinic in Dresden. Karl Hanke is in love with her. And Goebbels is thinking of leaving her for a Czech film actress of twenty-three, Lida Baarova.

Unaware of the rumors Hitler insists that both Goebbels attend the opening of the new Künstlerhaus (House of Artists) in Munich on July 8, a glittering social occasion with five hundred guests in medals and evening dress. Goebbels' diary is non-committal: 'Magda accompanies me for the first time in quite a while. The Führer is very nice to both of us. . . . Magda is radiant.'⁸⁶ Over the next two days they attend two more functions together.⁸⁷ From what Magda tells Speer, however, her husband has been badgering her incessantly since collecting her from Dresden: 'He is using the children to blackmail me,' she says. 'He is threatening to take them away from me.'⁸⁸ Dr Goebbels returns his wife to the Dresden clinic on the way back to Berlin.

Two more weeks of this conspicuous separation follow. He often visits the children at Schwanenwerder and sometimes sleeps there. He previews two new films in his private cinema there including Lida's latest, *The Gambler*. He records in his diary a kind of even-handed alibi: 'One barely knows which of the two films to favor.' Playing safe, he enters both of them in the Venice film festival.⁸⁹

Scarcely has Magda returned when he leaves for Heidelberg and Austria. Once, she yammers at him on the telephone.⁹⁰ As the gorgeous annual Wagner festival begins, Hitler again commands them to appear together at Bayreuth. Dr Goebbels flies down separately on July 24. For his love-smitten aide Hanke it is pure torment to see Magda sharing a bedroom with Goebbels in the new wing of the Wagner household. Of all choices, that evening's offering is *Tristan and Isolde*. Wagner's romantic opera relates the ecstasy of a love which can face even death. Dramatic

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though the libretto is, neither Hitler nor Goebbels will forget the tragic scenes that accompany it in the auditorium. The Führer and his lady, the voluminous and matronly Winifred Wagner, sit in the large central box flanked by Joseph and a loudly sobbing Magda; Albert Speer, summoned to Bayreuth by his distraught friend Hanke, is to Magda's left. During the intermission she slumps with head bowed, loudly weeping, in the salon while Hitler and his white-faced propaganda minister affect not to notice. In his diary Goebbels comments stiffly only on the Wagner—'What music, and what acoustics! Incomparable!'—and passes over in silence the no less memorable performance of his spouse.⁹¹

The diary does hint at a row the next day. 'We find ourselves again,' he records however, blandly adding: 'We have been apart so long.'⁹² They lunch and dine again with Hitler, Winifred Wagner, and Speer. Hanke, excluded from these occasions, is frantic. By Speer's account, he has enlightened Hitler that morning about what is going on. The Führer sends for Goebbels—the diary shows them talking until three A.M.—and bluntly suggests that he leave Bayreuth forthwith.

It is an appalling turning point in the two men's relations. After only three hours' sleep, Dr Goebbels flies back to Berlin with his tail between his legs, leaving Magda and Hanke in Bayreuth.⁹³ 'She is so nice and affectionate to me,' he tells his disbelieving diary. The next day she goes—no doubt not alone—to see *Tristan* again. 'That would be too much for me,' observes Goebbels dourly, and drives out to Lanke.⁹⁴

While Magda stays on at Bayreuth, he orders a second preview of *The Gambler* at Schwanenwerder, probably for Lida's benefit, and luxuriates in unopposed access to the children.⁹⁵ Little Holde, now seventeen months, has come toddling across the tarmac at Tempelhof to greet him. Helga, nearly six, is graceful and ladylike. Hilde is a little moppet, and Hellmut, alas, a stubborn little ne'er-do-well.⁹⁶

His father conveys all this to his diary, but its pages are becoming increasingly a vehicle for deception. 'A long discussion with Magda,' it records. 'She is very sweet and kind to me. I do love her very much. It's so good to own a person who belongs to one body and soul.'⁹⁷ The next day he gives her a beautiful amethyst ring. Later he phones Lida Baarova, calling himself Müller as usual, and announces: 'Liduschka, I have told my wife everything. She knows that I love you and cannot live without you.'⁹⁸ On the day after that, August 4, he phones again to say that Magda wants to talk things over with her. 'She's being very sensible about it. . . . It will be all right.'⁹⁹ Panicking and feeling suddenly trapped, Lida drives over from the studios to Schwanenwerder after the day's filming. Magda receives her swaying gently on her feet, with more than one tot of cognac inside her, and challenges her to reveal her intentions. Lida blurts out, however, 'I want to leave Germany!' She pleads with Magda for help.

'No,' responds Magda tipsily, 'you must not leave! He needs us both. He is a genius. It is our duty to live for him.' Filling Lida's glass, and addressing her as *du*, she lays down a few ground rules. 'I don't want any carrying-on in here,' she says motioning unsteadily around her villa. The

see
Speer's
account

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two lovebirds can live in the house next door, the citadel. 'What happens elsewhere doesn't bother me.' Nor, she adds as an afterthought, must Lida have any children by Goebbels.

Young Lida is stunned by all this. 'I'm too young,' she protests, indignation momentarily displacing tact. 'I have all my life ahead of me.' She is conscious that, as a Czech, her career is at the minister's mercy—he can order her deportation instantly. Often she has driven home from Lanke in floods of tears, rendered distraught by the hopelessness of her position.¹⁰⁰

Dr Goebbels walks in, eyes gleaming. He bestows upon Lida a diamond brooch. 'Are we all set?' he asks.

In his diary he records only 'an important talk,' adding: 'It is of great importance to me. I am glad we're all set now.'¹⁰¹ It makes no mention of Lida at all. It paints an idyllic picture of the next days, as the minister cruises with unidentified friends—six times in one week—on the sun-dappled waters of the Wannsee.¹⁰² While the temperature in Berlin climbs, they chat, they laze in the sun, they visit Peacock Island for picnics, and they swim around in the lake's warm waters. Once Magda comes splashing alongside Lida and asks, 'Are you happy now?' Lida swims gracefully away from her. But things are already coming unstuck. Goebbels logs another long spat with Magda. 'Things are not entirely clarified...' he grimly records. 'The last months have pretty well worn me down.'¹⁰³ The rows increase.¹⁰⁴ On one trip he and a scantily clad Lida have adjacent deck chairs on the foredeck overlooked by Magda from aloft. Ello Quandt sees the tears behind Magda's dark glasses and Magda blurts out the unnatural arrangement which her husband is proposing.¹⁰⁵ That Saturday, the thirteenth, they all cruise to Lake Tegel in a violent summer rainstorm. After a visit to Peacock Island, Goebbels invites them back to watch a film. Most of them elect to see Anny Ondra's latest, but Goebbels, grinning, proposes *The Gambler* instead.¹⁰⁶ It is another little dig at Magda. When the lights come on, Lida turns round and sees Magda and Hanke holding hands in the back row.¹⁰⁷

As the rain beats down, Magda begins to fight back. That night she assigns Ello to share Lida's bedroom in the citadel, pleading a full house as an excuse.¹⁰⁸ The Czech actress snaps at Goebbels, 'I shan't be coming again. I don't like being spied on!' That Sunday, August 14, after consulting with the poisonous Ello, Magda tells her husband to get out—she's going to sue for divorce.

On Monday, a tropical heatwave returns. 'I'm glad to get away!' he grouches in his diary. Perspiring through his thin white suit, Goebbels drives back to Berlin. Now the heat is on in every sense. As Hitler returns to Berlin that evening, Hanke secures an immediate audience for Magda.¹⁰⁹ She complains that a young Czech actress has invaded her marriage. People at her studios, she says, have heard Lida boasting, 'It is I who shall decide when they divorce!'¹¹⁰ Hitler knows who Baarova is. He has just seen *The Gambler* (the only film this week on which he has passed no comment).¹¹¹ But he will not hear of divorce in the Reich's

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'happiest family.' He sends for Goebbels. The minister's stock is beginning a decline from which it will take six years to recover. 'I then have a very long and grave conversation with him,' records Goebbels, without being more specific. 'It shakes me to the core. I am deeply moved by it. The Führer is like a father to me. I am so grateful to him. I take grim decisions. But they are final.'¹¹² Goebbels is hoist by his own petard; trapped by the 'family image' that he has himself created.

He telephones Lida Baarova immediately afterward at her rented Grunewald villa. She will never forget his words. 'My wife is a devil!' he exclaims. 'She's just been over to the Führer and told him everything. She has persuaded him that you're the evil one. I've had to give my word of honor that I won't ever see you again.' 'I love you,' he croaks between sobs. 'I cannot live without you.' He phones her best friend, the actress Hilde Körber, to go over and console Lida. Afterward he drives off aimlessly into the summer evening, half enjoying the suffering he has to endure. Not since Anka Stalherm has he experienced such a delicious torment to his soul.

'I am living as though in a trance,' he writes the next day, analyzing his own emotions. 'Life is so cruel and harsh. . . . But one's duty must come first.' After a 'very long and very doleful' farewell phone call (to Lida), he soliloquizes: 'I remain firm, though my heart bids fair to burst. Now let my new life begin. Harsh and cruel, but subservient only to my duty. My youth is now over.'¹¹³

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30: Duty put on Hold

It was to Goebbels that Hitler subsequently gave the credit for the bloodless victory over Czechoslovakia in 1938.¹ The propaganda ministry artfully developed the theme that Czechoslovakia was Moscow's aircraft carrier in the heart of Europe. Taubert's anti-Comintern unit published a book, *Europe Betrayed*, to hammer home this line.² Later Goebbels flooded the media with Czech atrocity stories concocted by Berndt with the aid of address books, maps, and telephone directories.³ The Nazi newspapers along the frontier with Czechoslovakia supplied further raw material.

This did lead to local difficulties. Konrad Henlein's press chief Franz Höller objected to one particular story about Czech attacks on Sudeten Germans, pointing out that this was his own village, and it enjoyed particularly good ethnic relations.⁴ 'Tell me,' retorted Goebbels, grinning, 'how big is your village?' Höller told him. 'Right,' said Goebbels, grinning evilly. 'So three hundred people know we are lying. But the rest of the world still has to find out!'⁵

For Czechoslovakia the clock was already ticking. On the day of Magda's lachrymose performance at Bayreuth late in July Hitler had predicted that he would have to use force. 'Prague won't come to terms,' Goebbels wrote afterward.⁶ But Hitler's fortifications against France, the West Wall, were still incomplete. This, wrote Goebbels, was why Hitler had just sent an adjutant to London for informal talks with the new foreign secretary Lord Halifax—he had to play for time.⁷ 'Of course,' he continued, 'our Berlin generals are all shitting their pants again. . . . The Führer wants to avoid actual war. That's why he's preparing for it with everything we've got.'

War psychosis gradually permeated Europe's capitals, including Berlin. Addressing the gauleiters, Göring argued against panicking. Goebbels, listening in his capacity as gauleiter of Berlin, wondered uneasily whether the German people would stand for a long war. They would have to rely on rapid surprise tactics. He could see Hitler's mind constantly turned to Britain—how dearly he would like to be on good terms with her—and to the south-east. 'We don't want these peoples,' Hitler commented later in August, discussing Hungary, Romania, and Czechoslovakia. 'Just their land.'⁸

His family life momentarily a shambles, Goebbels throws himself into

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his other tasks. For the four weeks until the Sudeten crisis peaks in mid-September he wallows in self-pity. He has barely eaten since that dreadful rainy Sunday, August 14. He lies awake, hollow-eyed, takes sedatives to sleep. 'If only the sun would not shine. If only the day were not so bright and radiant! I draw the curtains and try to work.'⁹ A second man-to-man talk with Hitler leaves him badly shaken. 'I cannot think of any way out, almost,' he writes, the casual *almost* being a clue that this dramatic baring of feelings is largely sham. Indeed, each such heartrending passage is followed by humdrum details of ministerial routine. Using Hilde Körber as a conduit he explains that his decision (not to see Lida any more) is 'unalterable.'¹⁰ That evening he has a long, unforgettable, totally humiliating talk with Magda. ~~'She is so hardhearted and cruel' is all he writes.~~ 'I have nobody to help me. Nor do I want anybody. One must drink the full draught from this bitter chalice. And shrink back cravenly before nothing. I am presently suffering the worst time of my life. With [Minister of Posts] Ohnesorge,' he continues, without even dipping his pen, 'I have discussed details of our share of the reduced radio license fee....'¹¹

last scene of the requiem

What a feast a psychiatrist can dish up from such passages, written in Goebbels' refuge at Lanke as the wind sighs and the rainstorms spatter his lake. 'I go to bed early.... Loneliness!' He flees to his mother and bewails: 'Ello has behaved despicably. But what else was one to expect of her?'¹² His mother falls ill with worry. Back at the ministry on Thursday, Hilde Körber 'comes with more sob stuff'—the German *weint mir etwas vor* is just as deprecating in tone. He again visits the hardhearted and cruel Magda, and curses in his diary: 'I've never seen her like this before.' He swears that he has now stopped seeing Lida. They agree on a truce until the end of September. 'Much can happen until then,' he reflects miserably. 'Both for better and for worse.... Let time pass, the universal healer.'¹³

There are some awkward moments. During the important five-day state visit by Admiral Nicholas von Horthy, the Hungarian regent—another of Czechoslovakia's predatory neighbors—Hitler orders Joseph Goebbels and Magda to appear together at the state reception on the twenty-fourth and at the gala performance of *Lohengrin* the next night. The photos show her sitting stiffly at her wayward husband's side. 'If only I could drop into an everlasting sleep,' writes Goebbels, still drinking deeply from that chalice, 'and never wake again!' After the farewell banquet in Charlottenburg castle, Magda snarls at him. '*Das alte Lied*,' he records with a wounded sigh: the same old melody. He stays up late talking with his trusty Karl Hanke, then decides on a little midnight motor excursion after all.¹⁴

He prepares a trial separation from his family. After seeing them briefly at Schwanenwerder on August 27, he spends a crestfallen night out at Lanke, then drops into the Scala strip club with a few friends. He decides to spend two weeks away from Berlin. Magda's nerves are in tatters too. Before leaving Berlin he phones her but finds her more impossible now than ever.¹⁵ He wonders who is putting her up to this and resolves not to

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THE WAR clouds now conjured up by Hitler over Europe were thus almost a welcome diversion. Several times the diary shows him debating privately with his senior staff whether there would be war—the one big topic now.¹⁷ Through a British mediator Prague had offered conciliatory terms to the Sudeten Germans, but this only embarrassed Hitler. 'The problem now,' observed Goebbels, 'is how the Führer can create a suitable situation to strike.'

Much depended on whether Britain would then declare war. Goebbels' man in London, the fainthearted Fitz Randolph, lamely telegraphed that nobody could tell.¹⁸ Goebbels' gut feeling was that Britain was merely bluffing. He ordered that her threats should not be reflected in his ministry's monitoring reports, the so-called 'Blue Telegrams,' lest they frighten Ribbentrop's diplomats. He studied Britain's nerve-war tactics with all the analytical detachment of a master propagandist. 'The whole London scenario is well thought-out,' he wrote approvingly. 'Cabinet meetings, Henderson recalled to London, "prepared for grave steps," and so forth. The old one-two. But it doesn't wash with us any more.'¹⁹

On the last day of August he flew down to the Berghof with Karl Hanke, evidently on his own initiative.²⁰ While waiting to see his Führer he was briefed by Göring's aide Karl Bodenschatz on the progress being made with the fortifications; the best month to attack Czechoslovakia, said the colonel, would be October. Otto Dietrich pulled a face and asked, 'What will Britain do?' Hitler, joining them, was reassuring. He delivered a little lecture about Bismarck's courage when it came to taking action. Goebbels afterward trudged downhill to the guesthouse—it did not escape him that Hitler no longer housed him in the Berghof itself. He was frantic about this mark of his slipping prestige, but he sensed too the clammy fear of war that was spreading across all Germany.²¹ Using Helga's sixth birthday as a pretext he put through a call to Magda. She was as hardhearted as ever.²²

The next day Hitler told them that the gap in Germany's western defenses was now all but closed. 'Britain will hold back,' he predicted, 'because she does not have the armed might. Paris will do what London does. The whole affair must unroll at top speed. For high stakes you've got to run big risks.'²³ Goebbels could not get that word *risks* out of his mind. Hitler's talk with Henlein turned to finding a suitable pretext to invade. That afternoon, September 2, Hitler delivered another little pep talk to them all—Goebbels, Henlein, Ribbentrop, Bodenschatz, Bormann, Speer, and Hoffmann—on 'keeping one's nerve.' Goebbels passed the message on to Hanke and Dietrich, who were beginning to waver.²⁴

For all Goebbels' atrocity propaganda, there was none of the public enthusiasm for war that had marked August 1914. Berndt made this clear to him.²⁵ Funk was pessimistic too.²⁶ France noisily called up her reservists and Goebbels had to remind himself that they were already

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fighting a war—of nerves.²⁷ When Czech police bludgeoned more local German officials, he turned the entire German press loose again to help Henlein in his assigned task of bringing the crisis to boiling point.²⁸ *The Times* of London suddenly sided with Hitler, recommending that the Sudeten territories be formally restored to Germany.²⁹ On the ninth the British ambassador adopted a similar line in private as the annual Nuremberg rally began. Goebbels concluded from this that Britain did not want war.³⁰ But others like Neurath, the former foreign minister upon whom Hitler occasionally relied as an elder statesman for advice, still preferred waiting another year. 'Waiting,' scoffed Goebbels. 'That's what they all say when they don't want to act at all.' Hitler's ambassadors in London and Paris warned that both Britain and France would march. 'We must just stick to the Führer,' retorted Goebbels, almost piously. 'He commands, we obey. . . . I trust in him as I do in God.' But even as he wrote these lines, the nagging private fears returned: 'Just one question gnaws away me, day and night: what's it to be, war or peace?' Smiling enigmatically, Henderson assured him that France was honor-bound to aid Czechoslovakia, and then Britain could not stand aside.³¹

At the Nuremberg rally, he branded Prague a 'hotbed of the bolshevik conspiracy against Europe.'³² But it was in Hitler's closing speech that the world first heard of his determination to go to war. The Sudeten Germans, he declared, were not alone. As they marched out together, Hitler whispered to Goebbels, 'Let's see what happens now.'³³

'Things are panning out just as we wanted,' triumphed Goebbels as the world's press betrayed the first signs of panic. The death toll began to rise—'over fifty in one village,' he recorded, carelessly confusing fact with his own propaganda. Addressing his editors he called for tough nerves and perseverance.

Then came the totally unexpected. The elderly British prime minister Neville Chamberlain offered to visit Hitler the next day.³⁴ Still hoping for a military showdown which would give him all of Czechoslovakia, Hitler had little opinion but to agree. For a moment Prague faltered, and relaxed her pressure. 'Nevertheless,' observed the cynical propaganda minister, 'we make a splash about "Czech terror." Things have got to be brought up to boiling point.'³⁵ Chamberlain met Hitler at the Berghof on September 15. At first Goebbels learned nothing except that the prime minister had asked for a further meeting at Bad Godesberg. While awaiting word from Hitler Goebbels addressed a steadying lecture to five hundred gau officials in Berlin.³⁶ Hitler invited him down to the Obersalzberg for a briefing. He flew down on the seventeenth, taking Hanke, Fritzsche (press section), and Hadamowsky (radio) with him. Hitler lunched alone with him and then invited him aloft to the newly built Eagle's Nest, along with Himmler and the favored British journalist Ward Price.³⁷ The Eagle's Nest was a teahouse built by Bormann's engineers on top of the Kehlstein, reached by an amazing lift inside the mountain. Here Hitler described Chamberlain to these listeners as an 'ice-cool,' calculating Englishman. He had not minced his language.

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London might fear a world war, he had boasted, but he was prepared to accept that risk.

The English prime minister, he said, had undertaken to persuade his Cabinet and the French to endorse a plebiscite in the disputed territories. This did not suit Hitler's purpose at all; but he expected Prague to hold out, which would leave the way open for the total solution he preferred. It was a war of nerves. Goebbels predicted that Prague would buckle under this pressure. Hitler disagreed. 'In 1948,' he said, 'it will be just three hundred years since the Peace of Münster [Westphalia]. We've got to liquidate that peace treaty by then.' Praising Goebbels' propaganda effort so far, he added: 'We've half won the war already.'³⁸

The Czech president Beneš, abandoned by Chamberlain, conducted frantic telephone conversations with his legation in London. 'Despair is the only word,' recorded Goebbels smugly, reading the wiretaps Hitler showed him. 'He [Beneš] just murmurs, "Yes, yes."³⁹ Capitalizing on London's sudden helpfulness Hitler upped the ante. He sketched a new map showing still greater territorial demands, ready for when he next met Chamberlain. With Goebbels limping at his side, he strutted up and down the Berghof terrace beneath a clear canopy of stars.

Goebbels issued fresh instructions to Berndt to create the necessary frontier incidents. Hitler mobilized Czechoslovakia's other neighbors: The cowardly Hungarians made no move, but the Poles were more obliging.⁴⁰ They had already hinted that they would entertain Hitler's demand for the return of Danzig, and in gratitude Hitler dictated to their ambassador what Poland might now demand with his blessing from Czechoslovakia.⁴¹ According to what he told Goebbels, as they set off together with Ribbentrop by train for Godesberg, the Polish ambassador had 'promised' force against Czechoslovakia.⁴² Goebbels still predicted that the Czechs would ultimately cave in. Hitler however told him that he was poised to strike on September 28—just one week's time.⁴³

Goebbels attended both days of the Hitler–Chamberlain conferences at Godesberg. The first on September 22 began at four P.M. and lasted for three hours. Hitler's new sketch-map shocked the Englishman. But Hitler reminded him that the frontiers would look somewhat worse if he eventually had to use force. (The main thing, realized Goebbels, listening to them haggling, was to get behind the formidable Czech mountain fortifications.) Chamberlain said he would have to consult, and they all adjourned, Hitler and Goebbels to a city launch that chugged up the Rhine into the gentle autumn evening. The next morning Chamberlain sent over a letter to Hitler. The Nazi wiretaps on the British and Czech international phone lines left no doubt now that Beneš was playing for time. Word came shortly that Beneš had mobilized. Undeterred, Hitler handed new demands to Chamberlain.

There was a lot of playacting on both sides. At that evening's crisis session, Chamberlain rose haughtily to his feet and threatened to walk out.⁴⁴ Goebbels did not know what to make of it all. His private alarm deepened. War hysteria was seeping into the German press.⁴⁵ Flying back

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to Berlin with Hitler he found a mood there wavering between noisy jingoism and grim 'determination'—for want of a more gloomy word which he could safely enter in his diary. The wiretaps showed Beneš digging his heels in. Would he give way? The question dominated Hitler's lunch table. 'The Führer thinks not,' recorded Goebbels. 'I say he will.' Hitler again said that he would attack on or after the twenty-eighth. 'That gives the Führer five days,' calculated Goebbels, adding: 'He fixed these dates way back on May 28.' He somberly agreed that the radical solution was the best. Ribbentrop predicted that nobody would lift a finger to help Prague. For once Goebbels found himself agreeing with him, but he still did not want war.⁴⁶

Hitler proved right and Goebbels wrong: Beneš rejected Hitler's territorial demands outright. Goebbels again had to lecture his editors on steadfastness, and stepped up the propaganda war still further.

The unwitting party faithful might cheer but others—intellectuals, generals, and even ministers—began bombarding Hitler with warnings.⁴⁷ Goebbels heard Himmler complaining about the uselessness of the older generals. Hitler gave the Czechs until two P.M. on the twenty-eighth to agree to his terms. Goebbels mechanically told Berndt to stir up discord between Beneš and his people using clandestine transmitters based in Vienna.⁴⁸

This war of nerves reached its climax on the twenty-seventh, when Hitler received Chamberlain's dapper emissary Sir Horace Wilson. He told Goebbels later that he had screamed at the Englishman, accusing him of evasions.⁴⁹ 'The Führer,' summarized an admiring Goebbels, 'believes in his mission with the sureness of a sleepwalker. Not for one moment does his hand tremble. A great genius in our midst. . . . One has to serve him with profound devotion. He is more true, more simple, more farsighted than any German statesman that has gone before.'⁵⁰

The German public was spared these insights. War panic now gripped its heart. That evening Hitler ordered a mechanized division to rumble through the capital. He sat watching from the darkened foyer of the chancellery as the armor rattled past, while Goebbels mingled unseen with the crowds.⁵¹ 'The public,' he wrote anxiously afterward, 'is filled with a profound worry. They know that we're coming into the last lap now.'

As the deadline for Hitler's ultimatum approached, Goebbels decided to head him off. The British and French ambassadors got to Hitler first, bringing fragrant fresh proposals. Ribbentrop was furious that war might be averted. 'He nurtures a blind hatred of Britain,' decided Goebbels. 'Göring, Neurath, and I urge Hitler to accept. . . . You can't get into what may well turn into a world war over procedural issues. Göring . . . totally shares my viewpoint and gives Ribbentrop a piece of his mind.' 'Mein Führer,' he blurted out over lunch in Hitler's chancellery on the twenty-eighth, 'if you think that the German public is thirsting for war, you are wrong. They watch its approach with a leaden sense of apathy.'⁵²

In that instant Hitler changed his mind. According to Ribbentrop's Staatssekretär Ernst von Weizsäcker it was primarily Goebbels who per-

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sued Hitler to back off from war at this, the eleventh hour.⁵³ Perhaps Hitler even welcomed his moderating influence. He immediately approved suggestions for a four-power conference to take place in Munich the next day. Goebbels saw the likely outcome thus: 'We take the Sudeten territories peacefully; the grand solution remains wide open, and we gird ourselves for future contingencies.' He was due to address half a million people in the Lustgarten that evening. He prudently decided not to reveal anything of the morrow's certain victory. 'Nothing would be more improper,' he explained to his staff after that historic luncheon, 'than to announce Chamberlain's coming. That would unleash incredible public scenes of jubilation; and then the British would realize the truth—that all our belligerence is just bluster.'⁵⁴

Remaining in Berlin, he warned his editors not to let their campaign about 'Czech terror' flag either. Soon Hanke, sent to Munich as his observer, reported that Mussolini, Chamberlain, and the French premier Edouard Daladier had agreed to Hitler's demands. Czechoslovakia should hand over the disputed territories in the first ten days of October. 'So that's all we get for the time being,' noted Goebbels. 'Under the circumstances,' he added, hiding his relief, 'we are unable to realize our grand plan'—seizing *all* of Czechoslovakia.⁵⁵

Hitler had dramatically increased the Reich's international prestige. In a stinging rebuff to Beneš, the four powers had not even invited the Czechs to the Munich conference. 'And now,' triumphed Goebbels in his unpublished diary, 'let us rearm, rearm, and rearm!' Once more he ordered his gau to prepare a hero's welcome for the Führer at the Anhalt railroad station.⁵⁶

He had other causes to rejoice. 'Ribbentrop fell flat on his face,' he wrote. 'Göring is livid with him. Calls him a pompous prima donna.' He had already commented during June on the foreign minister's pathological hatred of the English—a relic of the treatment meted out to him as ambassador by the British establishment.⁵⁷ 'The Führer,' Goebbels had added in September 'is in for a big surprise with him.'⁵⁸

Back in Berlin, Hitler told his lunch guests about the famous 'piece of paper,' the Anglo-German declaration that Chamberlain had sprung on him afterward for signature. He did not believe that the British meant to honor it, he said. Chamberlain was a fox. 'He tackles each issue ice-cool,' he reiterated. 'We're really going to have watch out for these British.'⁵⁹

Over dinner the next day he again revealed his unshatterable resolve to destroy Czechoslovakia, as Goebbels recalled his words. He doggedly argued that London and Paris would not have intervened. Goebbels continued to differ on that score.⁶⁰

A few days later however Hitler personally inspected the Czech fortifications and he realized that it was fortunate after all that there had not been any fighting. 'We would have shed a lot of blood,' he privately admitted. It was a good thing, Goebbels decided, that things had turned out the way they had.⁶¹

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ON the day of Hitler's triumph in Munich an ugly revelation awaits Goebbels in Berlin. Given the evasions of his diary in matters matrimonial, however, we cannot properly speculate on what it is. Suffice to say that police chief Helldorff visits him late that day and Goebbels then records: 'A sad and difficult day for me personally.' He adds philosophically, 'If it isn't one thing it's another.'

Four painful weeks have already passed since he last visited Schwanenwerder and saw his children. 'Papa has been naughty,' Magda cruelly tells them. 'He's not allowed to come here any more.'² She herself has begun drinking heavily and hitting the night spots—a world of chrome, black leather, and subdued lights. She frequents cabarets where the stand-up comics make fun of her own husband. Admiral Raeder's adjutant is drinking in one such club when Magda utters a boozy invitation to him to share her bar-stool. After a flurry of indiscretions about her marital problems, she invites the navy captain and his pals back to her home.³ Five years later, when Goebbels snarls in his famous total war speech about 'the nightclub crowd who lolled around in stylish bars,' Magda—seated in the front row—has no doubt whatever who is meant by that.⁴

Joseph Goebbels thought he had friends, as Lida Baarova would sadly remark years later: But he had none. Behind his back Karl Hanke starts the sniggering rumor that in the street confrontation early in 1937 Lida's lover Gustav Fröhlich had actually socked Goebbels. Improbable though it is—given that the minister throws men into concentration camp just for their opinions—the story sweeps Germany and delights foreign capitalists.⁵ A cabaret artiste guffaws, 'We'd all like to be *fröhlich* sometime!'—the word means contented. Schacht calls the minister's affairs a public scandal.⁶ Himmler complains to Hitler that he has never liked the Goebbels genus, but has so far kept his views to himself: 'Now he's the most hated man in Germany,' he says. There was a time, he continues, when Goebbels used to sound off against the Jews who sexually coerced their female employees; now the minister is doing the same himself. 'It's obvious,' adds the Reichsführer, 'that they are not doing it for love, but because he's propaganda minister.'⁷

Shocked by all this, Hitler orders a watch kept on Goebbels' former girlfriend Lida Baarova. Gestapo limousines cruise up and down outside

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from
Baarova's
diary

her rented villa in Grunewald. But Goebbels, feigning indifference, makes no overt effort to contact her.

During the four dramatic weeks preceding Munich, what he calls his private *misère* has receded into the background. For four more weeks he does not see Magda at all. On the verge of a nervous breakdown he occasionally resorts to subterfuge to see Lida. He directs Hilde Körber to take Lida to the theater, and feasts his eyes upon her from a few rows away. He phones Hilde repeatedly to ask how Lida is. He sees the Nuremberg rally as a welcome distraction from 'dumb thoughts,' evidently meaning suicide, because the next day, after talking a party official out of shooting himself over a silly blunder, he remarks grimly in his diary: 'We all make silly blunders.'⁸ He gets his mother to see Magda in Berlin—to whom alone, ultimately, he is beholden—but it's 'the same old melody.'⁹ 'I can expect no quarter,' he writes the next day.¹⁰ After phoning his mother again he gives up. 'In Berlin there's the devil to pay. But I'm immune to all that now.'¹¹ Deprived now of both Magda's and Lida's company, he risks a 'motor outing' upon his return from Nuremberg to Berlin ('just to get some fresh air,' he pleads in his diary) and then another ten days later, followed by a 'drive through the Grunewald, just to get fresh air' the next day.¹² Lida still lives there, of course. During early October, these motor outings multiply.

While his own Staatssekretär Karl Hanke is now gathering evidence to aid Magda, Goebbels apparently suspects nothing. On October 3 he has a long talk with him about his personal affairs. 'Hanke is very nice about it, a real chum,' he informs his diary. 'I've got one person at least I can talk things over with. I couldn't have gone on like this.'¹³ A few days later, after another little motor outing, Goebbels again bends Hanke's ear about his plight. 'He proves very attentive and understanding. He then has a very important conversation and this sets my mind very much at rest.' Evidently Hanke has telephoned Magda, and she 'agrees' to see him. 'I am glad,' repeats Goebbels, 'that I now have at least one person I can speak with. These last few weeks I have often felt so lonesome and deserted.'¹⁴

Lida Baarova is now filming *The Sweetheart* with Willy Fritsch and Grete Weiser. She confides in Grete without realizing that she too is in cahoots with the double-dealing Hanke.¹⁵ When Hanke shows Magda his dossier it contains the names of thirty-six women and copies that he has filched of Goebbels' correspondence with them.¹⁶

Visiting Saarbrücken with Hitler, Goebbels phones Hanke to ask the outcome of his visit to Magda. 'Seems it's all over,' he writes afterward, perplexed. 'Nothing I can do will change that. I've tried my utmost. But if that's how it is, so be it. I feel crushed.'¹⁷ Hanke reports back in person on the tenth. 'Things seem pretty hopeless,' decides the minister, caught up in the drama of his own situation. 'A human tragedy is unfurling with neither blameless nor guilty parties. Fate itself has taken a hand and has spoken.' Oddly, he tells his diary that Hanke has questioned 'all' the parties concerned—a hint at infidelities by Magda? He asks Hanke now

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to report all these facts, as a neutral chum, to the Führer.¹⁸ He can no longer keep Hitler out of it. 'I shall neither complain nor whine,' he writes, melodramatically. 'I have no cause for hatred or indignation. I await the Führer's decision and shall obediently comply. . . . Things just can't go on like this.'¹⁹

Hanke in fact sees Hitler the next day at Godesberg, and regales him with salacious details of his own minister's wrongdoings—like how he has kept foreign ambassadors waiting while he entertains his female visitors within. Waiting for word from Godesberg, the craziest of notions race through Goebbels' brain. He cruises the streets 'just taking in fresh air.' At last Hanke phones: Hitler is willing to see Goebbels soon, he says, quietly relishing the moment when, he imagines, he will step into the disgraced minister's shoes. 'At any rate he knows how things stand,' writes Goebbels, confident that he has got in first with his version of affairs.²⁰ After a sleepless night he goes for another little drive, 'to collect my thoughts.'²¹

FOR Goebbels the suffocating ministerial routine has resumed—the struggle to lever out the Jews,²² the Sudeten referendum, and the inauguration of the magnificent new theater that a grateful Hitler has donated to the Saar.²³ Ignoring the sunshine outside, he mopes for hours in his darkened ministerial chambers, snapping pencils, and writing endlessly in his diary.²⁴ His brain gyrates pathologically around his personal miseries. His diary reflects his pain—page after page of self-centered whining tinged with a masochistic delight in every moment of this self-flagellation. Once Magda allows the three older children over to him. They all cry loudly and Helga whispers sweet nothings in his ear. Goebbels is still hungry for their childish chatter when it is time for them to leave. He broods alone that night, crushed by his own solitude, and toying with words. 'Those who love me are not allowed to see me: those who can see me don't love me any more.' He puts his affairs in order and closes his diary.²⁵

That Saturday afternoon, October 15, he tells Rach to chauffeur him out to Lanke. He is tired of the world—he writes—and tired of life itself. He has decided to resort to that most feminine of wiles, the feigned suicide attempt.²⁶ He swallows two Phanodorm sleeping tablets, washed down with alcohol, and goes to bed. He sleeps around the clock while, he assumes, Rach and the panicking manservant Kaiser try to arouse him. All he is aware of is a stabbing pain near his heart. He thinks he is dying, but—he writes—Heaven is again merciful. Apart from Rach and Kaiser however nobody pays him the slightest attention.²⁷

His head throbbing from the barbiturates, Goebbels stays out at Lanke until Tuesday, victim of a monster hangover. 'In the afternoon I drive back in despair to Berlin.' Among the films he previews that evening is *Prussian Love Story*, an episode from the life of Prince Wilhelm of Prussia. Lida Baarova plays the prince's first true love, a Polish-Lithuanian aristocrat, the Princess Elisa Radziwill. Two bitter-sweet hours later the tears

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are streaming down Dr Goebbels' cheeks. 'I didn't think it would be so hard for me to see it,' he confesses in the diary.²⁸

Worse is to come, far worse: On Wednesday he learns from police chief Helldorff the cruel, humiliating truth about Hanke's disloyalty.²⁹ Hanke—his old comrade in the fight for Berlin: His protégé: His own Staatssekretär! Meanwhile Magda has taken to Emmy Göring her plaintive tales about her husband, calling him 'the devil in human form.'³⁰ Helldorff at least is a true friend, he reflects. He sends for Walter Funk on Thursday morning, and Funk offers to see Göring. 'Take Helldorff too,' pleads Goebbels. 'He knows best of all.'³¹

Hitler is away, triumphantly touring Bohemia, and does not return to the Berghof until late on the twentieth.³² Meanwhile Goebbels ostracizes Hanke. 'He is my cruelest disappointment.' He drives out to Carinhall at noon on October 21, and puts his case to the field-marshal; he argues that Magda has turned frigid, and that he is therefore entitled to graze in fresher pastures.³³ Göring listens kindly, even jovially, proposes radical solutions, and undertakes to see the Führer. In private he chortles over Goebbels' discomfiture; but he lectures Emmy that she's got to see that Goebbels does have a point.³⁴ 'Good ole Göring!' writes Goebbels. 'I've really gotten to like him. We part as true pals.'

Relieved, he takes Helldorff off to Hamburg, where he is to speak. Here there is unpleasant news indeed. Magda has got to Hitler first—she is at this moment taking tea with Hitler up at the Kehlstein teahouse, and she has sent for the eldest children to complete the picture. 'So things are hotting up,' remarks Goebbels.³⁵ His speech at Hamburg's Hanseatic Hall is as truculent and cynical as ever.³⁶

No detail of the odd events that Saturday October 22 eludes the foreign diplomats in Hamburg. Goebbels duly attends the reception at the opera house but is missing from the foundation-stone ceremony of the *Hamburger Abendblatt*, the local party newspaper. Even the British consul-general learns that Dr Goebbels has received 'sudden orders to attend Herr Hitler at Berchtesgaden.'³⁷ Goebbels calls in Helldorff and Funk, but the latter is nowhere to be found. 'I make up my mind to fight,' Goebbels writes. 'I shall defend my name.'

At the Berghof Hitler receives him at once, speaks of solidarity, *raison d'état*, and the greater common cause. Helldorff, duly called upon by Goebbels to testify, backs him up but on the main issue—evidently Goebbels' proposal to that he resign, divorce Magda, and marry Lida—Hitler will not budge. Magda herself is now called in—the first time that Goebbels has seen his estranged wife in two months. She is at first rather aggressive, he notes; but ultimately they both have to submit to Hitler's impatient diktat. He orders a moratorium, a cease-fire. For three months they are to live together, at the end of which he will permit a divorce if both still desire.³⁸

Hitler disapproves of Goebbels' behavior, but he cannot dispense with him—not right now. 'The Führer,' Goebbels records afterward, 'detains me for a long time alone. He confides to me his most profound and

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innermost secrets.... He sees a really serious conflict brewing in the none-too-distant future. Probably with Britain, which is steadily preparing for it. We shall have to fight back, and thus will be decided the hegemony over Europe. Everything must be geared to that moment. And thus must take precedence over all personal hopes and desires. What are we individuals compared with the fate of great states and nations?³⁹

With Speer and Eva Braun they all take the brass-walled elevator up to the lofty Kehlstein teahouse to celebrate the Goebbels' shotgun reconciliation. Helga and Hilde smother their father with joyful kisses. Hitler instructs a photographer to capture the reconciliation on camera. Berlin radio broadcasts appeals for Heiner 'Shortleg' Kurzbein—is there to be no end of the minister's humiliation!—to report to the propaganda ministry immediately. As head of the photo section, his services are needed urgently because Hitler has decreed that the Goebbels' 'family photo' will appear in every newspaper in Germany.⁴⁰ 'It will help to expunge a great deal of the unpleasantness,' agrees Goebbels. But much will remain. Hitler has also bowed to Magda's demand that Lida Baarova withdraw from society and the film world entirely.⁴¹ Eva Braun, an avid film fan, writes to Lida coldly severing their friendship.⁴²

Leaving Magda behind at the Berghof, Goebbels returns by overnight train to Berlin with Helldorff; he is frantic with fear that he may never regain his esteem in Hitler's eyes. In the morning—it is now October 23—he sends Helldorff over to break the cruel news to Lida. Calling in his senior staff he strikes the same heroic pose he has seen Prince Wilhelm adopt in *Prussian Love Story* and declares: 'In the conflict between love and duty I have made the choice that men have made throughout history when faced with their duty to the people.'⁴³

Shortly Helldorff returns, badly shaken, with word that Lida, whom he has summoned to police HQ, is demanding to speak with Dr Goebbels and is threatening to kill herself; a doctor has had to sedate her with morphine in Hilde Körber's villa. Göring phones, invites him out to Carinhall, and promises to back him up down the line on condition that Goebbels drop his claim to be the second personality in the country.⁴⁴

'On the critical issue,' records Goebbels himself tantalizingly, without being more specific, 'he immediately knows a way out.'⁴⁵ At 9:30 P.M. he phones Hilde from Carinhall, while Göring listens in, and asks her to put Lida on the line. 'I'm out at my good friend's house,' he says. She will know who that is. 'He's standing next to me. Liduschka, keep a stiff upper lip, whatever they may do to you. Don't be angry. Stay the way you are.' Distraught and her mind numbed with morphine, the actress is unable to reply. They never speak again.⁴⁶

Her torment is just beginning. She is confined to Hilde Körber's villa with her phone tapped and two secret police on the door.⁴⁷ She is allowed out on Friday October 28 when her latest film is premiered at the Gloria Palace on Kurfürstendamm. Goebbels notes, 'The premiere of *The Gambler* went off reasonably well.'⁴⁸ There are loud sniggers from the audience at one scene when her father, reproached for squandering

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their money, snarls: 'Money? Go get more money from your Doctor!' As Lida goes on stage at the end there are shouts: 'Minister's whore!' She calls out to the unseen hecklers, 'How much have you been paid!' Karl Hanke's hired hooligans have done their work well. There are similar scenes at the weekend performances, and on Monday the film is withdrawn.⁴⁹ Her life will become a nightmare from which there is no reveille. Julius Schaub, Hitler's personal adjutant, warns her not to leave Germany—'Something might happen to you if you try.'⁵⁰

Goebbels tries to pick up the pieces of his life. He tackles the personnel problems of the advertising council and the film industry, he stiffly discusses with Hanke the wartime use of Germany's radio networks, and he admonishes Helldorff and Funk to keep still tongues in their heads. ('We've got a stool-pigeon in this office,' he writes, 'somebody blabbing to outsiders. I'm going to smoke him out.')

Oct 25

On October 25, the three months' probationary period begins. That evening Goebbels collects Magda and the children at Tempelhof. He berates her until six A.M.; she listens with set and expressionless features. 'Ghastly things come to light,' he wails in his notes, without saying what. He retires to bed, his fevered brain battered down with Phanodorms, and awakes to finish off this (previously unpublished) volume of the diary without having written the name of Lida Baarova in it once.⁵²

4 quick scenes?

As for Hitler, the whole episode leaves him with a bitter sense of betrayal. Rosenberg, Schacht, Hanke, and Himmler tell him of the damage that Goebbels has done by his philandering. One French newspaper prints a publicity photo from The Gambler showing Lida Baarova fending off a tuxedo'd villain on whose shoulders they have imposed the Führer's head.

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Goebbels is falling from grace, head over heels, and he knows it. Sick with worry, he begins work on a palliative, an adoring twenty-five-chapter panegyric entitled 'Hitler the Man.'⁵³ For the next eight weeks the diary shows him dictating this book and revising it; he even has it proof-printed, and negotiates the sale of rights with Eher Verlag in Germany and the Hearst Corporation in the United States. Hitler however, none too happy about being linked in the public eye with Goebbels, asks to run his eye over it, and in mid-January 1939 he stops its publication 'for the time being.'⁵⁴ The book is never seen again.

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It is surely a sure sign of a civil war to examine Kristallnacht, was the evil involved in a published Goebbels are only clues,

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32: Broken Glass

It is surely against this fraught and unstable background—the marriage-war with Magda, the sniping from his enemies—that we have to examine the historic episode which follows only a few days later: Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass, November 9–10, 1938.¹ Whose was the evil brain behind this outrage? How far was Hitler himself involved in authorizing or endorsing it? Once again the hitherto unpublished Goebbels Diaries provide clues to what really happened—but they are only *clues*, which need proper interpretation.

As the motto with which he opens the next volume of his unpublished diary shows ('It is suffering alone that makes men of us!') he has spent the last week of October 1938 wallowing in self-pity, unable to sleep without sedatives, wearily reopening the wounds of the past with Magda, talking of 'ways out' and flirting with thoughts of suicide, dosing himself with narcotics, and sleeping around the clock.² He admonishes Helldorff once again to keep a still tongue in his head about it all, he decides to replace yet another adjutant, Diether von Wedel (he 'has betrayed me wherever he could').³ When October 29 comes, he not once but twice writes of it as 'the saddest birthday of my life.'⁴ Magda wakes him from his drugged sleep and 'frostily' congratulates him; his two eldest girls recite their poems; there are artificially glowing reports in the press and photographs of Hanke speaking the birthday eulogy in the ministry. Not surprisingly he finds something spooky about it all. 'What else really is there left for me to do in this world? I can't see any more jobs for me.'⁵ Regardless of Hitler's injunctions, Magda is still carved of ice as November begins.⁶ The children neither know nor ask the reasons for the perpetual frostiness of the family meals at Schwanenwerder.⁷ He loathes the whole human race and yet again tells his diary so.⁸

'I am glad to get back to work,' he writes on November 3, adding the heartfelt sigh: 'How I wish the past could be forgotten!'

At a beer evening at Weimar during the Book Week, Magda, wearing a fetching strawberry-colored dress with a generous lace décolleté, is the star of the evening while Dr Goebbels chain-smokes endlessly and glowers into his beer.⁹ 'It is still not working out,' he writes on the fourth after another late row with her.¹⁰

GERMAN propaganda drifted, with no firm hand on the helm. The British embassy, trying to detect a pattern, found it aimless and inconsistent.¹¹

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Goebbels now seemed to be trying to conjure up a British 'bogey'—evidently an echo of Hitler's gloomy review of foreign policy to him while at the Berghof on October 23.

Goebbels had sidelined the party's propaganda directorate (the Reichspropagandaleitung, based in Munich) by setting up local offices under his direct ministerial control, and through these channels he often dictated policy to the party itself. His direct and evil influence as gauleiter on the Berlin police has already been noted.

Nationwide, his anti-Jewish campaign gathered momentum. Goring was already purging the Jews from the business sector with a verve paralleled by Goebbels' sweep in the chamber of culture.¹² Count Helldorff liaised closely with Goebbels on the continuing and orchestrated police harassment of the Jews that had begun in June.¹³ Moreover Warsaw and Prague were following suit. 'The Jews are being driven from country to country,' observed Goebbels, 'reaping the fruits of their eternal intrigues, hate campaigns, and dirty tricks.'¹⁴ Poland announced steps designed to keep the seventy thousand Polish Jews living abroad from returning; to forestall this ban, on October 28 the German police rounded up fifteen thousand Polish Jews and shunted them back across the border into Poland.¹⁵

This operation indirectly triggered the events that now followed, although there is some frail evidence that LICA, the Paris-based International League against Antisemitism which had lurked behind the 1936 assassination of Wilhelm Gustloff, also had a hand in them. On November 7 a seventeen-year-old wastrel, a penniless illegal immigrant of Jewish-Polish extraction, pumped several bullets into a German diplomat in Paris, and Goebbels' life suddenly had meaning again.¹⁶ Somehow this lad, Herschel Grynszpan, had found the money to check into an expensive hotel one block away from LICA's HQ and to purchase the pistol with which he gunned down the German official, Counselor Ernst vom Rath. Even before news of the attack leaked out, LICA's attorney Moro Gjafferi arrived to represent him.

At first Goebbels had overlooked the news from Paris. He had risen early on November 6 at Schwanenwerder to go to Fürstenberg to visit an N.S.V. (National Socialist Welfare) home for mothers and infants from Berlin. 'I think Magda's glad to see the back of me,' he wrote, still licking the emotional wounds sustained in the prolonged fray with his wife. Back in Berlin he went out with 'some people' to Erich Carow's Laugh-in, one of the premier cabarets in the city, and laughed himself sick—according to his doubtful diary—at a sketch titled 'Family Idyll.' There is little doubt who was its butt.¹⁷

On November 7, as he and Helldorff took the morning train to Munich, he ordered the Paris shooting given only two inches on the *Völkischer Beobachter's* second page.¹⁸ Far more important was the solemn anniversary of the November 9, 1923 putsch, now a pivot of the Nazi calendar with speeches by Hitler and a midnight swearing-in ceremony for the S.S. Goebbels' diary shows him conferring on the way down to Munich

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with his new chef de bureau Dr Werner Naumann ('a decent chap'), with Minister of the Interior Dr Wilhelm Frick on Reich reform, and Wilhelm Fanderl, editor of Berlin's *12 Uhr Blatt*.

THEN however Ernst vom Rath's condition took a turn for the worse. Hitler ordered his promotion—an ominous sign that he was not expected to live. The Führer's attitude was one of laissez-faire; Goebbels however saw his chance. As surgeons battled to save the shooting victim, he swore to take revenge. He ordered press and radio to blame the outrage on the 'international criminal Jewish rabble.'¹⁹ *Angriff* published photographs of Frankfurter, the killer of Gustloff, and Grynszpan, the Paris assassin, with pictures of the British politicians Winston Churchill, Clement Attlee, and Duff Cooper scurrilously captioned 'Jewish murderers and those who put them up to it.' The party newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter* published a whole page on the Paris murder attempt. Summarizing these events, Goebbels wrote: 'But now [NOVEMBER 8] the German press makes itself heard. And now we're using plain talk. Major antisemitic demonstrations in Hesse. The synagogues are burned down. If only one could now give free rein to the public's outrage!²⁰

On November 8 he conferred with propaganda officials in Munich. According to his diary the topic was merely the Sudeten gau election campaign, but in the light of antisemitic outbreaks in Hesse, Anhalt, and Saxony on that day and the next it certainly cannot be ruled out that he discussed reprisals for the Paris outrage too. He then spent the afternoon working on his new Hitler book. In the evening Hitler spoke in the Bürgerbräu to the party veterans, viciously attacking Churchill, Eden, and Duff Cooper until tears of laughter streamed down every cheek. 'He's rendering these three unfit for government office,' wrote Goebbels, explaining Hitler's intent, 'and a good job too.' Afterward he invited Hitler to his regular café, the Café Hoch on the Marienplatz, facing the city hall. Until three A.M. they talked about horses, the Romanian monarchy, punishments for reckless driving, and their future plans for Germany's screen and stage. After that Goebbels carried on working back in his hotel, tired but unable to sleep.²¹

The diary for the next day, the ninth, 'a gray November day,' opened with the traditional march to the Feldherrnhalle watched by immense crowds. 'The condition of the diplomat Rath shot by the Jew in Paris,' he noted, 'is still very grave. The German press opens up with a will.' Helldorff sent instructions to Berlin to disarm all the Jews. 'They've got a few things coming their way,' commented Goebbels. He resumed work on his Hitler manuscript, finding it a delight. More reports came in of demonstrations against the Jews, this time in Kassel and Dessau, with synagogues being set on fire and businesses demolished. Later that afternoon Goebbels learned that Rath had died of his gunshot wounds. 'Enough is enough,' he wrote. At five P.M. the official press agency released the news.²²

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followed. As Goebbels and Hitler set out to attend the Nazi reception in the old city hall, they learned that the police were intervening against anti-Jewish demonstrators in Munich. Hitler remarked that the police should not crack down too harshly under the circumstances.²³ 'Colossal activity,' the Goebbels diary entry reports, then claims: 'I brief the Führer on the affair. He decides: Allow the demonstrations to continue. Hold back the police. The Jews must be given a taste of the public anger for a change.' Deciding, so he wrote, that this policy was right and proper, Goebbels issued his own instructions immediately to the police and party.²⁴ These instructions are confirmed by at least one gauleiter who recalled that an urgent telegram signed by 'Hanke' (as Staatssekretär) went to all forty-two of Goebbels' local propaganda agencies²⁵ transmitting instructions directly, over the heads of local gauleiters, to the district propaganda directors—who were party officials—to orchestrate outrages against Jewish properties in conjunction with the local S.A. units acting in plain clothes.²⁶ It was already very similar to what Goebbels had organized in Berlin that summer. He had consulted neither the party's gauleiters nor the S.A. chief of staff before issuing these instructions.

Hitler subsequently left the dinner at the old city hall around nine P.M. according to other sources.²⁷ Gauleiter Rudolf Jordan now told Goebbels of widespread anti-Jewish violence in Magdeburg.²⁸ According to Bormann's adjutant Heim, Goebbels seemed taken aback by this: things were getting out of hand and the carefully propagated image of German law and order was taking a battering.²⁹ Deciding to make a virtue out of necessity, at about nine-thirty he limped up to the podium, signaled for silence, and announced the death of the German diplomat and the anti-Jewish incidents; he described the latter as evidence of a 'spontaneous' public outrage. The local British consulate learned that he also said that Jews were now fair game, and that 'the S.A. could do anything to them short of looting and plundering.'³⁰ He would not be surprised, another witness heard him say, 'if things got worse during the night.' The same witness saw Lutze however warn his old friend Goebbels that his S.A. men would keep well out of any pogrom.³¹ Goebbels himself recorded that after issuing his instructions he had made a brief speech to the Party leaders, greeted by storms of applause. 'Everybody makes a beeline for the telephones,' his diary entry reads. 'Now the public will take action.'

Several people who heard Goebbels' firebrand speech were uncomfortable. Karl Hederich, one of his department heads, felt that it conflicted with the tenor of Hitler's speech.³²

A few gau officials get cold feet [wrote Goebbels in his hitherto unpublished diary] but I keep pulling everybody together.³³ We must not allow this cowardly murder to go unpunished. Let things run their course. The Stosstrupp 'Hitler' [a shock-troop unit named after the Führer] sallies forth at once to deal with Munich. And things happen right away. A synagogue is smashed to smithereens. I try to save it from

the flames, but party treasurer Streicher, and that we can no. We just have to kovský wants in

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* This sentence is sur we know.

the flames, but fail. Meanwhile I discuss financial issues with [the party treasurer Franz Xaver] Schwarz, the Jewish problem with [Julius] Streicher, and foreign policy with Ribbentrop: He too is of the opinion that we can now pull in the rest of Czechoslovakia by neutral methods. We just have to box cunning. [Czech foreign minister František] Chvalkovský wants it. As for the others, we don't know.

Over to [Munich] gau HQ with [Gauleiter Adolf] Wagner. I now issue a detailed circular setting out what may be done [against the Jews] and what not. Wagner gets cold feet and trembles for his [i.e. Munich's] Jewish shops.³⁴ But I won't be deterred. Meanwhile the Stosstrupp goes about its business. And with no half measures. I direct [Werner] Wächter [director of the RPA, propaganda agency, in] Berlin to see that the synagogue in Fasanen Strasse is smashed. He just keeps saying, 'Honored to comply.'

It was by now midnight. Goebbels attended the impressive S.S. swearing-in ceremony at the Feldherrnhalle. Hitler spoke to these new officers, then went back to his apartment. Goebbels, leaving for his hotel, saw the skies flickering red. According to his diary—written up next morning—he hurried over to gau HQ, where nobody could tell him what was happening, then directed fire brigades to douse the fires so far as necessary to protect neighboring buildings. 'The Stosstrupp has wrought terrible damage,' he wrote.

With many conflicting orders on the wires, a brutal confusion reigned all over Germany. At 3:30 A.M. the S.A. commander of Marburg ordered his men to burn down the local synagogue (despite Lutze's misgivings).³⁵ Every synagogue in Darmstadt was destroyed despite orders to the contrary from Mannheim's S.A. Gruppenführer Herbert Lust, still in Munich. The synagogues in Bayreuth, Bamberg, and Reutlingen were also torched.³⁶

THERE seems little doubt about Goebbels' sole personal guilt, that he was not just made the scapegoat for others even higher. In the subsequent internal inquiry, the party's Supreme Court headed by Walter Buch—admittedly no friend of his—determined that the propaganda minister had issued 'oral instructions' which had 'probably been understood by every party official present to mean that the party was not to appear publicly as the originator of the demonstration, but that it was in fact to take over its organization and execution.'³⁷ After hearing these instructions, repeated at first hand by a party official in Munich and so similar to Goebbels' orders to Helldorff in June, the commander of one S.A. Gruppe had telephoned orders to his HQ in Kiel at 11:20 P.M. in the following terms: A Jew had fired the first shot; now the Jews must pay. There were 'totally superfluous' Jewish shops and synagogues in Friedrichsstadt, Kiel, and Lübeck waiting to be destroyed; the local

* This sentence is surely blatant window-dressing by Goebbels for posterity, given what we know.

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police were to be tipped off first. 'There is to be no looting,' the message continued (significantly confirming the British consulate's version). 'Nobody is to be roughed up. Foreign Jews are not to be touched. Meet any resistance with firearms. The *Aktion* is to be carried out in plain clothes and must be finished by five A.M.'³⁸ Once again the similarities with Goebbels' own secret narrative of his orders for the anti-Jewish outrages in Berlin in June 1938 are worth remarking upon.

The pogrom was soon out of control. Only three of the twenty-eight S.A. *Gruppen* received actual orders to stage demonstrations.³⁹ Fired by five years of Nazi oratory however the mob needed little encouragement. From all over the Reich the reports began to come in: First fifty, then seventy-five synagogues on fire. By dawn on November 10, 191 of the country's fourteen hundred synagogues had been destroyed; about 7,500 of the one hundred thousand Jewish shops had had their windows smashed. Thirty-six of the country's half-million Jews had been murdered, and hundreds more badly beaten.⁴⁰ 'The Führer,' claimed Goebbels in the diary, 'has directed that twenty or thirty thousand Jews are to be arrested immediately. That'll do it. Let them now see that our patience is exhausted.'

Wagner is still a bit half-hearted. But I don't let up. Wächter reports back to me, the order has been carried out.⁴¹ We go with [Julius] Schaub to the Artistes' Club to await further bulletins. In Berlin five synagogues are ablaze, then fifteen. Now the people's fury is aroused. This night it is impossible to do anything else against it. Not that I want to. Let it rip.

Schaub is on top form. His old *Stosstrupp* past comes flooding back. As I drive back to the hotel there is the sound of breaking glass. Bravo! Bravo! Like gigantic old kilns the synagogues are blazing. There is no danger to German property.

Nothing else in particular has to be done. I try to sleep for a few hours.

As he wrote these heartless lines the next morning, the overnight reports came in. 'As was to be expected. The entire nation is in uproar. This is one dead man who is costing the Jews dear. Our darling Jews will think twice in future before simply gunning down German diplomats.' And that, he wrote, concluding this extraordinary, unrepentant diary entry, was the object of the exercise.⁴²

WHAT of Himmler and Hitler? Both were totally unaware of what Goebbels had done until the synagogue next to Munich's Four Seasons Hotel was set on fire around one A.M. Heydrich, Himmler's national chief of police, was relaxing down in the hotel bar; he hurried up to Himmler's room, then telexed instructions to all police authorities to restore law and order, protect Jews and Jewish property, and halt any ongoing incidents.⁴³ The hotel management telephoned Hitler's apartment at Prinz-Regenten Platz, and thus he too learned that something was going

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on.⁴⁴ He sent for the local police chief, Friedrich von Eberstein. Eberstein found him livid with rage.⁴⁵

According to Luftwaffe adjutant Nicolaus von Below, Hitler phoned Goebbels. 'What's going on?' he snapped, and: 'Find out!'

According to Julius Schaub, the most intimate of his aides, Hitler made a terrible scene with Goebbels' and left no doubt about the damage done abroad to Germany's name. He sent Schaub and his colleagues out

into the streets to stop the looting (thus Schaub's postwar version).⁴⁶

Philipp Bouhler, head of the Führer's private chancellery, told one of Goebbels' senior officials that Hitler utterly condemned the pogrom and intended to dismiss Goebbels.⁴⁷ Fritz Wiedemann, another of Hitler's

adjutants, saw Goebbels spending much of that night of November 9-10 'telephoning . . . to halt the most violent excesses.'⁴⁸ At 2:56 A.M. Rudolf

Hess's staff also began cabling, telephoning, and radioing instructions to gauleiters and police authorities around the nation to halt the madness.⁴⁹

But twenty thousand Jews were already being loaded onto trucks and transported to the concentration camps at Dachau, Buchenwald, and Oranienburg. Hitler made no attempt to halt this inhumanity. He stood by, and thus deserved the odium that now fell on all Germany.

Goebbels had anticipated neither Hitler's fury nor, probably, such an uncontrollable, chaotic orgy of destruction. Not surprisingly he made no reference to this unwelcome turn of events in his diary. But perhaps this, rather than Lida Baarova, was the reason why he would write this *mea culpa* to Hitler six years later: 'In the twenty years that I have been with you, particularly in 1938 and 1939, I have occasioned you much private grief.'⁵⁰ Ribbentrop relates that when he tackled Hitler about the damage Goebbels had done, Hitler rejoined that this was true, but he could not let the propaganda minister go—not when he was just about to need him again.⁵¹

As more ugly bulletins rained down on him the next morning, November 10, 1938, Goebbels went to see Hitler to discuss 'what to do next'—there is surely an involuntary hint of apprehension in the phrase.⁵²

Georg Wilhelm Müller of his ministry had meanwhile reported to him about the conflagrations in Berlin. Goebbels told his diary only, 'A good thing too,' but he immediately composed an ordinance calling a halt to 'operations' (*Aktionen*), and at 10 A.M. he broadcast a live appeal for order over the Deutschland Sender. While it spoke of the 'justifiable and comprehensible' public indignation at the Ernst vom Rath murder, it strictly forbade all further action against the Jews; it was repeated at hourly intervals and printed in next day's party newspapers.⁵³ The Jewish question, the item stated, would be resolved only by due process of law. Later that morning Goebbels directed that press and radio were to play down the damage—a few windows had been smashed and synagogues had caught fire, but otherwise, the news items were to suggest, 'the public's understandable indignation was its spontaneous answer to the murder of the embassy counselor.' 'Enough is enough,' the propaganda minister commented in his diary. 'If we let it continue, there's a danger

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that the mob will take over. In the whole country the synagogues have been burned down.' He repeated yet again, with grim and vengeful satisfaction, 'Jewry is having to pay dear for this dead man.'⁵⁴

He made his report (on 'what to do next') to Hitler in the Osteria, the Führer's favorite Italian restaurant, and was careful to record this—perhaps slanted—note in his diary, which stands alone, and in direct contradiction to the evidence of Hitler's entire immediate entourage: 'He is in agreement with everything. His views are quite radical and aggressive. The *Aktion* itself went off without a hitch. A hundred dead. But no German property damaged.' Each of these five sentences was untrue, as will be seen. Goebbels continued: 'With minor alterations the Führer authorizes my decree re breaking off the *Aktionen*. I issue it immediately through the press. The Führer wants to proceed to very harsh measures against the Jews. They must repair their shops themselves. The insurance companies will pay them nothing. Then the Führer wants Jewish businesses gradually expropriated and their owners compensated with paper which we can [illegible word: repudiate?] at any time. Meanwhile people are starting with their own *Aktionen*. I issue appropriate secret decrees. We're waiting to see the repercussions abroad. For the time being there is silence there. But the hullabaloo will come.'

Despite the toughing-out tone of these entries, there are more than enough hints that Goebbels was deeply concerned by the extent of the pogrom and its effect on foreign opinion; and that he had hastily thrown everything into reverse. He hoped, he wrote, that the *Judenaktion* was over for the time being—'Provided there aren't any sequels,' he added with ill-concealed nervousness. But his troubles were just beginning.

I speak on the phone with Heyderich [*sic*]. The police bulletin from the entire Reich conforms with my own information. Order has been restored everywhere. Only in Bremen have there been ugly excesses. But they submerge from view in the overall *Aktion*. I arrange with Heyderich how the party and police are to cooperate on this.

Work on until evening. Reports come in from Berlin about really serious antisemitic outbreaks there. The public has taken over. But now there really must be an end to it. I have appropriate directives issued to the police and party.

Signing as the party's national director of propaganda, Goebbels issued a confidential 'communiqué' to all gau propaganda officials (printed opposite). It specifically alluded to his earlier orders (which are missing from the archives): 'I refer,' it began, 'to my today's announcement re ending the anti-Jewish demos and *Aktionen*.'

Together with the police, all gau HQs are to take all due steps to make good the demolished Jewish shops in the shortest possible time at the expense of their Jewish owners.

He gave notice that a government ordinance would follow voiding the liability of insurance companies to pay out on Jewish claims. 'Moreover

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a series of measures will shortly be enacted against the Jews... Most significant was the document's last paragraph: 'The anti-Jewish *Aktionen* must now be called off with the same rapidity with which they were launched. They have served their desired and anticipated purpose.'⁵⁵ It is worth remarking that Goebbels felt comfortable issuing *orders* both to other gauleiters and to police.⁵⁶

That evening Hitler received four hundred leading pressmen in the Führer Building and delivered an extraordinary secret speech to them. He made no mention of the pogrom, and no secret of his admiration for Dr Goebbels' *propaganda* triumphs.⁵⁷ Goebbels sat up until midnight listening to Hitler debating with the journalists, then 'had to' leave, as he put it, for Berlin. The foreign radio stations were now full of the pogrom. Things were getting out of hand. 'I assume full authority for Berlin,' he wrote. 'At such times of crisis, one man must take charge.'⁵⁸ Hitler stayed in Munich, perhaps keeping as much distance as possible from Dr Goebbels.

WERNER Naumann, who traveled back to Berlin with the minister, would state that Goebbels fulminated with suppressed anger against the extent of the pogrom and issued a public dressing down to his deputies Görlitzer (in the Berlin gau) and Wächter (in the Reichspropagandaleitung, the party's propaganda HQ) for the synagogue fires when they met him on the railroad platform early on November 11.⁵⁹ Given the content of Goebbels' diary—as he and Wächter knew, he himself had ordered the synagogues destroyed—this scene displays nothing but his utter cynicism.

He drove straight out to Schwabing for Magda's birthday. The broken glass had been swept away, the shattered store fronts were already boarded up. 'In Berlin,' he recorded, 'everything has remained calm during the night.' With further breathtaking cynicism he took the credit with his radio broadcast. 'The Jews,' he added, 'ought to be downright grateful to me.'⁶⁰

Rattled by the mounting global outrage over the pogrom, he called one hundred and fifty foreign journalists into his ministry at two-thirty P.M. The atmosphere was icy. 'Explained the whole thing to them,' he told his diary; but the journalists found him pasty, haggard, and ill at ease. 'You can't blame me for what happened,' he said. 'Why, I was in Munich...'⁶¹ He claimed that the Reich frowned upon such 'spontaneous' demonstrations—but that the wrath of the people this time had been too great to contain, and that the police could scarcely open fire on crowds with whom they sympathized. Shrugging off any personal responsibility he scoffed: 'If I, Dr Goebbels, had organized the demonstration, the result would have been very different.' To his listeners he seemed unconvincing, self-contradictory, and confused.⁶² (A few days later the foreign press corps howled with glee when Louis Lochner told a departing colleague, 'I think you will agree that our efficient secretary managed to organize a very fine *spontaneous* demonstration for you.'⁶³ Still unashamed, Goebbels drafted together with Hans Hinkel, head of

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the Jewish desk at his ministry, petty and repressive ordinances denying Jews access to all places of public entertainment henceforth. 'This takes the whole question a great step forward,' he congratulated himself.

WHILE Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop earned grudging praise for his handling of the protests abroad,⁶⁴ Dr Goebbels found himself a pariah in official Berlin. He had to seize and suppress all the foreign newspapers for several days.⁶⁵ Lutze entered in his diary: 'Much wailing provoked abroad, but even at home opinions sharply diverge.'⁶⁶ Rosenberg, who detected Goebbels' hand and no other behind the pogrom, shrewdly put the cost to the German economy at roughly two years' Winter Relief.⁶⁷ Goebbels however would brag that he had proved that the Jews could be eliminated from the economy, whatever Funk said to the contrary.⁶⁸ 'Goebbels,' wrote one German diplomat, 'has seldom found less credibility than for his claim that a "spontaneous outburst of public rage" led to the violence.' Hess confirmed that in his view Goebbels was alone to blame.⁶⁹ He ordered the Gestapo and the party's courts to delve into the origins of the night's violence and turn the culprits over to the public prosecutors.⁷⁰ A top Nazi official advised Hess that there was 'nationwide antipathy to Goebbels.'⁷¹ Heydrich also blamed him. Himmler was furious that Goebbels had issued orders to his police force.⁷² 'The order was given by the Propaganda Directorate [R.P.L., i.e. Goebbels wearing his party hat],' minuted Himmler privately, 'and I suspect that Goebbels, in his craving for power, which I noticed long ago, and also in his empty-headedness, started this action just at a time when the foreign political situation is very grave.... When I asked the Führer about it, I had the impression that he did not know anything about these events.'⁷³ Many of Goebbels' colleagues wondered if he might be going mad. 'Is Goebbels losing touch with reality?' speculated one minister.⁷⁴

Rosenberg's damage estimate, a hundred million marks, was well short of the true cost of Goebbels' folly. The reality was that German insurance companies would have to pay out for the senseless damage, since most of the destroyed buildings were German-owned; even the plundered stocks were often German-owned, and merely sold by the Jews on commission. On November 11 Göring told all the other gauleiters that he would not tolerate any recurrences. He praised Karl Kaufmann and the others who had abstained from the public violence, and said he was going to insist that Hitler get rid of Goebbels.⁷⁵

At a Cabinet-level conference held the next morning at the air ministry building, Field Marshal Göring roared at Goebbels: 'What the Public needs is a bit more *Enlightenment!*'—an allusion to Goebbels' full title.⁷⁶ Repairing the plate-glass windows alone would cost Germany nearly five million marks in scarce foreign currency.⁷⁷ Goebbels afterward recorded, 'Heated arguments about the situation. I hold out for a radical viewpoint. Funk a bit weak and wobbly.' They agreed to levy a billion-mark (\$250 million) collective fine on the Jewish community for Rath's murder, and to take the remaining steps necessary to exclude the Jews from the

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German economy.⁷⁸ With once again less than total honesty Goebbels' diary continued, 'I am cooperating splendidly with Göring. He's going to crack down on them too. The radical line has won.' After drafting a strongly worded communiqué he commented for the *n*th time, 'This is one corpse that's going to cost the Jews a packet.'⁷⁹

He was unrepentant. Interviewed by Reuters chief correspondent Gordon Young that day he dismissed the pogrom as Germany's internal affair. As for the billion-mark fine, he said that the Jews' assets in Germany alone were eight times that figure. Future harmony would depend on their accepting their status in the Reich—'namely that of a foreign race whom we recognize to be antagonistic to the German people.'⁸⁰

Göring's criticism had sunk in. In working-class Wedding on the thirteenth Goebbels warned the proletariat in stern language to abstain from further *Aktionen* which would henceforth only damage their own economy.⁸¹ The wider damage had however already been done. Washington recalled the American ambassador.⁸² Foreign diplomats reported that Goebbels now outranked both Ribbentrop and Himmler in unpopularity.⁸³ This was not his own view. After rattling a Winter Relief collecting box outside the Hotel Adlon he recorded for posterity, 'I am very happy that the public loves me so much.'⁸⁴

LATE on November 15, 1938 Hitler finally returned to Berlin.⁸⁵ 'He's in fine fettle,' found Goebbels. 'Sharply against the Jews. Thoroughly endorses my, and our, policies.'⁸⁶ (A revealing self-correction—crossing out the original possessive adjective, *my*, would have been too obvious.)

All speculation among his fellow ministers about Goebbels' future was however now dispelled: In a public display of support Hitler escorted him to the formal reopening of the rebuilt Schiller Theater that evening, invited Goebbels and Magda to share his box, and stayed the night at Schwanenwerder with them.⁸⁷ They all talked until nearly three A.M. (Goebbels then blarneyed for five more hours with Magda). Hitler stayed over at their villa all the next day, conferring with his generals and ministers about the threat that Prague still posed.⁸⁸

Thus the public were to believe that Goebbels still enjoyed Hitler's favor. He resumed work on 'Hitler the Man,' his doomed biography. For an hour or two Hitler frolicked with the Goebbels children. 'All great plans are forged in one's youth,' he told their chastened but grateful father before leaving for Rath's state funeral in Düsseldorf, 'because you still have an imagination then.'

'I found that too,' remarked Goebbels in his diary.⁸⁹

For a while, he believed himself immortal again.

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NINETEEN thirty-eight has been a traumatic year for Dr Goebbels. As the New Year, 1939, is rung in he writes: 'I'd rather go hang myself.'¹ 'I have gained many gray hairs over the last year,' he will add a few weeks later.²

Denied marital comforts by Magda for months on end, he allows masculine frustration to overwhelm ministerial prudence. He invites a Miss U. to his study, offers routine pleasantries about her latest movie, presses a check for several thousand marks upon her, and invites her out one day—she assumes to a movie. His car picks her up after dark near the Kroll opera house. Miss U. nervously has her fiancé follow, but Goebbels' supercharged Mercedes soon shakes him off. Rach drives them out to Lanke. A cold buffet is waiting inside the villa. Seeing the piano, she mentions that she can play. He says that two can play, but when it appears that he has a different tune in mind she fends him off vigorously. Goebbels snaps: 'You must know whom you're dealing with. I'm one of the dozen most important men in Europe!' He drives her back to Berlin in a cold fury, and instructs Rach to halt before the end of the autobahn. 'The lady is alighting here,' he instructs.³ This victim immediately places herself at Magda's disposal.⁴

By early December 1938 the three-month probationary period is already forgotten. Magda tells her father, now a wealthy industrialist in Duisburg, that she has decided to leave Goebbels for good—perhaps even to emigrate. Her father welcomes her decision. Referring to the 'prevailing tense circumstances,' he assures her: 'Given recent events I agree more than ever with the decisions you tell me of. Be of good heart, my child. Your father has now grown even larger and more independent and you will always find with him, whether at home or abroad, a secure and financially adequate refuge for yourself and your children.'⁵

Goebbels is almost inured to these agonies. After speaking with Magda ('the same old melody') he falls seriously ill.⁶ Stomach X-rays reveal no organic disorder. The doctors diagnose nervous complications. He takes to his bed, and for the first time in fifteen years he writes no diary for two weeks.⁷ Professor Sauerbruch orders him into the La Charité hospital. Suspecting him of malingering, Magda makes a beeline for the Führer with fresh complaints about his behavior. When she visits the hospital it is just to bespatter him with more matrimonial bile. It is a fair assumption that there is a link between these reproaches and the anonymous large

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Hitler later recalled that a favorite childhood book was an illustrated history of the Franco-Prussian war, glorifying Bismarck and the victory of German arms. As a young boy he remembered asking himself why Austria had not fought for the cause of German unity. Why, specifically, had his father not joined the battle? A psychiatrist has suggested that the question may be put in a different way: "Why didn't my father die a heroic death?" It may also be suggested that years later, when Hitler talked about the annexation by announcing the death of Austria, he was also celebrating the death of his father: "There is no longer an Austria. The country that calls itself Austria is a corpse."¹¹⁵

He did not want an *alliance* with Austria, he thundered at the Austrian chancellor during their famous confrontation at the Obersalzberg; alliance was totally out of the question. He wanted complete *union* of Austria with the Motherland—the union he had longed for when he ran away from Vienna to Germany as a youth, "drawn by secret wishes and secret loves," when "the most ardent wish" of his heart was "to return to the bosom of the faithful Mother."¹¹⁶ But that union could not be accomplished until old Austria was first destroyed. Was this not the Oedipal death wish of childhood that he would fulfill as Führer?

From my earliest youth I came to the conviction which never deserted me . . . the protection of Germandom [the mother] presupposes the destruction of Austria [the father].¹¹⁷

Austria would not be completely destroyed, however. Hitler would see to it that it was mastered and disciplined—just as he had longed as a boy to turn the tables on his authoritarian father, who had so often disciplined him. Thus he told an intimate on the eve of the *Anschluss* that "he regarded it as his special task to train Austria to Germandom. He would be a harsh taskmaster in training them in German ways. He would make them sweat. He would drive out their indolence. . . . There had been enough softness. . . ." Childhood rage against the father who had never brooked contradiction found expression in the fury he directed against Dollfuss and other Austrian leaders. He screamed, "He dares to contradict me! But wait, gentlemen! You will see them before long crawling on their knees to me. But, with icy coldness, I shall have them put to death as traitors."¹¹⁸ Only after Austria was racially purified, severely disciplined and thoroughly "trained" by Adolf Hitler would it be worthy of uniting with the Motherland.

We therefore suggest that Adolf Hitler unconsciously used foreign policy as his means of defeating his Austrian father and achieving the union with his young mother which he had fantasied as a child and had promised on the very first page of his memoirs: "German-Austria must return to the great German Motherland. [*Deutschösterreich muss wieder zurück zum grossen deutschen Mutterlande.*]"¹¹⁹

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tivity. (A man who has

From Private Neurosis to Public Policy

seen the photographs has written that they were of the "most shocking depravity.") What concerns us is Hitler's immediate reaction upon first examining the pictures. He said at once that the male partner in the photos "must have been of Jewish extraction." The writer who reported the incident believed that Hitler then became "absolutely convulsed by the wildest anti-Semitic fulminations."⁴⁸ A reaction as violent as this lends credence to the finding that Hitler himself had a perversion which produced feelings of guilt and self-loathing so intense as to require urgent projection.

As we have noted, the evidence is strong that Hitler believed he might have had a Jewish grandfather (see Chapter 3, pp. 126-131). Hitler talked incessantly about blood poisoning by Jews; he sought to get rid of his own blood; he destroyed the village he associated with his grandmother and his illegitimate father. In short, he was terrified by the thought that he himself might be "part Jewish." Such a suspicion was simply unbearable. Psychologically, he had based his very identity on the projection of his own feelings of guilt, inadequacy, and failure onto Jews. Politically, he had staked his entire career on the principle of the superiority of the Aryans, the inferiority of the "sub-human Jews," and the terrible threat of the "Jewish peril." He simply had to get rid of his awful suspicion. First, we recall, he ordered his personal lawyer and then his secret police to investigate his ancestry in order to prove positively that he could not possibly have any Jewish blood. But they could not prove it because they could not determine the identity of his paternal grandfather. And that is one reason why, we shall shortly suggest, he tried to establish his innocence in a different way—a way that would have ghastly historical consequences.

HISTORIC CONSEQUENCES OF HITLER'S ANTI-SEMITISM

My enemy is Germany's enemy: always and only,
the Jew!

—Adolf Hitler

Political Value of a Private Scapegoat

Hitler's personal need for a scapegoat proved to be a distinct political asset in helping him come to power. For Hitler's phobia was soon shared by thousands of Germans who desperately wanted to find one simple explanation for all their manifold woes. True, other political parties also offered scapegoats; but they were not nearly so good as Hitler's. The Communists offered "the exploiting middle class," "feudal

this is the phobia

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

he often talked about memorializing death and personally designed tombstones for himself and other people he admired. But nothing for his mother. Was he avenging his brother Edmund's lack of a grave marker by denying one to his parents? Was he expressing his desire to keep his family background obscure?

Even after he came to power and was a man of wealth and influence, the graves of his parents went neglected and unmarked until local Party functionaries intervened. A Party archivist wrote with pained surprise, after visiting the Leonding cemetery in 1938: "The parents' grave of the Führer would be no longer maintained today if, at the last moment, it had not been for the Linz NSDAP. For many years their membership, apparently, have been paying the costs. I have the relevant document."¹⁵⁰

During a hurried visit to Leonding in 1938, Hitler did go to the cemetery to see the graves and the new marble tablet which contains a picture of Alois and the inscription:

Here rests in God
Herr Alois Hitler
Royal and Imperial Senior Customs Inspector, Retired
and Householder
Died 3 January 1903, in his 65th year
and his wife
Frau Klara Hitler
Died 21 December 1907 in her 47th year
R.I.P.

1938
The Führer glanced perfunctorily at the gravestone, turned quickly without comment, and left the cemetery. He never returned.¹⁵¹

IDENTITY CRISES, 1908–1918

Erik Erikson's studies of the human life cycle give us a clearer understanding of Adolf Hitler's late adolescence and early manhood. Erikson has shown that personality development continues through the whole cycle of life and is not crucially determined by age four or five, as traditional psychoanalysis had tended to insist, nor indeed by any one period of life: "What a man adds up to must develop in stages, but no stage explains the man." There is, however, one period of life that is particularly important to the consolidation of personality. It occurs at the end of adolescence and is associated with the "identity crisis." Erikson has been careful to point out that two of his distinctive terms, "identity crisis" and "identity formation," should not be confused or used inter-

The Child As Father to the Mo

changeably. In late adolescence, but identity formation, but identity formation is a "I the individual," going all process, "an evolving conflict any time during the life span."

During a discussion in there is only one identity for identity, Erikson replies all. Everybody has repeated basic identity crisis which in adolescence/young adult lesser crises—I would put from early childhood . . .

During this major crisis phrase goes, "to find himself, some core of identity, direction. And in this process amount of "identity confusion identities by playing himself. Thus we have already mother's darling; as build dandy. Later he would be house, before turning into the Führer of all Germany.

During the identity crisis as a means of attacking a when a son takes on an identity intended for him—and this "paranoid form of a power crises) against [his] parent

Erikson has also described young people struggling with about young Adolf Hitler. living in time. Time is a usual alternation of day and them unwound.¹⁵² During from heterosexual intimacy effectiveness. Alternatively, can dominate completely—Stefanie and Kubizek. For consciousness and inability for other people. The seek anonymity so that not failed. Music can become a of expressing his own inner emotions. For Hitler, music

A MAN OF CONTRASTS

Hitler was a person of contrasts, a man of dualities who thought and spoke in disjunctives. Anybody accused of crime should either be acquitted or beheaded; "the only choice," he said, "is between life and death, victory or destruction, glory or ignominy. . . . We shall be conquering heroes or sacrificial lambs." The battle against the Jews, he predicted, could end "either with the victory of the Aryan side or its annihilation and victory of the Jews." Or again, "One is either a hammer or an anvil." A person either followed him blindly or was a traitor. A leader could be either brutal and hard as steel or as soft and weak as a woman. There was absolutely no other alternative.⁶⁰

The urbane and perceptive French ambassador André François-Poncet was fascinated by the dual nature of the person he visited so often: "The same man, good-natured in appearance and sensitive to the beauties of nature, who, across a tea table, expressed reasonable opinions on European politics, was capable of the wildest frenzies, the most savage exaltation and the most delirious ambition."⁶⁰

Creation and Destruction

The constant battle within him between the opposing forces of destruction and creativity was brought into particularly sharp focus during a conversation prior to the war with Professor Burckhardt, the League of Nations representative for Danzig. Burckhardt had asked for an interview in an effort to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Polish problem. At one moment Hitler shook with rage, crashed his fists against table and walls, and screamed in a voice cracking with fury, "If the slightest incident occurs I will smash the Poles without warning, so that not a trace of Poland will ever be found. I'll smash them like lightning with the full power of a mechanized army. . . ." Then he suddenly stopped, turned to look pensively out the window at the glorious Alps, and observed quietly, "How fortunate I am when I am here. I have worked hard enough. Now I need a rest. . . . Oh, how gladly would I stay here and work as an artist. I am an artist, you know." Years later, in the midst of war, he mused, "Wars come and go. What remains is only the values bestowed by culture. Hence my love of art, music, and architecture—are they not the powers which point the way for future humanity?"⁶¹

Albert Speer has described the constant conflict between destruction and creation, observing in his memoirs that he concentrated on Hitler's architecture "not only because it was my field but because I believe at least one pregnant clue to this strange man lies there. It was not his avocation; it was his obsession. And long before the end I knew that Hitler was not destroying to build, he was building to destroy."⁶²

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

ferent versions of the time and occasion when he stopped smoking. He told his secretaries that as a young boy he smoked "a long porcelain pipe . . . like a chimney . . . even in bed," but had given it up at an early age. To others, however, he confided that he had not quit smoking until years later when, in Vienna as a young man, it occurred to him that money spent on tobacco might be better invested in food. But he also said on another occasion that he quit smoking in 1922 because he was afraid that it would impair the quality of his speaking voice.¹⁰⁰

His entourage knew how much he delighted in reading Karl May and other novelists he recommended, but he said, "I never read a novel. That kind of reading annoys me."¹⁰¹

Hitler's memory was incredibly precise. But curiously he forgot—or failed to tell the truth about—generally known facts of his personal life. A long letter of 29 November 1921 contains patent inaccuracies about his family, describing his father, for example, as a "postal official" when actually he had been a career customs inspector. Years later, in the *Tischgespräche*, Hitler's father was made out to be a local judge.

Hitler's father and mother—and their ancestors, as far as we can tell—were born in Austria and were citizens of the Austrian or Austro-Hungarian Empire. Hitler, on at least two occasions, tried to give a different impression. In a public speech on 22 February 1933 in Forstheim, Bavaria, he told his audience, "I myself by my descent, my birth, and family am a Bavarian . . . for the first time since the founding of the Reich the inheritance of Bismarck is in the hands of a Bavarian [*leines Bayern*]." In front of leading English and German diplomats who knew better, on ~~23 September 1938~~ in Bad Godesberg, he attempted to persuade Neville Chamberlain that he too was Anglo-Saxon, saying that since his own ancestors "came from Lower Saxony [*Nieder sachsen*]" he and the British prime minister could perhaps "claim common ancestry."¹⁰²

Why did Hitler feel it necessary to dissimulate about his family ancestry?

Realism and Fantasy

Hitler was a hard-headed pragmatist with a remarkable capacity to deal effectively with the realities of political life; he was also a person who lived in a fantastic dream world. When as a boy he dreamed of rebuilding his hometown, his plans became reality for him. As his only friend and confidant of those years recalled, "Hitler lived so much in his vision of the future Linz that he adapted his day-to-day habits to it; for instance he would visit the 'Hall of Fame,' the 'Memorial Temple' or our 'medieval open-air museum.'" As a teenager he fell in love with a girl named Stefanie. Although she never knew that he existed, he built a villa for her—in his fantasy—and furnished it with infinite care. He was particularly concerned about the

The Image and the Man

placement of the piano in the halls.

Years later, he had other described by Speer. Another invasion of Norway in 1940 a colossal resort with mile upon The swimming pools of the bath life of the future of on the continent would swim, from hydroelectric sources in during the short Northern ming pools. Although his amidst of important war plan detailed plans for the entire a to connect the resort with the

Hitler's extraordinary career, his fantasy about one of his career. In his memoirs, and lovingly over what he believed first important political speech in 1920. He recalled the event, asserting that he perceived care and that he converted an night that proved him an or victory, it was also the most struggling little German Volk fitting close for the first vol by . . . people united by a . . . A fire had been lighted, come some day the sword wh manic Siegfried and the life with the coming rise, I sense exorable Revenge. . . . Thus ment took its course."¹⁰⁴

That Hitler's fantasy does been carefully documented. T at all, but a Dr. Dingfelder; Party advertisements announced was less than enthusiastic one sentence on an inside page was the hated Marxists who crowd left the meeting, the *Internationale*.¹⁰⁵

Such is the "historical truth that a more important historic about himself. He believed in of history.

Sept
1938

1938?

whose loyalty to Hitler
mistake of my life."
to be close to Hitler
had a friend, I would
attitude toward his in-
enjoy destroying the
associates and faithful

ward away thousands of
day and in all-night
interminable and empty
of remarkable energy
campaign of 1932, for
though he was frightened
hundred thousand peo-
many he visited 21 towns
eight days; on the third,
20 towns in 24 days.¹¹⁸

phy; he was also a prude
did not permit swearing
their coats no matter how
for having his picture
with Mussolini for being
men, he observed in one
ents, do not run around
some skillful forger would

ached him, he would have
were expected to last
doctors and never al-
much. He rejected out-of-
ments might be alleviated
fully covered at all times,
white underwear—as
sultry, hot day of 20
part of his trousers.¹²⁰
the least embarrassed
of nakedness torments
undergo makes them

led with self-pity and an
for sympathy, he sniffed
could be neglected and for-

Perhaps one of my former associates will visit me occasionally,
but I can't count on it. Aside from Fräulein Braun, I'll take no one
with me. Fräulein Braun and my dog. I'll be lonely, for why should
anyone voluntarily stay with me for any length of time? Nobody
will take notice of me anymore. They'll all go running after my
successor. Perhaps once a year they'll show up for my birthday.¹²²

One day during the electoral campaign of 1932, according to an
intimate, Hitler was feeling sorry for himself as he slurped vegetable
soup and asked plaintively for assurance that the vegetable diet would
cure his stomach cramps, excessive sweating, and melancholy. But then
he started talking about his determination to come to power. He jumped
up, strode around the room, and convinced himself once again of his
greatness. Before one's eyes, the whining hypochondriac was trans-
formed into the great demagogue who could electrify skeptics and
force them to become true believers in his destiny.¹²³

The Führer flatly denied that he was ever bothered by fears of
weakness. Max Planck remembered a remarkable interview with Hitler
in which he shouted that it was "libelous" for anyone ever to accuse
him of having weak nerves. "I tell you," he screamed, "I have nerves
of steel!" When he said that, Planck recalled, "He pounded his knee,
spoke ever faster, and worked himself into such a fury that there
was nothing for me to do but . . . to excuse myself." A military aide
who observed his Führer closely concluded, "The strong nerves which
he so often praised, he himself did not possess."¹²⁴

Hitler felt it necessary to protest often that he never had any
feelings of inferiority. "Only an insane person," he once said, "could
say that I have an inferiority complex. . . . They are absolutely crazy.
I have never had an inferiority complex!" And again, a few weeks
later: "Do the English really imagine that with respect to England I
could have an inferiority complex?"¹²⁵

One evening during the war, Hitler was whistling a classical air.
When a secretary had the temerity to suggest that he had made a
mistake in the melody, the Führer was furious. He showed his vul-
nerability—and his lack of humor—by shouting angrily, "I don't have
it wrong. It is the composer who made a mistake in this passage."
His press chief, who followed him closely for ten years, recalled that
if an associate corrected him on any point of fact, in any field of
knowledge, "no matter how valid the correction, Hitler could not admit
his mistake." His personal interpreter insisted that "throughout the
time I interpreted for Hitler [1935-1945] I never once heard him
make . . . an admission of error even to his closest friends."¹²⁶

Such statements need some qualification. On rare occasions Hitler
could, in fact, admit a mistake. But when he did so, he invariably
hedged his admission in a number of ways. He would proclaim some-
thing a colossal blunder when he and his entourage knew it was trivial;

* ~~that~~ D. H. His inactivity was
insulation for his excessive sensitivity—
One might claim that for years
he could stress the boredom of his
existence

ADOLF HITLER

The Image and the Man

ated with glowing as-
and immortality. Thus,
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ld collapse." He told the
achievement in the his-
erman." Ever since his
stood the real meaning
him the most revealing
emoirs, Hitler replied at
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a youth I learned the
mastered all history led
a book he planned to
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of the Wehrmacht on 23
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I am boundlessly proud
e permission to lead this

ashing about him as he
his own suicide—he still
eel. In his last political
e he had made "the most
man." And when a secre-
ing up this last testament
survive after his death,
e "The German people
movement. Perhaps in a
ideas and National So-
the ashes." He assured
him and the other im-
place if after my death
some sort of Olympus. I
d spirits of all times." 136
ter making assertions of

omnipotence and infallibility, he worried about failure and defeat. His memoirs recall how many times during the early days of the Party "I had forebodings and was filled with a depressing fear." Fear followed him after he attained power. Constantly he was "obsessed by frightful nervous apprehension" that he was going to fail. He tried to reassure himself by insisting that he had absolutely no such fears, feeling it necessary to say, for example, "I have no fear of annihilation. . . . Cities will become heaps of ruins. Noble monuments . . . will disappear forever. . . . But I am not afraid of this." He compressed his thinking into a familiar disjunctive which included the alternative of disaster. "There are two possibilities," he said in 1936, "to win through with all my plans or to fail. If I win I shall be one of the greatest men in history. If I fail I shall be condemned, despised, and damned." 136

At the very height of prewar success, failure was on his mind. On 10 November 1938, for example, he addressed the German press in what should have been a moment of triumph. His first big pogrom against the Jews in the *Kristallnacht* had just been completed with the acquiescence of the German people. Preceding months had marked a series of other victories: reintroduction of universal military training; occupation of the Rhineland; a highly successful plebiscite approving his withdrawal from the League of Nations; *Anschluss* with Austria; and most recently, the triumph of the Munich agreement. And yet this speech of 10 November is studded with foreboding. The words *Angst*, *Rückschlag*, *Niederlage*, and *Misserfolg* keep reappear-

I must tell you that I often have one single *misgiving*. . . . I become almost *anxious*. . . . I have had nothing but successes but what would happen if I were to suffer a *failure*? Yes, gentlemen, even that can happen. . . . How would [the masses] act if we had a *failure*? Formerly, gentlemen, it was my greatest pride that I built up a Party that even in time of defeat stood behind me. . . . 137

Even in the Declaration of War speech of 1 September 1939 he was thinking of the defeat of 1918 and insisting that he never knew the word "capitulation." He also felt the need of naming successors:

Once again I have put on that tunic which to me is the holiest and dearest of all. I will only remove it after the victory or I will not survive the end. If anything should happen to me in this battle my successor will be [Field Marshal] Göring. If anything should happen to [him] his successor will be Hess. . . . One word I have never learned and that word is capitulation. . . . A November 1918 will never be repeated. We recognize again only one basic fundamental goal; it is completely unimportant if we live, but it is necessary that our people, that Germany, lives. 138

1938

The Vagabond's Return

ON March 12, 1938, Vienna was occupied by the German Army as a result of the failure of the British, French, or Italians to aid Schuschnigg in his country's hour of travail. On the afternoon of the fateful day, Hitler himself drove into Braunau, where he had been born, and subsequently was heartily welcomed in Linz by his most famous fifth columnist in Austria, Dr. Seyss-Inquart. Next morning he visited his parents' graveyard in Leonding and started on a triumphal progress to Vienna. Swastikas and the rest of the Nazi paraphernalia celebrated his coming, and Vienna accorded him a welcome that he recalled with great pleasure and some embarrassment in later years. The "Heils" predicted by Schönerer echoed resoundingly up and down the Ringstrasse, while from the beloved spire of St. Stephen's floated the swastika, emblem of the triumph of the vagabond turned folk-hero.

It is not difficult to imagine the previously ignored conqueror's thoughts. Did the moth-eaten Habsburgs ever receive such hysterical screams of approval from the mob? Did Lueger at the top of his form really comprehend the ease with which a master could control the crowd? Did Schönerer with his sophomores and perfect Wagnerites have any inkling of the way a once-inconsequential nobody could accomplish the sacred *Anschluss*? Had Adler, dying in the debris of November, 1918, perceived ever so faintly that the claims of "blood" would triumph over his eminently logical and stunningly dull theories of human betterment? Did the Jews still believe that anti-semitism was merely a constant but ineffectual part of the

right?

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of decades, lay between planning and execution. The plan existed; then came influence and power and the plan became reality. This happened with uncanny regularity, as though the fifteen-year-old had taken it for granted that one day he would possess the necessary power and means. This is just too much for me to take in. I cannot conceive that such a thing is possible. One is tempted to use the word "miracle," because there is no rational explanation for it. *

1906 -
*
1938
* D.T.
It must
be said:
Kubrick
is not
w/o
accused

Indeed, the plans which that unknown boy had drawn up for the rebuilding of his home town Linz are identical to the last detail with the town planning scheme which was inaugurated after 1938. I am almost afraid of giving, in the following pages, my account of these early plans, lest my veracity should be suspected. And yet every single syllable of what I am going to recount is true.

X On my eighteenth birthday, August 3, 1906, my friend presented me with a sketch of a villa. Similar to that planned for Stefanie, it was in his favourite Italian Renaissance style. By good luck, I have preserved the sketches. They show an imposing, palazzo-like building, whose frontage is broken up by a built-in tower. The ground plan reveals a well-thought-out arrangement of rooms, which are pleasantly grouped around the music room. The spiral staircase, a delicate architectural problem, is shown in a separate drawing, and so is the entrance hall, with its heavy beamed ceiling. The entrance is outlined with a few brisk strokes in a separate sketch. Adolf and I also selected a fitting site for my birthday present; it was to stand on the Bauernberg. When, later, I met Hitler in Bayreuth, I took good care not to remind him of this imaginary house. He would have been capable of actually giving me a villa on the Bauernberg, which presumably would have been finer than the original idea, and very much in the taste of the epoch.

More impressive are two sketches still in my possession, samples of his numerous designs for a new concert hall in

Linz. The old theatre and some art lovers in Linz joined this society and He worked for months, obviously convinced that his anger was beyond measure, hopes by giving up the old had the old one renovated.

I refer to his biting remark of August 17, 1908. "It is more the old junk heap."

Full of fury, he said it would be to wrap up his off to the address of this "mittee-for-the-Execution-of-the-Theatre." How well he raged!

My two sketches, on that period. The one shows break up the walls and the The balustrade is adorned domed ceiling covers the project, Adolf explained intended building, in which interested. It clearly shows the orchestra, are reflected as to be, so to speak, pour took a great interest in a instance, his suggestion whose bad acoustics always of the ceiling.

And now for the rebuilding legion, yet he did not indeed held fast to his de-

* D.T. The question arises whether he

much later

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

make his own feelings more bearable by shifting the finger of guilt away from himself and pointing it at the Jews. But this kind of projection does not really solve his problem. Indeed, it creates a kind of vicious circle: "The hated scapegoat is merely a disguise for persistent and unrecognized self-hatred. . . . The more the sufferer hates himself, the more he hates the scapegoat. But the more he hates the scapegoat, the less sure he is of his logic and his innocence; hence the more guilt he has to project." ⁴⁶

The greater the guilt feelings, the more the scapegoat must suffer. Since Hitler's hatred of the Jews was monumental, his feelings of guilt and self-loathing must have been very great indeed. The specific accusations he projected onto the Jews are particularly revealing. In public speech and private conversation, his chief charge against them was that they were guilty of dark and evil sexual practices. Hitler made Jews directly responsible for almost every crime known to man, but "never did he become so emotional, so arbitrary and so absurd" as when he fulminated against Jewish sexual perversions. Jews are the kind of people, for example, who have sex with their mothers. ⁴⁷

The question of Hitler's sexual relations with his own mother illustrates one way in which a historian's approach to a problem differs from that of the clinical psychologist. All the training and professional instincts of the historian focus on the question: Did it actually happen? Did this incest really take place? The psychologist is more interested in a different question: Did the patient actually have this fantasy—did he *believe* that it happened? It is doubtful that Hitler actually had sexual relations with his young mother, but psychological evidence indicates that he had fantasies about Oedipal fulfillment and that he felt guilty about them. By using the word "incest" so often, he showed that it was on his mind, he hung a portrait of his mother over his bed in all his bedrooms; a poem he wrote about her is redolent of sex and the death wish; his only bride, he said, was the Motherland, and he talked of "conquering" her. All the women with whom he had sexual relations, of one sort or another, were mother substitutes; all had attributes of age or physical qualities or family relationship or nicknames that reminded him of his mother and her relations with her husband. One can also surmise that Hitler had incestuous fantasies and felt uneasy about them because he found it so important to deny that he had them: it was not he, it was the Jews who practiced incest.

The Jews were also useful to Hitler in fulfilling his need to blame someone else for his own uneasiness about sexual perversion. One incident will serve as an illustration. In 1938 he professed absolute moral outrage when he discovered that General Blomberg, the minister of defense, had married a former prostitute. Hitler had the Gestapo collect incriminating evidence against Frau Blomberg. They supplied him with photographs showing her plying her profession by participating in various forms of deviant sexual activity. (A man who has seen the photographs has written that they are "the most shocking depravity".)

366

* A scene which is the photograph
Hitler's reaction: "The man is of Jewish extraction"

* * * Eventually, he was most excited by the photographs. Frau Blomberg was a woman to enjoy in one's thoughts. And the presence of the Jew was an element in the carnal bliss of his sack. He waited 36 hours with swollen testicles before he would masturbate, and then it was with Frau Blomberg's hand on the tiller.

From Private Neurosis to Public I

seen the photographs has written "depravity.") What concerns us is examining the pictures. He says photos "must have been of the incident believed that Hitler the wildest anti-Semitic fulminations lends credence to the finding which produced feelings of require urgent projection.

As we have noted, the emperor might have had a Jewish grandfather. Hitler talked incessantly about to get rid of his own blood; his grandmother and his illegitimacy by the thought that he himself was simply unbearable. Psychology on the projection of his own onto Jews. Politically, he had of the superiority of the Aryan Jews," and the terrible threat to get rid of his awful suspicion. lawyer and then his secret plot to prove positively that he could. But they could not prove the identity of his paternal grandfather shall shortly suggest, he tried way—a way that would have given

HISTORIC CONSEQUENCES ANTI-SEMITISM

Political Value of a Private

Hitler's personal need for political asset in helping him soon shared by thousands of one simple explanation for all parties also offered scapegoat Hitler's. The Communists offer

OD: ADOLF HITLER

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b writers as Samuel Pufen-
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they believed that freedom
ite to which they assigned
e disdained democracy. He
ty with his commitment to
l thinking ended in virtual
e *German Idea of Freedom*:
(-66, 87-90, 124).

The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History

great city shall tremble before him . . . he shall command the mightiest ruler of the world and reign over earth and sea." Woe to those who refuse obedience to this German Leader, for these "he will exterminate [ausrotten]. . . ." He would establish a kind of crude socialism, and people of German blood would live together in one harmonious *Gemeinschaft*. His Greater Reich of the German Nation would extend far beyond the borders of Germany, for he would be a mighty conqueror. All of Central and Eastern Europe was to come under his direct control. Western lands would also feel his power: "The Kings of England, Sweden and Denmark, being of German blood . . . will receive their crown and kingdoms as fiefs of the German Nation." To consolidate his vast dominion, the German Hero would build a magnificent new capital of Germania, "the city in the middle of Germany greater than Manoaah in America and richer in gold than Jerusalem at the time of Solomon." ¹¹

A British authority on Grimmelshausen, writing smugly in 1931 at a time when the German Republic was struggling for survival, found the fantasies of Grimmelshausen and his dreams of conquest really quite diverting. "One can smile," he said, "at the idea of other European countries as vassals of Germany." ¹² Just ten years later, he would have found the prospects neither preposterous nor amusing.

The Contributions of Prussian Kings

Two souls lived in the Prussian state of Frederick William I and Frederick the Great. One soul was capable of culture; the other was hostile to it.

—Friedrich Meinecke

Two centuries before Hitler was born, two Prussian kings—father and son—were building institutions and leaving memories which the Austrian would find of inestimable value in creating his dictatorship. Both monarchs would probably have been appalled by their contributions to his success, yet they provided Germany with an early model of "a well-ordered police state." Word for word, a scholar's description of their government can be applied to the Third Reich. Like Hitler, they demanded "tyrannical control and supervision of every facet of public and economic life," and exactly as in Hitler's Reich, there was a "downgrading of the individual in favor of the community, as personalized by the ruler." ¹³

Frederick William I (1688-1740), laid the foundations upon which Hitler would build a militarized society. He was the creator of the Prussian Army—or rather, as Mirabeau commented in a memorable mot, "Prussia is not a country that has an Army; it is an Army that has a country." The king's demand for devotion was not very different from the fanatical commitment the Führer required of those who swore a sacred oath to him on the Blood Flag of 1923. The oath to

** A. H. broods on how to encourage the
Army leaders to love not only Prussia
but all of Germany. 253*

38

1469

1938

*

1937

56

HITLER'S YOUTH

In the Nazi period, the 'unassuming' Braunau became a veritable Mecca, where the devout considered themselves amply rewarded for their pilgrimage if they could come away with a 'genuine' splinter, price twenty marks, from the 'authentic and original' bed in which the Führer had been born. Today people refuse to believe that, but it is true, and what is equally true and should not be forgotten is that this cult developed in some quarters into an attempt to canonize Hitler, or 'to elevate him to our altars' as Lev, the Reich Minister of the Interior, had the temerity to suggest in his radio speech after the attempt on Hitler's life in July 1944.

Passau, Bavaria

In August 1892, when Adolf was three years and four months old, his family moved to Passau in Lower Bavaria, where they remained until April 1895. During those years Adolf learned to talk, assimilating from local children a dialect akin to that spoken in his Austrian birthplace, so that in later life he looked on the speech of Lower Bavaria as his mother tongue, 'reminding me,' as he said in *Mein Kampf*, 'of the days of my childhood'. When he went to Munich in 1913 he thus felt at home at once, whereas during all the five years he had spent previously in Vienna he had never got used to the Viennese dialect or been able to think of it as anything but a jargon.

In Passau, he can have seen little of his father. When his mother hauled him out of bed in the mornings, Alois would already be at work in Haibach, and when he returned home for his midday meal, no doubt it would be the elder children, Alois and Angela, rather than their small brother, who would feel constrained in the presence of the brooding, authoritarian 'pater familias'. And before the latter ended his day's work, Adolf would once more be in bed. As for his mother, her fifth child, Edmund, was born in those years and around the time of his birth, in March 1894, she would have been glad to have Adolf off her hands, playing out of doors with the neighbours' children.

Thus in the most impressionable period of his childhood

ADOLF'S BOYHOOD

1938

57

Adolf was among German, not Austrian, children, not only copying their speech, but feeling himself one of them.

It is safe to assume that, while in Passau, Adolf must have witnessed the annual festivities commemorating the German victory of Sedan. Perhaps he watched them, as I did when a boy, with admiration not unmingled with envy of German achievements, and took part in the days that followed with other boys in 'waging war on the French', and was so busy scuffling and fighting that he barely had time to eat or notice scratches or torn trousers until after the battle was over. Perhaps, indeed, the Führer's hatred of the French—so untypical of Austrians as a whole—was rooted in those early games of make-believe, when he was too young to know what he was hating or why.

Adolf goes to school

Shortly before Alois Hitler's retirement the family left Passau and returned to Austria, settling in Hafeld near Lambach, southwest of Linz. The property—the so-called *Rauscher-Gut*—which his father had bought there would open new and wonderful vistas to the youthful Adolf. But almost before he had time to explore them he started his formal education, attending school for the first time in his life on 1st May 1895, ten days after his sixth birthday. The *Volkschule*, or primary school, was at Fischlam, a good half hour's walk from his home across beautiful countryside. The school itself was shabby and primitive, consisting of one room only with boys of all ages mustered in a single classroom. The teacher, Herr Mittermaier, was alive in 1938 when Hitler seized Austria and could still remember how, forty-three years before, the boy Adolf had first entered the school hand-in-hand with his twelve-year-old sister, Angela. Perhaps he remembered them so well because they were a cut above the others in the class, who would all be peasant children. The teacher described the new boy as mentally very much alert, obedient, but lively. He and his sister always kept the contents of their satchels in exemplary order. Hitler's self-portrait in *Mein Kampf* accords with his teacher's description and is no doubt accurate.

IC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

The Past As Prologue: Hitler and History

Strike him dead! At the last judgment you will not be asked for explanations.²⁵

1938
1834

anded a new and portentous
Russian nationalists empha-
religious superiority of their
nationalism that was racial.
id "bastardization" and "mon-
many. A century and a half
that "the Germans are not
not become mongrels, they
ples in their original purity."
f the race: "The German is a
om God has given the whole

lding the Leader as the incar-
d the Volk with "the invisible
yth Hitler about the positive
e moment of live forces—that
is myself, I God the Lord."²³
dozen anthologies used in the
mpire, Republic, and Third
Lesebuch—a kind of German
e following poem which chil-
were obliged to memorize:

with blood

nd;
angel²⁴

1811), like many of his fellow
al longing for "a higher peace"
is one of the authors of those
"the most beautiful political
self." One such poem of 1809
The attitudes Mother Germany
to the treatment of her enemies
legend:

disdain

S....

on the track of the wolf!

Kleist's call for revenge against the West was heard not only during the Napoleonic wars but again after the defeat of Germany in 1918. One of the striking facts about the intellectual history of the Weimar Republic was the revival of Kleist's popularity. During this period, "Kleist scholarship became a passion, the cult a crusade."²⁶ Kleist and Arndt both said a great deal more than has been quoted here. But these things they did say—and they were long remembered.

Not all German Romantics delighted in conquest and carnage. One of them, Heinrich Heine (1797–1856), after listening to some of Kleist's and Arndt's "beautiful political poetry," gave a warning and penned a prophecy in 1834 which was to be fulfilled almost exactly a century later: "These doctrines have developed revolutionary forces which only await the day to break forth and fill the world with terror and astonishment." The Christian cross had for centuries kept "that brutal German joy in battle" tamed. But, Heine concluded,

Should the subduing talisman, the Cross, break, then will come roaring forth the wild madness of the old champions, the insane Berserker rage of which the Northern poets sing. That talisman is brittle, and the day will come when it will pitifully break. The old stone Gods will rise from the long-forgotten ruin and rub the dust of a thousand years from their eyes; and Thor, leaping to life with his giant hammer, will crush the gothic cathedrals!²⁷

Few Germans at the time listened to Heine. He was too much the humanitarian cosmopolite, too much at home in Paris. And he was a Jew.

A Romantic who had more influence on later generations than on his own was the nationalist philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814). He is best remembered by generations of German patriots for his stirring Addresses to the German Nation (1807–1808), which proclaimed the German people to be unique, the primal people (*Urvolk*), and endorsed racial nationalism:

To have character and to be German [*Charakter haben und deutsch sein*] undoubtedly mean the same. . . . All comparisons between the German and the non-German are null and void. . . . We are the chosen people. Chosen by God . . . with a moral right to fulfill our destiny by every means of cunning and force.

Fichte made contributions not only to the cult of the Volk and Teutonic messianism but also to the idea of national socialism. In his influential book *Der geschlossene Handelsstaat* (The Closed Commercial State), published in 1800, he attacked the Western liberal economics of

* convert to a Jew living in Paris²⁶¹
to understand what was really
going on - 1938 Kristallnacht

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

his day and demanded that Germany create a completely self-sufficient, state-regulated economy and expand to provide "living space" for the Volk.²⁸

Among the most influential of all Romantics were the collectors of fairy stories, the famous Brothers Grimm, Jakob (1785-1863) and Wilhelm (1786-1859). Both were distinguished scholars and philologists. Their popular fame, however, rests on the results of their typically Romantic impulse to rediscover the distant past by gathering ancient stories and legends of the German people. Their edition of these Volk-stories had an enormous impact. By 1815 it had sold more copies than any other book with the single exception of the Lutheran Bible. For a 150 years and more, German children were lulled to sleep as the lessons of these stories sank deep into their little heads. Modern child psychologists have learned that Schiller was quite right: "Deeper meaning lies in the fairy tale of my childhood than in the truth that is taught by life."²⁹

The first lesson of the Grimm tales is that little children must respect authority and be very obedient. Such is the message of a frightening story entitled "The Girl Without Hands." In it, the devil orders a father to cut off the hands of his little daughter. The father asks the little girl if she understands his predicament: he certainly doesn't want to cut off her hands, but he has been given orders by authority. The daughter responds dutifully: "Father Dear, do with me what you will, for I am your child." Thereupon she lays down both her hands, and her father hacks them off at the wrists.

Obedience and discipline are also driven home in one of the shortest and most memorable of these bedtime stories, "The Willful Child":

Once upon a time there was a child who was willful, and would not do what her mother wished. For this reason God had no pleasure in her, and let her become ill, and no doctor could do her any good, and in a short time she lay on her death-bed. When she had been lowered into her grave, and the earth was spread over her, all at once her arm came out again, and stretched upwards, and when they had put it in and spread fresh earth over it, it was all to no purpose, for the arm always came out again. Then the mother herself was obliged to go to the grave, and strike the arm with a rod, and when she had done that, it was drawn in, and then at last the child had rest beneath the ground.³⁰

To be sure, there are some sweet and charming little stories, but the number of tales involving bizarre physical and psychic cruelty is appalling. Let us consider the following scenes taken from a dozen or so of the stories, and note particularly the visual imagery they evoke in a child's mind: a queen boils and eats her own children; a young man is required to sleep with a corpse to keep it warm; a king's

The Past As Prologue: Hitler

daughter is torn apart by wicked stepmother (Grim into a barrel filled with eyes are cut out; a pretty into a vat filled with putre up, put into a pan, and father; a stepmother plan an old women cuts off th upon drops of blood fro In the original version of sisters cut off their toes the slipper, and their eye awaited Hansel and Gret eaten.³¹

Little Germans of 1 stories to admire racial pu outsiders—such as stepm mosity. But hatred for the tense that the Grimms ass stories, the heroes are usu middle-class merchants te larly true of the Jew. He culture; he dresses badly, is a miser who delights i coward who whines when of these bedtime stories, it edition as prizes for the yo

Another of the well- founder of German gymn of 1813, Friedrich Ludwig (1778-1852). One of the concept of *Volkstum*—the tory—and in 1813 he calle of Iron and Fire . . . The Vc sins."³²

Of course, it must no current running in the ti during the Napoleonic era world's most creative philo. (1749-1832) and Schiller magnificent expressions of (1768-1834) and his fello individual personality; and calling for civil rights and the impact of these politi to the historic forces th humanist tradition toward

1938
Hitler ponders this story. Would the Cossacks
people under him rise to a height equal
to the nobility of this daughter?

Quite possible, he thinks. After all,
most people are disinterested in themselves.
It is not so bad, these people, to die in glory.
P.T. He is especially astonished and. It
was equal at the least to mine.

I believe that the absolute love for everything that was German which Pötsch combined with his aversion to the Hapsburg Monarchy was the decisive revelation for the young Hitler. This fervent devotion to the German people gave him a firm foundation for the rest of his life.

Adolf Hitler remained grateful to his old history teacher throughout his life, indeed his attachment to school and teacher grew with the passing of the years. In 1938 Hitler came to Klagenfurt and met Pötsch again. He spent more than an hour in a room alone with the frail old man. When he left the room he said to those accompanying him, "You cannot imagine how much I owe to that old man."

But these subsequent opinions of Hitler's about his teachers should not falsify the real picture of his schooldays any more than the subsequent opinions of the teachers about their former pupil — not to speak of the very contradictory opinions of his numerous classmates. The truth is — and I am witness to it — that Adolf left school with a fundamental hatred for it. I would take care not to bring the conversation round to the subject; but he sometimes would be seized by the necessity to hold forth against it violently. He never tried to keep in touch with any of the teachers, not even with Pötsch. On the contrary, he avoided them and pretended not to recognise them when he met them in the street.

His quarrel with school was going on at the same time as another conflict, which was much more important to him: his settling of accounts with his mother. This expression should not be misunderstood. Adolf tried to spare his mother as much as he could. But this became impossible when he finally failed at school and so gave up the career which his father had envisaged for him. Adolf was much more pre-occupied with this psychological conflict than with the eternal guerrilla war with the teachers. What did he care about bad reports? But to his mother they meant that Adolf would not reach his goal.

* the beginning of his sense of the Volk.

I myself witnessed how Adolf during the last school year, and her because it was impossible to go away elsewhere. Where, he did not know for many years after his mother's death, the greatest worry, the future of her son.

In those gloomy days of autumn, on the razor's edge. Superficially, the decision had to take was whether to repeat the technical school at Steyr, or leave meaning for him was graver: should he continue on a path which he knew was less for him; or should he ignore the cause his mother and choose the path he could only say that it was the path to which one can understand, didn't offer much.

But in view of his nature this was a decision in the true sense of the word. There was no dilemma at all. He simply and, leaving school, he embarked on a new path without looking back. But he knew how to live by this decision and this, I know, with grief.

In those months Adolf passed through the gravest during the years of our friendship by his falling seriously ill. He had lung trouble. His sister Paula noticed it. Others again assert that it was some kind of autosuggestion. I visited him at his illness, because I had to give him some medicine. Stefanie, who even at that time he could remember, his illness was actual. I know that for a long time afterwards he had coughs and nasty catarrhs, especially in the chest.

Also, in his mother's eyes, he was a failure from continuing school. Thus, it just

* She was afraid he'd be a failure.

beliefs; but none of this meant that he had changed his own radical and revolutionary views. He was more than a demagogue; he was a populist. Often Hitler insisted that he was not a dictator. Dictators were petty tyrants,* often dependent on small coteries supporting them by force. He saw himself as the leader not of a determined minority but of a majority. "We National Socialists are the better democrats," he said several times during the years 1933-1935.† He agreed with Goebbels when the latter pronounced (in 1934) the existence of a "new Germanic democracy." While he was contemptuous and dismissive of parliamentary democracy and of the democratic "pretensions" of Great Britain and the United States during the war, in his speech on 30 January 1941 he said that "the National Socialist Revolution defeated democracy through democracy!"

Shocked and stunned as he was in 1918 by witnessing and living through the collapse of the German empire, Hitler was not a monarchist—even though before 1918 we have no evidence of his hostility to the Hohenzollerns (as contrasted with his consistent hostility to the Habsburgs). Because of his need for conservative support there were few—if any—antimonarchical statements by Hitler during the period 1929-33, or until well after his assumption of the chancellorship. There were German (especially North German) conservatives who as late as 1934 hoped that Hitler would consent to a restoration of the monarchy in Germany. But after Hindenburg's death, with his consolidation of the chancellorship and the presidency, his dismissals of the—for him long-antiquated—hereditary idea and the monarchical principle (and not only in Germany) began to accumulate. A significant—and, for him, revelatory—event was his state visit to Italy in May 1938. He was repelled by what he saw as the creaking ceremonials of the Italian royal house, the precedences of court society, the corruptions of the Roman aristocracy, the personal weaknesses of the Italian king. By having

"I am not a dictator and will never be one . . . any popinjay can rule as a dictator." Cited by Fest, *F*, p. 572.

‡Zir/A gives many instances of such Hitler statements: p. 569, note 189. See also *BU*, p. 191, Hitler's "open letter" to Brüning, 13 December 1931: "You refuse, as a 'statesman', to admit that if we come to power legally we could then break through legality. Herr Chancellor, the fundamental thesis of democracy runs: 'All Power From The People.'"

allowed its continued existence, his friend Mussolini what Hitler saw, and though many of his confidants. The events of the surviving Social period; it had, after all, been Germany from the Hohenz

The Kaiser, William II, when the German army in offered him refuge in England (or word) did he demonstrate under the German occupation a congratulatory telegraphical phrase that his great Wendung durch Gottes Fügung by God!") Hitler was content to him?† As far as he was Germany if he so wished. In a special train with the imperial Kaiser's funeral.

IN THE PREFACE OF HIS speculated: had Hitler suddenly and would perhaps still be mans in history.‡ Such a statement but the reality of it would achievements—domestic rather of his leadership of Germany

*HR, p. 417. In *W*, p. 65, Irvin chies are at most capable of having empires are won only by revolution.

†Hermann Giesler, *Ein anderer* after: OR), p. 393.

‡F, p. 25.

**Especially by a German ge mainly addressed, but also by J Deuerlein, and others); by Haffner

D. T. By
now he
knew
enough
to react
wisely on
his own

1941

1938

1929-33

1938

1933-1935
1941

(1938)

(3)

had changed his own radical than a demagogue; he was a was not a dictator. Dictators on small coteries supporting leader not of a determined Socialists are the better the years 1933-1935.† He pronounced (in 1934) the "policy." While he was contempt of democracy and of the demo- and the United States during 1941 he said that "the National policy through democracy!" In 1918 by witnessing and liv- man empire, Hitler was not a 1918 we have no evidence of contrasted with his consistent of his need for conservative monarchical statements by until well after his assumption of German (especially North Ger- 1934 hoped that Hitler would monarchy in Germany. But after the end of the chancellorship of— for him long-antiquated— principle (and not only in significant—and, for him, revelation May 1938. He was repelled by the Italian royal house, by the corruptions of the Roman of the Italian king. By having

any popinjay can rule as a dic-

statements: p. 569, note 189. See pp. 13 December 1931: "You refuse, power legally we could then break central thesis of democracy runs: 'All

allowed its continued existence, by sharing his rule of Italy with the monarchy, his friend Mussolini had made a grave mistake. That is what Hitler saw, and thought, and found it now proper to express to many of his confidants. Then he decided to raise the pension pay-ments of the surviving Social Democratic ministers of the Weimar period: it had, after all, been their great merit, he said, to have freed Germany from the Hohenzollerns in 1918."

The Kaiser, William II, was living in exile in Doorn, in Holland, when the German army invaded Holland in May 1940. Churchill offered him refuge in England, but William refused. Not by a single act (or word) did he demonstrate compassion for his Dutch hosts under the German occupation. When France capitulated, William sent a congratulatory telegram to Hitler, repeating the pious senti-mental phrase that his grandfather had uttered in 1870: "Welche Wendung durch Gottes Fügung!" ("What a turn of events ordained by God!") Hitler was contemptuous: "Didn't anything newer occur to him?"† As far as he was concerned, the Kaiser could return to Germany if he so wished. In June 1941 William died. Hitler allowed a special train with the imperial relatives to travel to Doorn for the Kaiser's funeral.

IN THE PREFACE OF HIS great biography in 1973, Joachim Fest speculated: had Hitler suddenly died in 1938, he would have been—and would perhaps still be—regarded as one of the greatest Ger-mans in history.‡ Such a statement may have shocked some readers, but the reality of it would be recognized by others.** For Hitler's achievements—domestic rather than foreign—during the six years of his leadership of Germany were extraordinary. Not only did he

†HR, p. 417. In *1/w*, p. 65, Irving cites Hitler on 23 November 1937: "Monar-chies are at most capable of hanging on to what has been conquered. World empires are won only by revolutionary movements."

‡Hermann Giesler, *Ein anderer Hitler*, Leoni am Starnberger See, 1977 (here-after: GR), p. 393.

§F, p. 25.

**Especially by a German generation to whom, of course, Fest's *Hitler* was mainly addressed, but also by many biographers who preceded Fest (Heiber, Deuerlein, and others); by Haffner later; and, more recently, by Zitellmann.

1938

1940

1933-39

1937

1929, 33, 38, 44

(3)

1934: "In Germany bayo-
government is supported by
I have not been imposed by
I have grown up, in the
return. My pride is that I
with greater right than I can
le." Fest's insight is consid-
ish a tyranny [Gewaltherr-
er is insufficient to explain
be studied as [yet] another
een that Hitler himself said
wish to be one. Kershaw
"To suggest that Hitler's
aving aside difficulties with
ate only a partial truth."‡ In
oon that at least until 1938
but an authoritarian state,
orships in the Europe of the

urse, a difference between
s, between, say, Hitler's on
or Pilsudski's or Metaxas's
than one of nuances. Most
tain total control over per-
attention on *the state*, we
ces Hitler's vision—and his
emporary dictators, including

it, was a creation of the
(Renaissance Italy and then
ears ago; in an age marked
narchy, aristocracy, democ-

racy—and that Hitler's vision of history and of the future entailed a radical break with the institutions of the Modern Age. He would have agreed with Tocqueville on one thing: that the age of democracy was now irreversible. One hundred years before Hitler's assumption of power, Tocqueville projected a new kind of tyranny, peculiar to the democratic age: the tyranny of a majority. What was perhaps peculiar to Hitler was his establishment of a tyranny not so much of but *through* a majority.* "The state"—i.e., state interests, the security of the state—was a sacrosanct term in the modern world, even in Stalin's Soviet Russia, at the latest by 1939.† But already in *Mein Kampf*, Hitler had written that "the state is but a means to the end" ["Der Staat ist ein Mittel zum Zweck"]. And—with all of the compromises he had to make for the sake of the state—he remained consistent about this priority till the end. In March 1929, he said: "For us the idea of the Volk is higher than the idea of the state." On 10 May 1933: "It is not an accident that religions are more stable than forms of states." On 6 April 1938, he put it tersely in a speech in Salzburg: "In the beginning was the Volk, and only then came the Reich." Or, in his significant speech to officers in the Platterhof in May 1944: "The state is only an enforced frame-work" [eine Zwangsform].‡ On 5 September 1934, in Nuremberg:

*Zitelmann (ZIT/B, p. 85) cites Haffner: In 1933, among the German majority there existed a widespread feeling of freedom, of being "relieved of [parliamentary] democracy." He adds: "Hopes for a revival of national greatness were joined with utopian aspirations for a better, more socially minded society. It may sound paradoxical: but the end of [parliamentary] democracy seemed to mean to many the beginning of true popular rule."

†The term *the state*, originally anathema not only to Marx but also to Lenin, had become sacrosanct in the Soviet Union by 1939. (It may even be argued that Stalin's 1936–39 purges signified in large part the transformation of a party bureaucracy into a state bureaucracy.) In any event, Stalin (who, the very opposite of Lenin, was not a revolutionary but a statesman) discovered the supreme importance of the state at the very time when Hitler found that supreme importance to be outdated—another example of the backwardness of Stalin's Communism compared with Hitler's National Socialism.

‡Jäckel (JHW, p. 99) also cites MK: "The question of the external structure of the state . . . is not of principal importance, it only serves certain practical purposes." Haffner (HF/AN, p. 86) goes further—in my opinion, correctly—recognizing the significance that "in Hitler's political system the state plays an entirely subordinate part."

Stengracht told me, the Führer considers to hold this measure for an eventual entry of America in the war."^{*}

In any event: the reason Hitler gave no written directive ought to be obvious. He knew what these measures meant,[†] and he also knew how their evidence would shock people throughout the world—including Germany. Like other decisions throughout his career, the Final Solution had to be (and to remain) a state secret. There is plenty of evidence of directives to that effect.[‡]

To this we may now add something else. The mass extermination

^{*}Koeppen notes in *IFZ*, 20 September 1941, p. 21. It corresponds with Goebbels's diary, 19 August 1941: "We also talk about the Jewish problem. The Führer is convinced that his former prophecy in the Reichstag had come true, that if Jewry were to succeed to provoke a world war again, he would end that with the extermination [*Vernichtung*] of the Jews. . . . In the East the Jews must pay the bill; in Germany they have already partly paid it, and in the future they will have to pay more. Their last refuge is North America; and there too they will have to pay sooner or later. . . . In any case the Jews will have no reason to laugh in the future. . . . And will not rest until we too have taken the final measures against Jewry." On that day, Hitler allowed Goebbels and Heydrich to order the compulsory wearing of yellow stars for the remaining Jews in Germany.

Broszat (in *vFZ*, October 1977, p. 761) considers that Hitler's unwillingness to proceed to a wholesale deportation of Jews from Berlin in November 1941 may have had something to do with the presence of remaining American journalists in Berlin. Haffner (*HF/AN*, p. 142) dates Hitler's decision to proceed to extermination only in early December 1941, "[after] he abandoned all hope of a negotiated peace with Britain (and the associated hope of preventing America from joining the war)"—and he had to face the end of the German offensive before Moscow. I think this is too late. (There is one symbolic coincidence: the first gassing of Polish Jews took place in Chelno on 8 December 1941.)

[†]In his speech to officers on 26 May 1944: He had to eliminate [*entfernen*] the Jews. "One could of course ask me: Well, could you not have done this more simply—not simply; for anything else would have been more complicated—or more humanely?" Cited also by Broszat, p. 759.

[‡]Görlitz-Quint, 60, pp. 552–53: His original plan was ghettoization, but then he consciously went along with the gassing plans as "head of the state . . . this dark side of [his war leadership] was even more strictly kept as a state secret than was the euthanasia program." (For that a written Hitler order did exist—if only because it was necessary to free German physicians from their oath to preserve life.) Fleming, *FL*, p. 20: "Already at the beginning of the euthanasia program," Hitler ordered that "the Führer's Chancellery must under no circumstances be seen to be active in this matter." *FL*, p. 22, quoting Jodl at Nuremberg: "The 'Final Solution' of the Jewish

of Jews was a state secret side world or even to Hitler's own secret—that knowledge away anything about its det. One consists of his must be looked at and was his refusal to be accused of not being people close to him—into camps in the east their being forced to

question was a 'masterpiece of planning,' perhaps not the best everything . . . including the sense of criminal justice author and the cause of all people." Finally, there was on 11 July 1943: The word term "Special Treatment" is allowed.

^{*}As late as in his speech will become acquainted with objective solution of the (pp. 446–47: "England too the last minute.")

[†]Throughout the war, I work. On 17 July 1941 to do or Madagascar, is the same about Madagascar—and a Regent Horthy in April 19 responded, plaintively, that Hitler said something about they "would either have to were no other alternatives, fairly barbaric procedure than left over. Roughly speaking, men's." In 1944, Hitler asks. Speer confirmed to Fleming wanted Speer to gather Hu

^{*}Euthanasia had shown him that liquidation must be kept as the #1 secret. He said to himself "A death-quip must be kept held on this secret." I engaged him use of the word "death-quip." It must be said that when Gdolf was without wrong, he was most certainly without it.

Hitler
Speer
1938

1940-41

Death
Final Solution
program

(1)

1934

(1938)

ated us. No! We are The
ly power but those of God
depends the state!"

een Mussolini and Hitler, or
National Socialism. In the
ed, "It is not the people who
the people."* Mussolini was
paigning against the individu-
tried to institutionalize and
l to the state—harking back,
e state of the Italian Renaiss-
-ism" as an adjective. Yet his
er than totalitarian, and not
monarchy, the church, and
scist "totality." To describe
of the forms of Fascism, as
nprecise and mistaken leftist
scist" to all movements and

alism compelled him to con-
nany an occasion. Already in
lations with Mussolini above
ans and South Germans to
South Tyrol, which the Paris
had some trouble convincing
on not to imperil his poten-
n he admired and respected
al as well as realistic. I find
science in his occupation of

anfred Funke, ed., *Deutschland und
Leibes*, D, 1977, p. 817.

disleading than to call Hitler a Fas-
he term "Fascist" in F, on occasion;
w of F, this happened seldom, and
rding to which Hitler, unlike other
ences but worked for revolutionary

Austria in March 1938 perhaps more significant: "Mussolini, I shall
never forget this!" Hitler fired this emotional, and revealing, mes-
sage to the Duce when the latter had accepted the Anschluss,
meaning also the presence of a Greater Germany at the crest of the
Alps. That was months, even years, after Mussolini had proclaimed
a Rome-Berlin Axis and his friendship for Hitler, and after a large
accumulation of most reliable evidence of Mussolini having written
off the independence of Austria. Yet Hitler was relieved. He had
feared that, after all—or in the end, or at the crucial moment—
Mussolini's Italian *Staatsräson*, *raison d'état*, would kick in, more
important than their ideological comradeship.

It was to solidify his position and authority within the German
state (even more than within the National Socialist Party) that
Hitler moved against Röhm in the brutal coup of June 1934—after
which he made one of his few speeches sanctifying the cause of
the state: "The nation must know that its existence—and this will
be guaranteed by its internal order and security—will not be en-
dangered with impunity by anyone! And everyone must know for all
the future that if he raises his hand to strike at the state, then certain
death is his lot."* There was—obviously—some political calculation
behind such a statement, but it was not altogether contrary to his
own realistic beliefs. Bullock was astute in writing that Hitler's
"originality lay in his realization that effective revolutions, in modern
conditions, are carried out with, and not against, the power of the
State: the correct order of events was first to secure access to that
power and then begin his revolution."† But already in 1932 Ernst

*Cited by Fest, F, p. 644. He adds: "Repellent as the circumstances of the murder
of Röhm are, we may yet ask whether Hitler had any other choice at all. . . ."
Hitler's successor Dönitz did not comprehend this well enough. In 1945 (in cap-
tivity), he said that in June 1934 Hitler had to navigate between two opposites:
According to the radical Nazis (Röhm), the National Socialist revolution had not
gone far enough; according to the conservatives (Papen), it had gone too far. But
there was more than this kind of calculating navigation in Hitler's mind. As long as
Röhm was alive, Hitler could not count on the unquestioning obedience of the
leaders of the army, which was the only strong element in the structure of the state
that was not yet entirely subordinated to him.

†Fest, p. 257.

①

1938, 1944

"understand," rather than "ascertain"—since, unlike in the natural sciences, the purpose of historical knowledge may be understanding even more than "certainty.") There exists a substantial body of his own statements about his purposes—not only in his public speeches and his "private" table talk but well before that, in the hundreds of pages directed to what the aims of German foreign policy and German expansion should be, in *Mein Kampf* and in *Hitler's Secret Book*, as well as in the many articles he dictated or wrote during the years before his coming to power.* But here may be a case of not seeing the trees for the forest. To think (as, for example, Bullock does) that Hitler's aims were clearly set forth in *Mein Kampf*, and that therefore there was a frightening consistency in his purposes and their execution, is too simple. Recall, too, that he was also a very secretive man.† Whatever his basic ideas were (and we have also seen that there was, at least in some of them, an evolution), there were instances when he, like every other human being (not to speak of a politician or a statesman) had to adjust them to circumstances beyond his direct control. We have also seen that many of his statements were meant for public purposes, including the purpose of influencing not only large groups of listeners but men around him, and his conversants. Of course, no historian—and surely no biographer—possesses the mental powers (and, consequently, ought not to have the intellectual arrogance) to define and divide and nail down two categories of proof: (a) this was what his subject said he thought, (b) this was what his subject really thought.

**Hitler's Secret Book*, NY, 1961 (hereafter: HSB). Deuerlein is very perspicacious about this (D, p. 76): "... *Mein Kampf* is not ... a 'Timetable of a World Conqueror'; rather a summary of what Hitler himself said; lead articles for [a] 'Völkischer Beobachter.' "

†Gerald Fleming, *Hitler and the Final Solution*, Berkeley, Calif., 1982 (hereafter: FL), p. 18, citing Hitler's words to General Halder when appointing the latter as chief of staff of the army, September 1938: "You should know first of all that you will never be able to discover my thoughts and intentions until I give them out as orders. . . . In politics things are entirely different. You will never learn what is going on in my head. . . ." (Halder confirmed this personally to Fleming.) See also Schramm (SCH, p. 130), Hitler to Admiral Raeder, admitting his own "three ways of keeping secrets."

We may say—at the risk of posing to make German certainly the greatest in achievement of a new people (which involved the eventual unity of nearly in a single Reich. We may his minimal aim,* even though with any great consistency would evolve and change. of expelling Jews from Germany in 1940) of expelling them (1941), when emigration would have masses of them extermination of the remnant (a complicated matter return). There is, of course, Jews (at least in Germany) of Hitler's. There is also a "raum": to obtain, or conquest settlement in the east of Europe; and, despite Hitler's intentions and directives concerning them and directives concerning them were less consistent than his.

This is the main reason for the view, according to which an Russia leading to *Lebensraum*.

"God writes straight with crooked lines." He achieved this (except for Austria) millions of Germans abandoned the land of Germany; after the war, millions of Germans in Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia. There were few Germans in the East which was perhaps the most enduring. †Schreiber (SCHRB, p. 65) mentions only twice. (The term came first early as 1897.)

D.T.:
his
just
but also
his for
governing
been that
he did not
know himself

just so great and my influence knew
his, silence, and statement - "One need only
[1941] speak the truth if it is a large truth and new
beliefs you mean it."

in Linz who treated Hitler's mother during her last, painful illness. In March 1938, the old Dr. Eduard Bloch saw Hitler's triumphant entry into Linz from the window of his apartment in a house on the main street. Thereafter he and his family were treated with circumspection by the National Socialist authorities, who assisted his emigration to the United States. On 16 November 1938, before his departure, Bloch sent a letter to a Renato Bleibtreu, the director of the Viennese office of the NSDAP Central Archives, enclosing Bloch's medical record book of 1907, to be transmitted to the Führer. This was a remarkable letter, sentimental, memory-laden, and deeply melancholy, and yet not a groveling one. It included a long description of the young Hitler at the time of his mother's death, who left a long and searing impression on this physician's memory: "In my almost forty-year-long practice I have never seen a young man who was so struck by pain and sorrow as the young Adolf Hitler! I had the impression that here stands a man before you of whose very being, of whose heart, a piece had been torn out! . . . I have the conviction that he has not forgotten his mother's doctor, whose practice has been governed not by material but ethical considerations; but I am also convinced that the same principles govern thousands of my coreligionists whose many spiritual sufferings are the same as mine."^{*}

There is a humility in Dr. Bloch's letter that I find deeply moving. I write "humility"—which is of course different from cowardice, just as confidence differs from arrogance. The great historian Jakob Burckhardt once wrote that humility is something of which the ancient world was not capable; it was a virtue brought into our world by Christianity. Was Hitler capable of humility? Hardly: except on that occasion on Christmas Eve in 1907, when before this modest Jewish doctor he bowed deep, thanking him for what he had done for his mother.

^{*}To this were added another two pages, dated 7 November 1938: "Recollections of the Führer and of his [departed] mother." These are reproduced in Schenck, *PH*, p. 520ff. In these pages Schenck demolished Binion's thesis about Bloch's medical errors and his medical—and financial—irresponsibility. (See also Dr. Bloch's article about Hitler in *Collier's*, 15 and 22 March 1941.)

* Bloch warns him of the pain his mother will suffer. "If medicine were not so backward, there would be a mechanism invented that would allow me to take her pain into myself."

The C Chapter

*Hitler in the hist.
The problem of "public opi
Third Reich—
cla:*

THE HISTORY OF GER includes Hitler. This perhaps understand mans who shy away from it. the statement of a German re Hitler does not belong in G presumably also other non-C understandable—and excusal mans to regard the Hitler ye tory of their country and of chapter, suggesting something are popular inclinations and non-German people (perhap women) to the effect that Ger was but another German thi Second War, a continuation one. What we face here are e tions of a perennial question:

even when he had to impose them against the judgment of the best-trained general officers in Europe.*

There was one important—and historic—realization that Hitler made, and which served him well. This was the return of the supreme importance of land power. Sea power was the prime key to history, wrote the American Admiral Mahan (who was respected in Germany as well as in Britain) in the 1890s. That may have been true for centuries, perhaps, but no longer. The motorization of military movement changed that. In Napoleon's time the English, if not necessarily victorious, were unconquerable while they could sail rings around Napoleon's European empire, landing here or there with ease. But latest by the 1930s, armies could move faster on land than amphibious forces at sea. Hitler knew (and he said so on many occasions) that the horrible and senseless trench warfare of World War I, million-man armies struggling on the Western front in the mud for a few miles gained or lost, would not return. He was fascinated by the automobile, in many ways. The mobility of armor was even more important than its firepower.† Among his opponents the French, with the exception of Colonel, later General, de Gaulle, almost entirely failed to comprehend this; Franklin Roosevelt, as late as 1941, insisted that "naval power was the key to victory," which was still true in the Pacific and the Atlantic, but not in Europe; Winston Churchill had learned this quickly. All the superiority of the Allies at sea (and even in the air) was not enough; Hitler had to be defeated and Germany conquered on land. Perhaps Stalin knew it; but then the Russians have always been land animals.

*Schramm, *sch*, p. 147: "It would be a mistake to belittle Hitler as a strategist, or to deny that during the first half of the war he developed conceptions regarded as masterly even by many skeptical experts." P. 190: "Undoubtedly Hitler was able, by his methods, to get much more out of the German Wehrmacht than even the most sanguine optimist would have believed possible." Bullock, *too* (*bu*, p. 588): "Hitler, the outsider, who had never been to a university or a staff college, had beaten the Foreign Office and the General Staff at their own game. It is customary to decry this achievement. . . . [But] if Hitler . . . is justly to be made responsible for the later disasters of the German Army, he is entitled to the major share of the credit for the victories . . . the German generals cannot have it both ways."

†Yet he studied naval handbooks in great detail. He was able to recall many details about the speed, armor, tonnage, and gunnery of enemy warships. Fest (*f*, p. 306) recognized Hitler's realization of the passing predominance of sea power.

ON 30 JANUARY 1933, a depressed nation which felt itself gripped by what to anticipate. Except envisaged the worst, most a new order that was both expected. There was a race past—this in spite of Hitler's lution was being accomplished. There was, however, a common with the rest of the world.

It was not only that the nation of power was inadequate observers. (This is evident in many newspapers during the Depression, despite the despite the recurrent elections many passed in 1932, that assertive than at any time July 1932, which virtually acknowledged both by the opinion with a shrug of the desultory disarmament coalition was increasingly stiff reason to believe that the have risen in the 1930s evolution of this argument does is a brief discussion of how made good use of the traditional German Foreign Ministry

*On one occasion, Goebbels, a Nazi, "he belongs to an entirely different world as a [German] was an unusual word for Hitler to

At any rate, the Vienna/Munich question has not been raised to the point where it became a matter of argument among historians. Most (though not all) of them have—properly—dismissed assertions connecting Hitler with some of the bizarre and extreme racist and anti-Semitic groups and pamphleteers during his Vienna period—for example with Jörg Lanz-Liebenfels, set forth in a 1958 book (H. Daim, *Der Mann der Hitler die Ideen gab* ("The Man Who Gave Hitler His Ideas")). At the same time, serious consideration is due to Heer, who in 1938 produced the richest mass of material about Hitler's "Austrianness." Heer went so far as to claim that Hitler's character had been fully formed between 1905 and 1908 in Linz; that is, before his move to Vienna. This is debatable, but what is not debatable is the mass of Heer's kaleidoscopic and encyclopedic evidence of the Austrian—and Austrian-Catholic—elements in Hitler's thinking. Besides Hitler's "Austrian" mannerisms, gestures, and habits, remarked by many people (very much including his secretaries), this evidence accumulated again during the war, when, in that last chapter of his life, Hitler talked more and more about his memories of Vienna, often in a mood of nostalgia, praising (this was quite unlike his mood in *Mein Kampf*) many things about Vienna's atmosphere, culture, theaters, actors, and so forth. However, we must keep in mind that Heer's main interest was not the "Viennese" but the Austrian Hitler. In Heer's view it was the Austrianness, not the Viennese years, that had been formative. His most telling statements and quotes include startling, and at times shocking, proof of how certain conservative Austrian Catholics and their institutions not only welcomed Hitler in 1938 but expressed themselves both before and after 1938 in truly Hitlerian terms.* Heer's tremendous

*One example: Carl Freiherr v. Bardolff, a conservative and before 1914 the Archduke Franz Ferdinand's close adviser, greeted (as had also other high officers of the old Austrian army) Hitler enthusiastically in March 1938. In his subsequent book Bardolff described World War I as "the great war of the world against Germanism." The archduke and his close advisers never allowed "the representatives of the Jewish press to enter the Belvedere" (the archduke's palace). "It was Franz Ferdinand's absolute conviction that Freemasonry, Materialism, Liberalism, Marxism and Jewish world capitalism" were enemies. He ended his book (*Soldat im alten Österreich*) "with a full homage to Adolf Hitler, springing from my heart."

knowledge of Austrian history, his own religious and psychological into Hitler's career and character, the Vienna/Munich question seems to suggest that the occurred before Munich: his acquaintance, written from the Hitler speaks of the "inevitable Germany."† There is also something with his comrades in the dugout.

Together with such contradictions among Hitler's principles, the most decisive questions of the years in Vienna on his behalf. German historians more than authors wrote in the same book ["Weltbild" and "Weltanschauung" selves very early in Vienna."‡

*In another book by Heer (*Land in Hitler*, highly talented with many gifts from his Austrian background: his knowledge of that knowledge, and Hitler's lay in his understanding of human we

Interesting, too, is Heer's argument Austrian emperor Joseph II as much as the Great. Also telling: Hitler's decision: Catholic and Nazi Seyss-Inquart Reich government: "That, too, was on Hitler to Austria."

†Letter to Ernst Hepp, cited in M. volume: "Those of us who will be blessed: homeland cleansed of aliens . . . by thousands, their blood spilled every day not only of [foreign] but domestic one nationalism, to be destroyed. That was territory." These sentiments accord with

‡GQ, pp. 43 and 61: "Weltbild" and that these two words are not necessarily argument was made by GQ. Jäckel did purposes it is unnecessary.

1938-9

0

and perhaps even hated his
s were made to connect Hitler
age, foremost among them the
e illegitimate son of a Jewish
ix the fact of fatherhood with
of some historians are suffi-
haler-Schicklgruber relation-
ing else. Yet we may consider
ize "mere possibility"—that
was half Jewish (perhaps also
ence there were people, young
out his father, true or not). It
described his father as "liberal"
was not, and that he heard
in his fourteenth or fifteenth
of his father—which, again,
Deuerlein was one of the few
ughout, the possibility exists
Hitler's father can never be
ert's perspicacious argument:
e Führer projects on the Jew;
y's suffering is the fault of the
n Professor Binion's psycho-
g to which Hitler hated the
streated) his beloved mother;
at hatred then burst forth in
of his martyred mother. Men
they hate (and fear) in them-
e age of thirty, was moved by

"MOVED BY HATRED"—WE HAVE enough evidence of this, includ-
ing Hitler's own words. But such a general statement is no more
than the observation of a psychic tendency. Allow me to repeat: The
true motives—or, in other words, the real sources—of Hitler's
Judeophobia are not ascertainable. What is more—and legiti-
mately—ascertainable is the evidence of his expressed purposes.
There is a difference between legal and historical evidence, but for
both the great commonsense maxim of Samuel Johnson properly
applies: "Intentions must be gathered from acts." Truth is a slippery
fish, and law is often a coarse net: but even law, or at least English
law, admits "motive" as evidence only when it refers to an intention
expressed. The historian's search for and admission of evidence is
not constrained by the categories of legal procedure. Potentially all
is grist to his mill—which makes his work both easier and more dif-
ficult than that of the lawyer or judge. But he, too, must be aware of
the difference between motives and purposes; he must eschew the
categorical, and often false, attribution of psychic motives—a pesti-
lential intellectual habit of this century—while his task includes
looking for evidence of his subject's expressed purposes.* In other
words, the psychic sources of Hitler's motives are one thing, while
expressions of his intentions are another—and the historian's prin-
cipal task is the attempt to comprehend and describe the latter, not
the former, including the evolution of when and how those inten-
tions resulted in acts.

There was an evolution in Hitler's Jewish policies—its stages cor-
responding, by and large, to turning points of his life and career.
His original policy was expulsion: to force all Jews to leave Ger-
many. Then came the first change, in the winter of 1938-39, force-
fully expressed in his speech of 30 January 1939: He saw the coming
of a war; if so, the Jews will have made it and they would have to pay
for it. From this time on, his intentions involved more than the Jews
of Germany and Austria—they involved all the Jews of Europe. In
his mind the war and Jews were inseparably connected. It was only

1938-9

red, see chapter 2. Also Schreiber,
Kampf. Antwort an Hitler (Vienna,
ed of Jews." And Edgar Alexander
(1), *Der Mythos Hitler* (z, 1937, repr.
system." (SCHRB, p. 124, note 233)

*Cf. nc, chapter 4, "Motives and Purposes."

1938-9

Hitler's Third Reich was not a party state, it was a Führer state. . . . A colossal achievement to have united virtually the entire nation behind him [by 1938]—and accomplished in less than ten years! Accomplished, moreover, on the whole not by demagoguery but by achievement. . . ." Thus wrote Sebastian Haffner, a liberal conservative with an unimpeachable intellectual reputation. And Hans Frank, in the shadow of the gibbet: the Party Congress in 1938 was Hitler's "wedding with the German people. . . . Above everything smiled the great magician Hitler, blessing, bewitching, touching their hearts. . . ." These are emotional images in the memory of a desperate man. Yet we ought not to ignore other such evidence of national confidence, such as the fantastically high German marriage and birthrates in 1938-39, together with the extraordinary drop in the number of suicides, and so forth.

We have seen that in 1939 the German people, after so many years of anti-Communist propaganda, reacted to Hitler's pact with Stalin without a murmur, indeed with sentiments of admiration—by which Hitler himself was surprised, and relieved. Thereafter, during the war German opinion and sentiment sometimes lagged behind Hitler,† and sometimes it ran ahead of him—as in the summer of 1940, when all of the surveys reported an impatience among the people about the expected invasion of England: "Wann geht es los?" "What are we waiting for?"

"The Germans," wrote Jäckel, "loved him rather than feared him." (This was not true of Russians under Stalin.) "Under Hitler the Germans never doubted, despaired, or revolted as they might have under a tyrant. Forces from abroad had to take him away from them, and only then was the spell that had bound them to [him] for over twelve years broken. . . ."‡ As late as September 1944, a call for volunteers of the year 1928 (fifteen- and sixteen-year-olds) in the Catholic "Westmark" (the Saar and the Palatinate) resulted in 96 percent volunteering. Kettenacker cites a British survey of German

*HF/AN, p. 34; HF/AL, p. 194; Frank, FR, p. 264.

†Steinert, ST/HK/D, p. 91, agrees with Helmut Krausnick, who wrote that in September 1939 the majority followed Hitler into the war with a "reluctant loyalty" [widervillige Loyalität].

‡JH, pp. 89-90. "And broken immediately." This may be put too simply.

prisoners of war near the
were convinced anti-Nazi
must of course consider the
enemy; and there is much
January 1945, the belief in
and only then, began the
then it was not an overall c

The mass of the German
loved, Hitler, while they di
Socialism and the party. I
serve this distinction—ke
such a categorical statemen
mindedness at work, too.
Or: they put their faith in
was understandable. It had
successes, with his elevatio
with the national prosperit
of power. "Hitler," wrote H
leading principle of all the r
the party, the bureaucracy,
had many reservations [Seh
ler,' was the exception. Q
'The Führer does not kno
into this!' Or: 'The good
Written shortly before his
Sight of the Gallows"—he s
in the national imagination
kind of faith, and, indeed, to

*Lothar Kettenacker, "Sozialps
Der Führerstaat: Mythos und Realität
1944, 40 percent of German prisor
the first months of 1945, 44 perce
belief in a German victory was n
Socialism or even to Hitler.)

†Frank, pp. 260-61. Another hi
tary, in *Hitler* (Chicago, 1955), "Th
trust in a single man, had revered
man then led them into the greatest

D.T. He was doing so well that I had
to wonder if not only the G.P. but the
Dankwart was also a kind of

al matters in the course of this

Hitler's career was due to his abilities. The head of the small underestimated his capacity to;† the German politicians (and estimated his political abilities; people throughout the world open statesman. Yet he proved sman—not only in peace but ly successful strategist.‡ From a successful politician and eat nation, and then—at least the greatest war machine in ld—including his leading oppo- stimate him, even though there

ich Hillgruber, who was a proponent of war theory: that the war in the West (europäisches Normalkrieg) was regret- had decisively contributed, whereas the, amounted to a heroic defense of the tern civilization. I understand the senti- ust abide by the answer that Field Mar- clamation of the German generals who "The Russians are savages!" Whereupon that in June 1941."

dbloodedness, calculation and determi- risks for the sake of limited aims—and situations—he succeeded in getting the demonstrated ability to master crises danger his triumphs through their fur-

of the word "statesman," mostly because thus Heiber in HB, p. 117: "No. Hitler ated demagogue, an inspiring speaker, der there will be something to say: but a

① 1925-1942

Statesman and Strategist 135

1938-1941

was little in Hitler's past that suggested a character comparable to a Caesar or a Napoleon. But the evidence had come, and the world had learned a bitter and hard lesson.

One—perhaps the main—source of Hitler's political and military, diplomatic and strategic, abilities may be summed up briefly. He had an ability—mostly, though not entirely, instinctive—to recognize the weaknesses of his actual or potential opponents. (And also those of his actual, or potential, allies or followers.) He did not always know with certainty what they would do; but he was reasonably confident (and often rather accurate) in understanding what they were loath to do. This stabbing comprehension of the weaker sides of human nature carried him far; but it also led to some of his greatest failures when he underestimated some of his adversaries and therefore failed to understand them.¶ Still a powerful understanding of human nature may be a principal instrument, serving not only a statesman but a strategist as well.† Napoleon Bonaparte knew this when he quipped that there are two human occupations where an amateur is often better than a professional, one being prostitution and the other war.

In Hitler's case we may have to carry this a little further, evoking Napoleon's contemporary Clausewitz, the great German theoretician of war.‡ His famous maxim that war is but the continuation of politics by other means, surely applies to Hitler. (It is of course a truism: even a tyrant prefers an opponent who surrenders rather than fights.) But Clausewitz was thinking and writing about the many dynastic wars of the eighteenth century and of Napoleon, and

1925-1942

Churchill, for example. Also, not being an optimist, Hitler was wont to expect the worst from his enemies. This went beyond attributing weaknesses to them.

‡Schramm (SCH, p. 32, note 2) cites Dr. v. Hasselbach ("the most critical and reliable of Hider's doctors"): "Hitler repeatedly asserted that one of his essential capacities, which he could depend on absolutely, was the ability to judge men. Even a brief impression was sufficient for him to be able to say what sort of a person a man was and how he could best be used."

‡Görllitz-Quint cite a Hitler statement in GQ, p. 482: "Strategy is not a secret science. It is the application of a healthy knowledge of human nature. Its basis [ihre Grundformen] may be studied at a boxing match. Armies are nothing but gigantic bodies." This corresponds to Hegel's idea according to which the state is but a human being writ large, a "Macroanthropos."

* Here, he had greater help from me. When it came to the Russians, however,

I was of less use to him. I knew that the O.O. had as many agents in the USSR as in Deutschland and in such cases where there was intensive double investment ~~was not made~~ by us, a species of wall, a psychically, confused.

‡ Be certain, whether he would in a German, I was able to supply.

* 1938-41

1938

when he takes over from Rosenberg

insight on each side