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which the existence of his state depended. I was a complete outsider to the army, to the party, and to industry. Never in my life had I had anything to do with military weapons, for I had never been a soldier and up to the time of my appointment had never even used a rifle as a hunter. To be sure, it was in keeping with Hitler's dilettantism that he preferred to choose nonspecialists as his associates. After all, he had already appointed a wine salesman as his Foreign Minister, his party philosopher as his Minister for Eastern Affairs, and an erstwhile fighter pilot as overseer of the entire economy. Now he was picking an architect of all people to be his Minister of Armaments. Undoubtedly Hitler preferred to fill positions of leadership with laymen. All his life he respected but distrusted professionals such as, for example, Schacht.

As after the death of Professor Troost, my career was again being furthered by the death of another man. Hitler regarded it as a specially striking instance of Providence that I had arrived at headquarters the night before by sheer chance, and that I had canceled my projected flight with Todt. Later, when I was having my first successes, he liked to say that the plane crash had been engineered by fate in order to bring about an increase in armaments production.

In contrast to the troublesome Dr. Todt, Hitler must have found me a rather willing tool at first. To that extent, this shift in personnel obeyed the principle of negative selection which governed the composition of Hitler's entourage. Since he regularly responded to opposition by choosing someone more amenable, over the years he assembled around himself a group of associates who more and more surrendered to his arguments and translated them into action more and more unscrupulously.

Nowadays, historians are apt to inquire into my activities as Armaments Minister and inclined to treat my building plans for Berlin and Nuremberg as of secondary importance. For me, however, my work as architect still remained my life task. I regarded my surprising appointment as an interim thing for the "duration," a form of wartime service. I saw the possibility of winning a reputation, and even fame, as Hitler's architect, whereas whatever even a prominent minister could accomplish would necessarily be absorbed in Hitler's glory. I therefore very soon extracted the promise from Hitler that he appoint me his architect again after the war.³ The fact that I thought this necessary shows how dependent we all felt on Hitler's will, even

climbed these rocks when I was young. On this hilltop, looking over the Danube, I daydreamed. This is where I want to live when I'm old.¹³ And: I won't take anyone along except Miss Braun; Miss Braun and my dog.¹⁴

Albert Speer—after 1945, to be sure—ironically characterized Hitler's exaggerated love for Vienna as a "provincial mentality," adding that Hitler "always remained one of the small-town people, an insecure stranger in the large metropolises. While he was almost obsessively thinking and planning in huge proportions, it was in a town like Linz, where he had gone to school and where everything was on a manageable scale, that he felt at home socially." The nature of this love, Speer claimed, was "one of escape."¹⁵

Yet the point here is a lot more than the contrast between province and capital: it is the nationally homogenous, "German" Linz on the one side and multinational Vienna on the other. Furthermore, Hitler experienced the rural character of the provincial town as honest and rooted in the soil compared to the sophisticated, intellectual, and self-confident metropolis. Thus Goebbels, functioning as his master's mouthpiece, remarked after a visit to Linz: "Genuine German men. Not Viennese scoundrels."¹⁶

From a biographical perspective, Linz represented for Hitler the backdrop for an orderly, clean, petit-bourgeois time of his youth, which he spent with his beloved mother, whereas Vienna was witness to lonely, unsuccessful, and wretched years. However, most important from a political angle was Hitler's goal to dethrone the Hapsburg empire's old capital and to subjugate it to the German capital of Berlin. Vienna, he said, exuded a *huge, even gigantic fluidum*. Therefore it was a *tremendous task to break Vienna's cultural preponderance in the Alpine and Danube districts*.¹⁷

Complicated Family Relations

Linz, Upper Austria's rural capital, episcopal see, and educational center, situated in a bright landscape on the right bank of the Danube, had almost 68,000 inhabitants at the time of Hitler's youth, and thus—after Vienna, Prague, Trieste, Lemberg, Graz, Brünn, Cracaw, Pilsen, and Czernowitz—was the tenth largest city in Cisleithania, as the western part of the Dual Monarchy was called.¹⁸

Although he called it his "hometown," Hitler lived in Linz only a short while, from ages sixteen to eighteen, 1905 until February 1908. Until then, his life as the son of Austrian customs officer Alois Hitler had been unsteady. The border town of Braunau on the Inn, where he was born on April 20, 1889, and which he left when he was three years

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The Imperial City

The Multinational Empire's Metropolis

What with all his dislike for Vienna, and in particular of the Viennese, Hitler would still praise this city's attraction as the center of a large empire for his entire life: *One thing of course, Hitler said, one can't create artificially; and that is the unusually intense intoxication which Vienna offered in past centuries, just as it does today, and which seems like a permanent Biedermeier. Because this intoxication, which you experience every time you walk through the pleasure grounds of Schönbrunn, he said, was unique.¹ After the campaign in France, he remarked that Vienna even matched Paris.²*

Vienna, the capital and imperial residence, reflected the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy's great international significance. After all, taking into account the total population of almost 50 million around 1910, it was the second largest in Western Europe, behind the German empire with almost 65 million and ahead of Great Britain with Ireland (45 million), France (almost 40 million), Italy (34.7 million), and Spain (almost 20 million).

However, Hitler saw Vienna's significance less in its role as the Dual Monarchy's capital than in its historical significance, in Vienna's myth as a centuries-old residence of Roman-German emperors: When I encoun-

ter the leaders of other tribes position by virtue of where I'm my homeland was a large, pos

Aware of this city's pro history, Hitler tried not to capitals after 1938 and to us capital of the "Greater Gerri he realized as late as 1942: in Berlin if in view of his own ing, he said. Even to his own, was not really a capital; for, Berlin's cityscape couldn't co said, did have its merits, since held as many cultural treasur back behind Berlin: one of ti is to create in Berlin a truly rep station and the Reich autobahn from Vienna would be overwh

After 1933 there was m but there were no investmen Otherwise Vienna's cultural at increase in political attraction, me that. There was no new co that it would have been a mi . . . of the imperial residence.³

Thus the old imperial re Joseph Goebbels observed: great plans for Vienna. . . . C it might rather lose somethi stressed that even though Vi role has to be reduced to or Vienna used to always treat t reason alone it shouldn't be ; in Austria."⁷ And as late as A has figured out the Viennese sisting of a mix between Pole essary to "keep a tighter rein

Vienna was granted on against the roaches and all the the cultural task the Vienna o needn't do anything else. If it .

* Just a few more

no doubts whatever could arise."⁷⁷ The great aim was to win the culturally all-too-lazy "German people"—which consisted only of the Viennese, to be sure—over to classical German music in order to gain ground against the Jews.

The great liberal newspapers in Vienna generally supported and promoted Viennese modernism and offered intellectuals as well as artists a forum where they could reliably reach their audience. This resulted in the far-spread accusation that in reality "Jewish modernism" was no art at all but only artificially pushed by the "Jew press" with its business sense.

This politically overheated atmosphere in Vienna led to veritable press battles between the two large camps: the "Jewish press" on the one side and the "anti-Semitic press" on the other, the "wholesome opinion of the people" pitted against "Jewish modernism." Using the very lingo of the anti-Semitic press in Vienna, Hitler said as late as 1942: *By virtue of art reviews which one Jew scribbled about another, the people, which believes anything it reads black on white, was indoctrinated to a view of art which regards everything that is altogether kitsch as the latest artistic perfection. Even during the time when he was attending the art academy, scribbles making similar noise without sense had been lanced as the works of the "seekers."*⁷⁸

In 1929 Hitler mentioned the campaign of the *Neue Freie Presse* and the *Neue Wiener Tagblatt* campaign for Bruno Walter, the conductor, as an example of the influence of the "Jewish" press. Thirty-six-year-old Bruno Walter—and Walter Schlesinger before him—conductor at the Vienna Court Opera and the most fervent pioneer of the work of Gustav Mahler, received an offer from Munich in 1912. Yet Vienna's liberal papers tried to keep him at the Court Opera. Hitler said: *No one looked at Mr. Bruno Walter as something special until then, but in the course of three weeks the name Bruno Walter was surrounded by a halo. And: Thus there was a synergy between the Jews of Vienna and Munich which gradually pushed the fourth-rate conductor Mr. Schlesinger from Vienna to the top.*⁷⁹

Reich chancellor Hitler's wrath against "Jewish" art criticism finds expression in many of his utterances, for example: *This race simply has a tendency toward ridiculing everything that is beautiful, and it frequently does so by way of masterful satire. But behind that there is more: there is a tendency toward undermining and toward ridiculing authority.*⁸⁰ However, he also displayed a personal dislike of critics: *I cannot abide people whose only job is to criticize what others do.*⁸¹ As Reich chancellor he prohibited all art criticism in the press and decreed that only "contemplations of art" and reports be allowed.⁸²

Much of what Hitler said later is virtually identical with his anti-cultural utterances from his Viennese period, for example, when in *Mein*

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ter the leaders of other tribes in the Germanic realm, I am in a wonderful position by virtue of where I'm from: I can point out that through five centuries my homeland was a large, powerful empire with an imperial city.³

Aware of this city's pronounced self-confidence, which was based on history, Hitler tried not to allow any rivalry to develop between two capitals after 1938 and to use all available means to develop Berlin as the capital of the "Greater German Empire." That this was not an easy task, he realized as late as 1942: You can't blame someone from Vienna arriving in Berlin if in view of his own hometown's cityscape he finds Berlin disappointing, he said. Even to his own face people from Vienna once told him that Berlin was not really a capital; for, culturally, Vienna was superior anyway, and Berlin's cityscape couldn't compare with Vienna either. This remark, Hitler said, did have its merits, since there was hardly another city in Germany that held as many cultural treasures as Vienna. But proud Vienna had to step back behind Berlin: one of the Third Reich's most important tasks, he said, is to create in Berlin a truly representative capital. To begin with, even the train station and the Reich autobahns' ingresses needed to be such that even someone from Vienna would be overwhelmed by the impression: that's our capital!⁴

After 1933 there was much construction in Berlin at great expense, but there were no investments in Vienna after 1938 for political reasons: Otherwise Vienna's cultural attraction will be too great. That would lead to an increase in political attraction, and that simply must not be. History has taught me that. There was no new construction in Vienna; the official reason was that it would have been a mistake to try to surpass the magnificent buildings . . . of the imperial residence.⁵

Thus the old imperial residence of Vienna was systematically sacked. Joseph Goebbels observed: "The Führer doesn't have any particularly great plans for Vienna. . . . On the contrary, Vienna has too much, and it might rather lose something than gain anything."⁶ And: "The Führer stressed that even though Vienna is a city with over a million people, its role has to be reduced to one of a provincial city. . . . Besides, he said, Vienna used to always treat the Austrian provinces so badly that for that reason alone it shouldn't be given a leading role in the Reich, not even in Austria."⁷ And as late as April 9, 1945, he noted: "The Führer certainly has figured out the Viennese correctly. They are a repulsive bunch, consisting of a mix between Poles, Czechs, Jews, and Germans." It was necessary to "keep a tighter rein" on them.⁸

Vienna was granted only renovation work: Vienna will start the war against the roaches and all the filth. The city needs to be cleaned up. That is the cultural task the Vienna of the twentieth century has to accomplish; it needn't do anything else. If it does that, it will be among the most beautiful

* Just a few weeks before our suicide

Metropolis

In particular of the Viennese, as the center of a large empire and, one can't create artificially; which Vienna offered in past like a permanent Biedermeier. Every time you walk through was unique.¹ After the camera-matched Paris.² Hence, reflected the Austro-national significance. After all, of almost 50 million around Europe, behind the German or Great Britain with Ireland only (34.7 million), and Spain

once less in its role as the Dual significance, in Vienna's myth than emperors: When I encoun-

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Goebbels *

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cities in the world.⁹ Hitler also included in this cultural task the "cleansing" of the nationally mixed population according to "folkish" criteria, that is to say, the battle against the "un-German" character of Vienna as the capital of a multiethnic empire with a centuries-old mix of Hapsburg peoples.

The Emperor

Every pupil in the Dual Monarchy, certainly including young Hitler in Linz, knew Emperor Franz Josef's title by heart and was as familiar with it as with the Lord's Prayer. This title expresses the centuries-old history and complexity of this multinational empire with conquests, inheritance, and money matches: "Francis Joseph I, Emperor of Austria by the grace of God, King of Hungary and Bohemia, of Dalmatia, Croatia, Slovenia, Galicia, Lodomeria, and Illyria; King of Jerusalem, etc.; Arch Duke of Austria; Grand Duke of Toscana and Cracow; Duke of Lothringia, of Salzburg, Steyer, Carinthia, Crain, and Bukovina; Grand Duke of Transylvania; Margrave of Moravia; Duke of Upper and Lower Silesia, of Modena, Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla, of Auschwitz and Zator, of Teschen, Friaul, Ragusa, and Zara; Princely Count of Hapsburg and Tyrol, of Kyburg, Görz, and Gradisca; Prince of Trient and Brixen; Margrave of Upper and Lower Lausitz and Istria; Count of Hohenembs, Feldkirch, Bregenz, Sonnenberg, etc.; Lord of Trieste, of Cattaro, and the Windy Mark; Great Duke of the Dukedom of Serbia, etc., etc."

Some of these titles had come to have merely historical significance, for example, that of "King of Jerusalem." Even the titles of Toscana, Lothringia, Silesia, and even the Swiss ancestral castles of Hapsburg and Kyburg were only remnants of long-lost Hapsburg property. Similarly, the impression the title leaves of a uniform Hapsburg empire is misleading. For since 1867—after the defeat at the hand of Prussia and the "settlement" with Hungary—the empire was divided in two and was called "Austro-Hungary." Since 1867, as king of Hungary, Emperor Franz Josef resided in Budapest, the Hungarian capital, several weeks a year, where he issued rules in Hungarian, clad in a Hungarian uniform, with Hungarian ministers and a Hungarian parliament.

After 1867 both parts of the empire went in more and more diverging directions. On one hand was strictly Magyar-dominated Hungary, ruled by a strong majority, with Hungarian as the national language; on the other hand was heterogeneous, multilingual Cisleithania, split into many parts, with a parliament that was usually nonfunctional and governments that were unstable. Particularly after 1906, when universal and equal suf-

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 this monarch; this flattery was all the more welcome in the Hofburg [imperial castle], since it corresponded not at all to the real merits of the Emperor.¹³

And elsewhere he said: Worst of all are the kings who have become old. If you touch one of them, everybody immediately starts yelling. Franz Josef certainly was a lot less intelligent than his successor, but a revolution against him, no way was that possible. He embodied an aura, even though there is no monarch who was beaten more than he was. He let everything happen and didn't do a thing.¹⁴

Like probably everyone in Vienna at the time, young Hitler had a certain degree of interest in life at court, particularly in his first year, when he lived near Mariahilfer Strasse. There the old emperor passed in his car twice a day, in the morning from Schönbrunn to downtown to take care of government business, and back at night. There were always spectators in the street who waved to the monarch or simply stared at him as an attraction. Kubizek wrote: "When we saw the emperor, Adolf neither made a big deal about it nor talked about it, for he was not concerned with the emperor as a person but with the state he represented: the Dual Monarchy of Austro-Hungary."¹⁵

Hitler and Kubizek were, however, familiar with the imperial residence's attractions. For example, Kubizek reports that a few times they also went to hear the imperial court's orchestra to listen to the Sängerknaben, the famous boy choir, like most tourists, and to take the opportunity to watch the famous changing of the guard at the castle.¹⁶

Hitler also witnessed the emperor's most spectacular public appearance, the procession on Corpus Christi Day. Aide-de-camp Albert von Margutti told the story how, early in the morning, the emperor went to Saint Stephen's in a state carriage drawn by six horses, "the arch dukes preceding him in state carriages drawn by four horses. . . . The wagons, made of glass and full of gold ornaments, the stallions' precious harnesses—magnificent Spanish-bred white horses—the coachmen, lackeys, and servants holding the horses in their gold-embroidered black rococo dresses, with white stockings, shoes with buckles, and wigs under the large tricorns and bicorns decorated with golden braids and ostrich feathers." Then followed reverences by the gorgeously and colorfully uniformed bodyguards in front of Saint Stephen's Cathedral.

After the service came the famous procession: first there were the members of the order of knighthood in their robes, the clerics, the cardinal-duke-archbishop with the monstrance underneath the portable canopy, Immediately behind this "heaven" strode the emperor as a humble Christian, bareheaded and holding a candle, followed by the archdukes, the aristocracy, the court's dignitaries, the mayor, the city council,

and many others. According to "one of the most impressive

The young man from Li guards (called Hartschiere in silver helmets with tufts of v pants, and long black patten Hitler would relate: Of course in front of the procession on C. ing—what a picture! They w hurt them. His conclusion: M something extremely useful: it whole shebang, did make sense

Hitler also liked to de front of the Court Opera: W members of the imperial court, the ladies with their precious je before the World War was bec women with their diadems, splk box occupied. The emperor u enough.) And at another o hereditary monarchy, which : crowned ciphers at least into si

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and many others. According to Margutti, everything put together was
 "one of the most impressive attractions in the whole world."¹⁷

The young man from Linz was mainly impressed by the Arciere body-
 guards (called *Hartschiere* in Vienna) whose state uniforms consisted of
 silver helmets with tufts of white horsehair, gold-laced red dresses, white
 pants, and long black patent leather boots with tops.¹⁸ As late as 1942,
 Hitler would relate: *Of course, if I post Hartschiere; when they were marching
 in front of the procession on Corpus Christi Day, everything was literally shak-
 ing—what a picture! They were so harmless, not even the revolution would
 hurt them. His conclusion: Mankind needs an idol. . . . Monarchy instituted
 something extremely useful: it artificially created the idol. All that fuss, the
 whole shebang, did make sense in a way.*¹⁹

Hitler also liked to describe how the carriages would drive up in
 front of the Court Opera: *What splendor when before dress performances the
 members of the imperial court, the archdukes in their uniform full of gold and
 the ladies with their precious jewels got out of the carriage!*²⁰ And: *The opera
 before the World War was beautiful! It too contained culture, incredible! The
 women with their diadems, splendor all over! . . . I had never seen the imperial
 box occupied. The emperor was not musical, I guess.*²¹ (Which was true
 enough.) And at another occasion he mentioned all that insanity of the
 hereditary monarchy, which needed all those pompous ceremonies to turn
 crowned ciphers at least into something after all.²²

The "Reich German" Princes Pay Their Respect

In 1908, the first year of Hitler's period in Vienna, the imperial myth was
 tended to as pompously as never before or after: Franz Josef, who had
 ascended the throne as an eighteen-year-old in 1848, the year of the
 revolution, celebrated sixty years of reign—a unique anniversary in the
 history of the Hapsburgs.

For a long time the weary, depressed emperor rejected any big, long
 anniversary celebrations. Yet their proponents listed important reasons:
 it would help trade and tourism and decrease unemployment. But above
 all, the festive mood, focusing on the old emperor and the fact that he
 would be paid his due respect, would strengthen patriotism and counteract
 the battle between the different nationalities.

Very late, not until March 11, 1908, the emperor reluctantly gave
 in to his advisers' arguments and approved celebrations and a parade.
 The latter was supposed to depict the history of the House of Hapsburg
 and give all the monarchy's peoples the chance to pay their respect to
 their emperor through deputations. The festivities were to be more

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low, and referred to both 1848 and the Versailles Treaty of 1918.

party's newspaper—reported, used to take place, received an emperor."⁷⁶

important day of commemoration of the "people's emperor" Franz Josef II, was an additional link between that the March revolution of 1848, Vienna's Josephplatz. The revolution with flower wreaths and national songs.

kind of political camps which were German Nationals, Liberals, as nationalists saw in him "Joseph"—and only he—had ruled the in a tight centralized manner official language, which, after Journalists unsuccessfully kept trying the Hofburgtheater, which transformed the aristocracy, into a German rather than Italian operas, come to write *The Abduction from the* all this certainly had no German—the Age of Enlightenment made an nationalists in their attempts to

arians used the cliché of "Joseph schs. They took donations to erect language areas and near the borders most notably in the Sudeten district area around Linz—and on anniversary—gold flags rather than Hapsburg's was such great demand for these in plants and made of cast-iron. ple, the one in Troppau in Lower the local Franz Josef monument. to be a German," became a slogan ing rallies. German-folkish alma-

nacs contained pages and pages of sayings by the emperor, right next to those of Bismarck and Schönerer.

Yet the Liberals too revered Franz Josef II, particularly as a reformer who had eliminated the privileges of church and nobility and had relaxed censorship of the press. Protestants and Jews were grateful to him for the 1781 "patent of tolerance" for non-Catholics. The poor revered Franz Josef II as a "people's emperor" who had abolished serfdom, fought against corruption, and had an open ear even for the most destitute. He brought the Enlightenment to Austria, following Frederick II of Prussia, whom he fervently admired. According to general consensus, his vigorous reform policies prevented the outbreak of a revolution, which in France claimed his younger sister Marie Antoinette as a victim.

Everyone was familiar with the legend of Franz Josef II's plowing in the Moravian village of Slawikowitz and thus paying his respect to the agrarian class. Around 1900 the image of the plowing emperor was used by Georg Schönerer for propaganda in order to win over the farmers from the Clerical party to the pan-German camp. He generously paid for monuments of "Joseph, the friend of the farmers."

The cult around Franz Josef II flourished in the Hapsburg empire whenever times were rough, and was always a sign of criticism of whoever was ruling. During his reign, for example, every celebration of Franz Josef criticized the country's extremely close ties to the church, the political predominance of aristocracy, military, and church, as well as the fact that Hungarians and Czechs were favored over the Germans.

Even years later, when Hitler was already Reich chancellor, he would praise Franz Josef II as the only laudable exception among the otherwise hated Hapsburgs and consistently used the arguments that were generally employed in Vienna around 1910. Thus in 1941 he remarked with appreciation, *If Germany was spared the French Revolution, it was only because Frederick the Great and Josef II were around*⁷⁸—yet another Viennese stereotypical slogan.

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On March 15, 1938, the Heldenplatz (Heroes' Square) was the magnificent backdrop against which Hitler's first great rally took place in Vienna. One reason for the choice of place was because it was so large. But it also had a strong historical tradition, particularly for the German nationalists. The "heroes" to whom the name refers were the soldiers of the Napoleonic and Turkish wars, as well as the "unknown soldier," whose monument is inside the Heldentor (Heroes' Gate) to this day. The classicist Heldentor, erected in 1824 in remembrance of the Leipzig Battle of

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household expenses shows that the book starts in February 1908, where the household consisted of "Haniaunt." Apart from needed some sixty kronen per eggs, milk—which indicates fre-

too had money problems. Fre-ave seriously diminished, if not why he went to Waldviertel was some, namely "Haniaunt," who A postcard congratulating Ku- with a view of Weitra Castle, of that he did make the trip.⁶

int." The 1908 book of the Linz unfortunately undated, by "Han- writing: twice, and very conspic- awkward handwriting a loan to Johana Pölzl" and "Adolf 924 is money—which was explicitly in Waldviertel.

1908 the nineteen-year-old again Academy, but this time was not arently there were a great number during that year—and Kubizek more than anything else. At any legedly asked him during a meet- and attended? . . . You clearly have school diploma was required for the result of all these disappoint- an autodidact.⁸

at his apartment at Mrs. Zakreys's new address. The reason for his ans disappeared in the big city but, the same day with the police at 22 andlady, Helene Riedl—this time far from Stumpergasse, but a little would stay there until August 20, ad his own room or perhaps just a

returned to Vienna as planned

of 9 months

and found his friend gone, he was at a loss. The next time he was in Linz he inquired about the move of Angela Raubal, who received him coldly, saying "that my artistic endeavors were partly to blame for Adolf as a twenty-year-old still having no job and not making a living."⁹ The bad blood between the siblings must have had something to do with the old quarrel about the orphan's allowance—and was also the likely reason for Hitler's playing hide-and-seek with Kubizek, who after all was the only connection to his relatives in Linz. That way Hitler also kept his sisters from finding out about his latest failure in the exam and from trying to collect his allowance. At any rate, Angela did not know where Adolf lived. She said that he had not written her again. Kubizek notes: "All of his relatives considered him a good-for-nothing who categorically shied away from any work that brought in money."¹⁰

The Great Inflation

There are no sources or eyewitnesses whatsoever for the year 1909 in Hitler's biography, and there is only one verifiable date: on March 4, 1909, after one year, he canceled in writing his membership for Linz's Museum Association, thus saving the annual membership dues of 8.40 kronen.¹¹

Whether part of the reason for this glaring lack of sources for 1909 is that they were systematically destroyed later on—that is to say, whether there was something that was worth hushing up—cannot be established. There is no doubt that it was a difficult time for Hitler. Right at that time, when the money from his aunt was about to run out, he must have suffered those hardships he liked to expound on in the years to come. But—he later said—at least he had reason to feel grateful to that period for drawing the mother's darling out of his soft downy bed and giving him "Dame Care" for a new mother; for hurling me, despite all resistance, into a world of misery and poverty, thus making me acquainted with those for whom I was later to fight.¹² Ultimately, he said in a monologue in 1941, his sufferings in Vienna had turned into the greatest blessing for the German nation.¹³

1941

No matter how frugally he may have lived, the money he borrowed from his aunt could not have lasted more than nine months. To be sure, government student loans were no more than 800 kronen annually either,¹⁴ but it was impossible to live on that amount without jobs on the side, such as tutoring. The minimum subsistence level, for which no taxes were collected, was 1,200 kronen.

According to a public list, salaries for civil servants were as follows: in the lowest, the eleventh salary group (for example, office clerk, bridge

ed in the workers' district
1910—where, contrary to
elters with 1,434 beds alto-
more, in 1911 by far most
had been in the shelter for
for newcomers. Without
place.

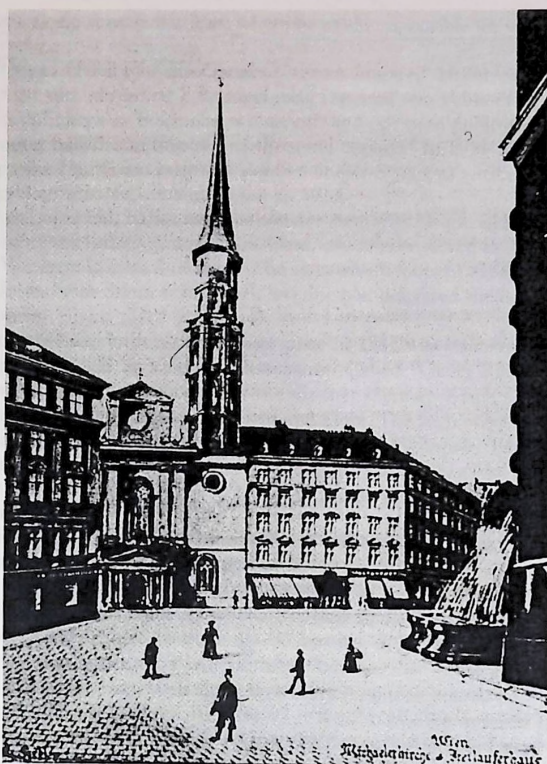
the men's hostel, Hitler sat
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to see, above all, views of
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Hanisch says, had nothing
too stiff. At any rate, he

ob Altenberg complained
These were the cheapest
any interest in them were
venirs."¹⁴

paintings were praised as
artistic past and the steep



The Michaelerplatz in an eighteenth-century view, copied by "A. Hitler":
at the left, the Loos House during Hitler's time

1944

price increases for his paintings went so far that Hitler felt forced to step
in lest he be embarrassed in front of experts. In 1944, when the price for
a "genuine Hitler" was up to ten thousand marks, he said to his friend,
the photographer Heinrich Hoffmann, *Even today these things shouldn't
cost more than 150 or 200 reichsmark. It is insane to spend more than that
on them. After all, I didn't want to become an artist, I painted that stuff only*

unity of the German people" politician would turn Schönerer's into the slogan *human right* su- precisely what Schönerer had was were to one's people, and nd, that a people was not bound them in order to achieve unity. followers among all national-

as men of national and patriotic policy and the disenfranchise- of governmental power, a na- tion is not only the right of every

ed the German people, which the only possible way to go: a an-Austrians' Anschluss to the age to cry "Hoch Hohenzollern" they still regarded themselves as an Reich, and never let a moment d me with joyful confidence; that owed their colors without reserve, to me the only still passable road

ted the title "Führer" and in- like Schönerer, he did not tol- " but only the truly Germanic t a leader and his obligation fully nd omissions. In it there is no the decision of an individual who is choice.⁴⁵ Only a small group crucial is not the quantity but y is always larger than a white-

nerer, but also examined his example, he wrote that the should, on purely psychological opponents, since this leads to a his realization led Hitler the- inst the Freemasons, Jesuits, many other enemies, but to

focus on one single enemy: the Jews, whom he made responsible for virtually everything that was wrong.

In 1938, as "Führer of the Greater German Empire," Hitler paid homage to the idol of his youth by supporting the final two volumes of Eduard Pichl's Schönerer biography, which still had not been published yet, purchasing half the edition of one thousand copies.⁴⁶ In 1939 Munich's Hapsburg Square was renamed Von Schönerer Square as a tribute to the Hapsburgs' greatest opponent prior to 1918.

On April 27, 1941, Hitler had a Schönerer memorial plaque affixed on the house of the former Austrian Reichsrat, which now served as the NSDAP's Viennese District Building.⁴⁷ The aggressive opponent of democratic suffrage, Franz Stein, Schönerer's last disciple, delivered the ceremonial speech.

Schönerer's hundredth birthday observance in 1942 was celebrated with a large exhibition in Vienna's Messepalast. Called "Georg Ritter von Schönerer, Herald and Pioneer of the Greater German Reich," it was organized by the old Schönererians Pichl and Stein. The high point of the exhibit was a quote from Schönerer, prominently displayed: "Pan-Germany is and has been my dream, and I am concluding with a Heil to the Bismarck of the future, the savior of the Germans and the shaper of Pan-Germany!"

The Special District Office "Inner Front" press office also dug out the following quote from the large treasure of Schönerer quotes, which was fitting to the war: "I am the first one to confess not only preaching love but also hate, and I am the first one to stand up for the fact that everyone who loves his people must also be capable of hatred. And as soon as my son has grown up, I will ask him: Can you love? And if he says yes, I will reply to him: Well then, love everything that is good and beautiful in the German nation! And then I will ask him: Can you feel hate too? And if he says yes, I will say to him: Well then, hate everything that is bad and everything that is harmful to the German people."⁵⁰

In an advertising brochure for the Schönerer exhibit in 1942, Stein even troubled John the Baptist to provide a quote to the effect that Schönerer was "the voice, forerunner, and seer . . . who could not live to see fulfillment so that someone mightier could come after him to complete what he started."⁵¹

Franz Stein and the Pan-German Labor Movement

During Hitler's Vienna years, when Schönerer was still his followers' cult figure but no longer personally present, Franz Stein embodied the Pan-

1943

honorary grave. The film *Vienna 1910*, in which a great number of stars appeared and which had its premiere in 1943, was a tribute to Lueger. The fact that, in a crude black-and-white way of presenting things, Schönerer served as Lueger's negative antipode, angered "the last Schönerians." In response to Stein's protests, Joseph Goebbels noted in his diary: "There is a radical political clique in Vienna which wants to make this film fail. I won't allow that to happen." However: "No doubt Lueger was somewhat heroized." Yet "apart from a very small circle of interested people," no one was familiar with all these events anyway.²¹²

whole process of the growth of one hand, and the unprec-
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And: Schönerer was more
Lueger believed he could
Both of them were absolutely

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from the Pan-Germans
enna, does not at all signify a
ere just as German-national,
Democrat as the Christian
papers of both of them is

Hitler by no means became
noted those parts of Lueger's
thus his sympathies definitely
when he was still in school
mentioned that he ever went
long as I knew Adolf Hitler, I
vice."²⁰⁹ He maintained that
had not joined the Christian
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either can Hitler's constant in-
into agreement with the spirit
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icals": when there was a battle
one, Hanisch reports, the *Arbei-*
procession, and on that occa-

ger was that he was never really
as far as Jews and Slavs were
Schönerer to be more consistent.
tribune" and "German man," as
to the "people" many different
himself to one single enemy—the
national leaders at all times consists
the attention of a people, but in

once again came to life. The
Lueger's sister Hildegard in an

Undated note by Hitler for a speech: "The aim of the Czechs / what are the Czechs aiming for? / planned-out preliminary work / Czechization in the former Austria"

had with Czechs, but no friend-
fold relationships with Jews in
the personal relationship between
his first landlady in Vienna, an
Czech accent and, as far as her
knowledge of German. Young
her. According to Kubizek, in
the only human being in this city
could associate."⁵⁸

were of a slight Czech-Viennese
"Tschapperl," this—coming from
non—something like "awkward
little one."

Czechs" had hardly anything to do
only only repetitions of old Vienn-
in 1942: Every Czech is a born
other obligations. One must not
the more dangerous he becomes.
most dangerous one, because he is
more Mongoloid than Slavic. He
loyalty. . . . I don't despise them,
Hitler has penetrated our folkdom,
one of the reasons why the Hapsburgs
problem through kindness.⁵⁹

ed in Vienna was that the Czechs
went to their superiors but kick their
knew from the experience of a

half thousand years . . . how best to act like vassals without arousing suspicion. How many Czechs, he said, were gadding about in Vienna when I was young, quickly learned the Viennese accent, and then deftly maneuvered themselves into important positions in Government, the economy, and so forth.⁶⁰

We can also detect the old Viennese condescension toward the "diligent" Czech who was fit to be a vassal, when in 1942 Hitler told his guest, Reich Leader SS Heinrich Himmler: *The Czechs were better than the Hungarians, the Romanians, and the Poles. A diligent petty bourgeoisie had formed which was keenly aware of its boundaries. Even today they will look up to us with both anger and boundless admiration: We Bohemians are not meant to rule!*⁶¹

Hitler considered Lueger's system of "Germanizing" the Czechs via the language not resolute enough. *Nationality or rather race does not happen to lie in language but in the blood.* Hitler said that I remember how in my youth Germanization led to incredibly false conceptions. Even in Pan-German circles the opinion could then be heard that the Austrian-Germans, with the promotion and aid of the government, might well succeed in a Germanization of the Austrian Slavs; these circles never even began to realize that Germanization can only be applied to soil and never to people. For what was generally understood under this word was only the forced outward acceptance of the German language. Yet it was a scarcely conceivable fallacy of thought to believe that a Negro or a Chinese, let us say, will turn into a German because he learns German and is willing to speak the German language and perhaps even give his vote to a German political party. That was a de-Germanization and the beginning of a bastardization and a destruction of the Germanic element.⁶²

In any case, Hitler planned "to resettle all elements that are racially of no value from Bohemia to the East" after the war. "The individual Czech, he said, was diligent, and if they were spread over the occupied Eastern territories, they might be quite good as supervisors. The Führer stressed again and again that he personally knew the Czechs extremely well."⁶³ On the other hand, he found the resettling of the Czechs and the aimed-for "Germanization" of Bohemia and Moravia too slow, which is why later on he believed a Germanization was possible, but only if merciless strictness was exercised toward rebels.⁶⁴

When in 1939 he moved his troops not only into the Sudetenland but also into the clearly non-German "rest of Czechoslovakia," this was hardly in line with his slogan "One people, one Reich, one Führer." He used flimsy excuses and referred to the Hapsburgs' tradition, for instance, in 1942: *Czechoslovakia, he said, just wasn't a structure that had internally grown into an independent state; rather it had remained a former Austrian nation state beyond its modeling itself after German culture.* Hitler said that

1942

vention. Between 1907 and 1914 Trotsky lived in Vienna with his wife and children, worked there as a newspaper correspondent, edited the Russian *Pravda* for workers, and was on friendly terms with Vienna's Social Democrats. In his speech he praised the solidarity of Austria's Social Democracy with the Russian Revolution, saying: "The Russian workers were enthusiastic mainly about two speeches, that of Comrade Adler's powerful indictment in Austria's first parliament of universal suffrage against the sentencing of our second Duma party group, and of Comrade Ellenbogen's glowing speech in the delegation concerning the torture of political prisoners. I recall these two speeches with gratitude."⁶⁸ Because Adler, Ellenbogen, and Trotsky were Jewish, the anti-Semites had new "proof" of their assertion regarding the attempted "Jewish world rule" with the help of international Social Democracy and the "Jewish press."

The third supporter on the road to the coming world revolution supposedly were the "money Jews." The *Brigittenauer Bezirks-Nachrichten* commented on some 300 international economic experts, who had convened according to news reports⁶⁹: "These 300 men are from the tribe of Judah and bequeath their right to rule within their families. They are the 300 kings of our time, who rule in actuality, pushing the old monarchs down to the mere level of sham princes." The German nation, the paper said, was ruined and "denationalized."

The Jews were allegedly planning "the establishment of an international alliance of banks with its seat in Washington" and would soon "publicly dictate its laws to the world": "High finance is destined to become the successor to empires and kingdoms, and with a lot more authority at that, since their authority will rule not only one country but the whole world." The local newspaper, with which Hitler was very familiar, drew this conclusion: "We all struggle and get incensed, and even have fights with one another when we get worked up, while the Jew turns the wheel of history, laughing scornfully."⁷⁰ Hitler the politician turned the myth about the Jewish revolution into a keystone of his propaganda, usually in connection with the Russian Revolution of 1917—for instance, in a 1942 speech: We know the theoretical principle and the cruel truth about the aims of this global scourge. It is called rule of the proletariat, and it means dictatorship of the Jews! It implies the extermination of the peoples' national leadership and intelligentsia, and the Jewish-international criminals' exclusive domination over the proletariat, which will then be without leaders and thus defenseless through its own fault. What had happened in Russia to such a horrifying extent, the extermination of countless millions of leaders, was supposed to continue in Germany.⁷¹

At any rate, after 1918 and 1919, the young politician put his finger

on the pulse of his time with cause of all misery, "the Jew over the other peoples of the humanity and this planet will thousands of years ago. Even her commands. Hence today will of the Almighty Creator fighting for the work of the learn to combat poison gas war that this is a question of to be

He never participated
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There can be no doubt that Semitism, among other things his political models—Schö anti-Semites. Many newspaper pamphlets he perused for when he was already Reich had a Viennese ring to it that he mastered the anti-S all its characteristic clichés, as Albert Speer, initially a vulgar byproduct, a relic from why he couldn't shed it."⁷⁴

Thus it seems to be clear straightforward line, especially Kampf of how he had become a time of the greatest spiritual ceased to be a weak-kneed coward he said, had significantly changed the time of this bitter struggle, visual instruction of the Vienna

As the decisive event Hitler mentions—in 1924, to an Eastern Jew. The apparition made him wonder: Is this a Jew? Once again, he says, this experience. For a few hellers I bought the happened then, he continued Semite's typical obsession:

* Mein Kampf
Installation

1942

on the pulse of his time when he announced the fight against the alleged cause of all misery, "the Jew": *If the Jew and his Marxist creed are victorious over the other peoples of the world, his crown will be the funeral wreath of humanity and this planet will move through the ether devoid of men, as it did thousands of years ago. Eternal Nature inexorably avenges the infringement of her commands. Hence today I believe that I am acting in accordance with the will of the Almighty Creator: by defending myself against the Jew, I am fighting for the work of the Lord.*⁷² The Germans, he continued, had to learn to combat poison gas with poison gas. It is our duty to inform all weaklings that this is a question of to be or not to be.⁷³

* MK

≠ *He never participated - he merely looked*
Was Young Hitler an Anti-Semite?

There can be no doubt that while in Vienna, young Hitler studied anti-Semitism, among other matters. The four politicians who may be called his political models—Schönerer, Lueger, Wolf, and Stein—were radical anti-Semites. Many newspapers which Hitler read in Vienna, and many pamphlets he perused for his self-education, were anti-Semitic. Even when he was already Reich chancellor, Hitler's way of expressing himself had a Viennese ring to it when he elaborated on "the Jews." This proves that he mastered the anti-Semitic vocabulary of his Vienna period with all its characteristic clichés perfectly. Therefore many later observers, such as Albert Speer, initially took Hitler's anti-Semitism "for a somewhat vulgar byproduct, a relic from his days in Vienna . . . and only God knows why he couldn't shed it."⁷⁴

Thus it seems to be clear that Hitler's anti-Semitism developed in a straightforward line, especially if one reads Hitler's description in *Mein Kampf* of how he had become an anti-Semite in Vienna: *For me this was a time of the greatest spiritual upheaval I have ever had to go through. I had ceased to be a weak-kneed cosmopolitan and become an anti-Semite.*⁷⁵ Vienna, he said, had significantly contributed to his becoming anti-Semitic: *At the time of this bitter struggle between spiritual education and cold reason, the visual instruction of the Vienna streets had performed invaluable services.*⁷⁶

As the decisive event of his transformation into an anti-Semite, Hitler mentions—in 1924, to be sure, in *Mein Kampf*—an encounter with an Eastern Jew. The apparition in a black caftan and black hair locks merely made him wonder: *Is this a Jew? was my first thought. And: Is this a German?* Once again, he says, this experience caused him to read up on the subject: *For a few hellers I bought the first anti-Semitic pamphlets of my life. What happened then, he continues, was what may be called a radical anti-Semite's typical obsession: Since I had begun to concern myself with this*

* *Mein Kampf represents the installation of D.V.*

ed in Vienna with his wife
respondent, edited the Rus-
terms with Vienna's Social
Solidarity of Austria's Social
ing: "The Russian workers
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be without leaders and thus
ppened in Russia to such a
millions of leaders, was sup-

ing politician put his finger

would have dropped Austria. I
der to save a political cadaver.³⁷
then place much sooner: But this
diplomacy, that it had always
until it was forced to strike at the

Hapsburg monarchy, Hitler always
he expressed his respect: Franz
because of the latter's plans for
Austro-Hungary's allegiance in
er policies. In 1941 Hitler said
army in World War I: *The most
War was perhaps Conrad von Hötz-
nally and militarily necessary, all he
The "instrument" Hitler was re-*

Day, the Führer of the Greater
as a sign of his admiration: at
Ludendorff's grave in Tutzling, and
Friedhof Cemetery in Vienna.⁴⁰

military history, we may believe
1921. *Since my twenty-second year I
ry history, and through all those years
and world history.*⁴¹

Pan-German writings. It was mainly
Austrian history, as Professor Poetsch
but also in what was dealt with in
battles and strategies, from the
from 1848 to the culmination of
German army's victory over France
the foundation of the "Second"

Bismarck, Hitler owned only a single
of the Franco-German War of 1870-
ed treasure" mainly because as his
to and a symbol of father and son's
onal Reich as created by Bismarck.
much liked to talk about that war's
naive knowledge. He had the same

admiration and knowledge for the war of 1866.* He knew all the com-
manders of the war and admired Moltke and, above all, Bismarck the
most. The latter was his greatest idol." According to Anonymous, young
Hitler only excluded one Hohenzollern from those he admired, quite in
accordance with the Schönerians—Wilhelm II: *That political baby dared
fire Bismarck! Yet all his power was the work of Bismarck.* As Hanisch reports,
Hitler dismissed Wilhelm as a *conceited babbling who poses for monuments.*

Later on Hitler liked to use his great factual knowledge to buttress
what he wanted to prove with fitting historical examples. In a conver-
sation with Hungary's governor Miklós Horthy during the disastrous situ-
ation after Stalingrad he recalled the battle of Königgrätz: *In war, he
said, one always knew how bad off oneself was, but never how difficult the
enemy's situation was. . . . If the loser had known how troubled the other side
was, it would have persevered and been victorious.* He illustrated this by
saying that in Königgrätz Prussia had been in an extremely critical situ-
ation around 4:00 P.M. *But the Austrians had noticed nothing about it, and
so ultimately the Prussians' stronger nerves had prevailed.* Around six P.M.
Moltke could light his famous cigar, since the crisis was over. *These observa-*
*tions, Hitler said, were also pertinent now.*⁴²

Yet as we can see from long passages in *Mein Kampf* and *Das zweite
Buch*, Hitler was thoroughly familiar not only with the course of battles
but also with the content and problems of the treaties of the Double and
Triple Alliance. To him, a preventive war against an ally was never a
moral issue, but always merely a matter of strategy and power politics.

Attempt to Dodge the Draft

In order to increase the strength of the Austro-Hungarian army in the
face of the constant danger of war, the government prevailed in estab-
lishing new draft laws in 1912. This law eased the draftees' obligations
by shortening the period of active duty to two years, with ten years of
reserve duty. However, the number of draftees was drastically increased.
Until then, 103,100 men had been drafted, but in 1912, the figure was
136,000 men; in 1913, 154,000; and in 1914, 159,000, the majority of
them from the empire's western half.⁴³ The law had been preceded by
months of debates—in the men's hostel as well, as Anonymous reports.

*The war between the Prussian-Italian alliance against Austria that led to the end of the
German Confederation. The battle of Königgrätz marked Austria's decisive victory.
(Translator's note)

From the Provinces to the Capital

The Dream of Linz

One of the last photographs of Adolf Hitler depicts him shortly before his suicide as he sits in the bunker of his Chancellery. While the Red Army advanced into the ruins of Berlin outside, he pondered a pompous architectural model of the Upper Austrian provincial capital of Linz, the gigantic buildings illuminated by a sophisticated arrangement of spotlights: Linz in the morning sun, at midday, at sunset glow, and at night. "No matter at what time, whether during the day or at night, whenever he had the opportunity during those weeks, he was sitting in front of this model," the architect Hermann Giesler reported, saying that Hitler stared at it as if at "a promised land into which we would gain entrance."¹

Visitors to whom he showed the model, often at the most unusual hours of the night, were confused and horrified: the man who had reduced Europe to ashes and ruins had clearly lost his sense of reality and hardly noticed how many people were still dying in these last weeks, in his name, and according to his will, as he continued to refuse to capitulate and end the horror.

Hitler dreamed of Linz, his hometown, which he had appointed "the Führer's sister city" and had wanted to make the Greater German Reich's

1945



45 cultural capital, the "most beautiful city on the Danube," the "metropolis," the petrified glorification of his person and his policies: Linz owes everything it has and is yet to obtain to the Reich. Therefore this city must become the carrier of the idea of the Reich. Every building in Linz should have the inscription "Gift from the German Reich."²

45 On the left bank of the Danube, in Urfaehr, opposite the old part of town, a party and administration center had been planned with an assembly area for 100,000 and grounds for celebrations accommodating 30,000 people, an exposition area with a Bismarck monument, and a technical university. According to the plan, a "district center"—with a new city hall, the Reich governor's house, the district and party center, and the Linz community center—was to be built around a national commemorative site: Hitler's parents' tomb, with its steeple, visible from far away, whose chimes were to play—albeit not every day—a motif from Anton Bruckner's *Romantic Symphony*.³ This steeple was planned to be higher than that of Vienna's Saint Stephen's Cathedral. Thus, Hitler said, he was making up for an old injustice; for, to the Linzers' vexation, during the construction of the neogothic Linz cathedral, Vienna had reduced the height of the steeple so that the Stephen's Tower would remain the highest steeple in the country.⁴ A monument "to the foundation of the Greater German Empire" was to be built too, along with a large stadium. Hitler told the Upper Danube district director, August Eigruber: *The stones for this will be shipped by the Mauthausen concentration camp.*⁵

45 On the opposite side of the Danube, in Alt-Linz—the old part of town—a boulevard was to be built under arcades, "wider than the Ring Boulevard in Vienna."⁶ A hotel was to be constructed for more than two

thousand guests there were also them an "Ad Motor Flying settlements for new streets, an rich, Hitler ad tories to Linz. almost the onl Factory" still e:

The planr in particular th the day before bought over the enlarging a galle most fervent wis

In fact, mo was a shortage March 1944 al Dutch pieces fr of June 1944 tl wrote in his di: to the Führer: competitor to give Vienna a pf.

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thousand guests, with a direct subway connection to the train station; there were also to be built the most modern hospitals and schools, among them an "Adolf Hitler School," a district music school, and a Reich Motor Flying School for the Luftwaffe. There were projects for model settlements for workers and artists, two homes for SS and SA invalids, new streets, and an access road to the autobahn. In order to make Linz rich, Hitler advanced industrialization, bringing steel and chemical factories to Linz. Transforming the farm town into an industrial city was almost the only thing that was actually realized. The "Hermann Göring Factory" still exists as the Voest factory.⁷

The planned cultural center was to have metropolitan proportions, in particular the Linz art museum, which Hitler mentioned in his last will the day before his death: *I collected the paintings in the collections I have bought over the years, never for private purposes, but always exclusively for enlarging a gallery in my hometown of Linz on the Danube. It would be my most fervent wish for this legacy to be realized.*⁸

In fact, money for this project was always available, even when there was a shortage of foreign currency during the war. From April 1943 to March 1944 alone Hitler purchased 881 works of art, among them 395 Dutch pieces from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By the end of June 1944 the museum had cost 92.6 million reichsmark.⁹ Goebbels wrote in his diary, "Linz costs us a lot of money. But it means so much to the Führer. And it probably is good too to support Linz as a cultural competitor to Vienna."¹⁰ For, as Hitler remarked emphatically, *I won't give Vienna a pfennig, and the Reich won't give it anything either.*¹¹

The most distinguished pieces for the Linz museum were requisitioned from private galleries, museums, and churches in the parts of Europe Hitler's army had occupied—for example, the Veit Stoss Altar in Cracow or the Van Eyck Altar in the cathedral of Ghent. Hitler derived particular satisfaction from transferring holdings from Vienna, for example from such "un-German" Viennese collections as those of Baron Nathaniel Rothschild. The formerly imperial Art History Museum also gave pieces to Linz, which, as Hitler remarked in 1942, *his dear Viennese didn't like at all; his dear Viennese, whom he knows so well after all, were so stodgy that when he was looking at some of the requisitioned Rembrandts, they tried to let him know in their genial way that all genuine paintings should really remain in Vienna, but that they would be glad to let galleries in Linz or Innsbruck have paintings by anonymous masters. When he decided differently, it hit the Viennese between the eyes.*¹²

Hitler planned to spend his retirement on Mount Frein above the old part of town in a building modeled after an upper Austrian farm. I

* In '45, he goes into paroxysms of rage
thinking of Vienna + his years in
the SA house.

1945

46

*

price, and they were allowed to keep their money—extraordinary privileges at that time.

Despite this special treatment, the Anschluss was the most unfortunate turn ever in Dr. Bloch's life. After so many years of respect and comfort, he lost the basis of his existence, his friends, his house, and his homeland. In 1940 he and his wife emigrated to the United States. Because his medical degree was not recognized there, he could no longer practice his profession. In 1945 Dr. Bloch died a broken man in New York.

1940-46

The Last Weeks in Linz

Some facts are known about the few weeks between the mother's funeral and young Hitler's departure from Linz in February. On January 4, 1908, Angela Raubal's child was born; she was named Angelika and later would become Hitler's "great love." On January 7, 1908, Hitler became a member of Linz's Museum Association for the steep annual fee of 8.40 Kronen; thus he became part of Linz's educated class and had free admission to the District Museum and its library. At the time the museum had the largest number of visitors since its opening: hundreds of people marveled at the "Discovery of Schwanenstadt," the entire collected household goods of a well-to-do citizen of the seventeenth century, including his clothes and everyday articles.

On January 18, 1908, the court's "inventory after death" took place in Urfahr. No property was listed,¹⁷⁴ which indicates that whatever money there was was distributed internally. An out-of-court settlement was important, because that was the only way a freezing of the inheritance of the children Adolf and Paula, who were still under age, could be prevented. Until their twenty-fourth birthdays, the paternal inheritance of 652 kronen each was in an officially frozen account anyway. Both children urgently needed money to live on, and the official orphan's pension of twenty-five kronen per month was not sufficient.

We can only guess at the amount of the inheritance. The proceeds from the sale of the house in Leonding of about 5,500 kronen in 1905 had most certainly dwindled down—on account of Angela's dowry, Adolf's expensive tuition in Steyr, his two trips to Vienna, three moves, and above all, Klara's long sickness and her funeral. In Klara's last year, inflation had seriously diminished the value of the pension of approximately 100 kronen per month. Krackowizer wrote on December 1, 1907, "Much inflation for weeks now. Rallies against this everywhere, debates

1944

bizek, his friend never designed "secular buildings or plants. . . . His imagination was always floating on higher planes, and when he made designs he never gave a thought to costs."⁴³

Later on Hitler would regret having lost those early drawings: *these were the most precious things I owned, my cerebral property, which I never would have given away the way I gave away my paintings. . . . If today I am, for example, able to sketch with the greatest of ease the floor plan of a theater building on paper, I don't do that in a state of trance, after all. All that is nothing but the result of my studies back then.*⁴⁴

1944

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Later on, witnesses would confirm how knowledgeable Hitler was. According to Speer, he could draw the Ring Boulevard and the adjoining districts with the large buildings true to scale and from memory.⁴⁵ Hitler was to tell the architect Hermann Giesler that when he was young he had also studied the large city plans of Paris under Haussmann and of Munich under King Ludwig I.⁴⁶ Indeed, as eyewitnesses noticed with astonishment in 1940 in Paris, he had precise knowledge of the great buildings in Paris, in particular of the opera.⁴⁷

scus?

How seriously Hitler was molded by Vienna also became evident when in 1942 he criticized some German monuments for their lack of artistic quality: they typically consisted of *potentates high on their horses with helmets and undulating plumes*. Of the six praiseworthy examples he mentioned, four were in Vienna—Emperor Frederick III's tomb in Saint Stephen's cathedral, the classicist monument of Joseph II as a horseman on Joseph Square, and two monuments among the group of buildings around the Heldenplatz: the group around Maria Theresia, erected in 1888 between the court museums, and Anton Fernkorn's monument of Prince Eugene on his horse.⁴⁸

Kubizek was surprised to find that his friend did not seek the opportunity "to actually apply his knowledge or at least to participate in exercises in construction drawing in university classes. He was not at all interested in associating with people who shared his professional interest and in discussing problems of mutual concern."⁴⁹ Upon his friend's worried question whether he was really planning on mastering his studies with books alone, Hitler rebuked him: *You of course do need teachers, I can see that. For me they are not necessary*. He called his friend an *intellectual boarder and hanger-on who sits at other peoples' tables*.⁵⁰ Kubizek did not try to defend himself.

As with music, Hitler proceeded extremely selectively with architecture: when it came to the modern, functional style he was at a loss and, according to Kubizek, let only Otto Wagner's streetcar system pass as something that "answers its purpose."⁵¹ Even though official Vienna



late as 1940 Hitler planned to
opera" in Berlin: *The most beau-*

"get downright intoxicated" with
tall: "Often he could look at such
trivially minor details."³⁹ "At home
of the ground plans or the longi-
tudinal interesting detail. He borrowed
of the individual buildings. . . .
formed he was about side gates,
ways or back entrances. . . . Thus
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demonstrate his views."⁴⁰

ar-old Hitler surrounded himself
in particular with a volume on
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Goebbels
Speech

Hitler - The man & military leader - Detwiler
The Ailing Empire - HOFFNER

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Bees

wax. If young bees can't produce wax fast enough, the colony takes comb from elsewhere, usually the unused outer frames, leaving huge holes that may or may not be repaired later, or they may chew up foundation to resolve the immediate crisis. Bees always have their priorities in order.

A honeyflow may last a day, several days, a week, or longer, depending on the nature of the blooming plant and on the weather. Here, bees take the pessimistic view, assuming that such prosperity can't last and they must make hay, or honey, while the sun shines. In this way they are philosophers, recognizing that good fortune is not to be trifled with but must be savored to the fullest while it lasts.



Bees, in their passionate pursuit of honey, led scientists to pose a question that baffled them: How is it that the honeybee is able to find nectar in the field, return to her hive, and direct other bees to share her discovery? By what extraordinary power of communication are they able to accomplish this feat? The answer was long in coming, but the mystery finally yielded to two forces: the invention of the observation hive with its glass walls, enabling investigators to watch bees go about their normal pursuits, and the keen perception of Karl von Frisch, a German professor of zoology, who translated the language of the bees into what he called dances, winning for himself in the process the Nobel Prize.

For years it was known that bees had a method of communication, but it was not understood until von Frisch discovered that forager scouts report their finds to the colony through a series of movements which send others scurrying to collect the

1940? D.T. on dancing.

THE QUEEN MUST DIE • 203

treasure. This is considered one of the most astonishing achievements in all of nature, speaking an intelligence independent of instinct. The information conveyed in the dances is so precise that foragers are able to fly directly to the food source by the shortest route, even if it involves a detour, as if they had a road map.

The food dances have the same intensity and form as the swarm dances previously described, but are somewhat different. Basically there are two movements. The first, called the round dance, consists of the scout running in a circle over the comb; this lasts about a minute, signifying that nectar is nearby, within a hundred yards of the hive, and foragers have only to look for it. The dancer could be saying, "You can't miss it!"

The second, known as the tail-wagging dance, is more complicated, the directions more involved, because the food source is farther away. Here we have not a single round circle, but two narrow semicircles, as if the two orbs were pushed together with a straight line connecting them in the middle. The dancer runs in a narrow semicircle, suddenly stops, and continues down the straight center line to the starting point; she then runs in the opposite direction (something like following a figure eight) to the starting point. This may continue several times, first right, then left, right, left. As the dancer heads down the straight line, she wags her abdomen, or tail, rapidly. Researchers recently found that the wagging movement is accompanied by a sound but its significance is not known.

The wagging dance signifies the presence of nectar from one hundred yards away up to the two-mile range in which bees usually forage; beyond this distance there are no known dances and the explorer is on her own, such flights involving considerable risk. The most remarkable aspect of the wagging dance is that it tells the bees how far they must go and the direction to travel; the dancer uses the sun as a reference point, traveling straight up the comb if the nectar lies in the direction of the sun, to right or left if it is to be found there.

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SEVENTY-TWO



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1940? D.T. on dancing.

THE QUEEN MUST DIE • 203

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nority only a few escaped Hitler's vengeance. They deserve respect, but they too accomplished nothing.

The "internal emigration" is another matter. There was of course an actual emigration, but emigration was not all that simple. The world was in the grip of economic crisis, and very few countries were ready to admit immigrants and allow them to work. Many Germans undoubtedly would have liked to withdraw into an inner emigration, but strangely enough that was not possible. Let me cite the example of Heinrich Lübke, the future president of the Federal Republic.

Lübke, a former leader of the Center party, had not capitulated to the Nazis in 1933, and consequently a political career was closed to him. He decided to fall back on his original profession, civil engineering, a completely nonpolitical vocation. Perhaps this may be seen as an act of inner emigration. By trading in his promising political career for an anonymous middle-class position, Lübke voluntarily accepted the loss of prestige as the price for living up to his beliefs. But can this really be called an act of inner emigration? As a civil engineer he had to work for the Reich, for example to help build camps for slave laborers, which was one of the (I believe unfair) charges later leveled against him. At any rate, Lübke has more right to consider himself part of the inner emigration than many an Anti who helped Goebbels carry out his program in the press, radio, theater, or literature.

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with the Soviet Union as his ally, was not the war Hitler had had in mind; it was the war General Seeckt and the Reichswehr had had in mind in the twenties. As mentioned earlier, Hitler saw it as the prelude to the big war against the Soviet Union, which he was going to wage with all his might once Poland and the West had been defeated.

That, however, was not to be. At first things went very well for Hitler. After a surprisingly brief campaign Poland was smashed in September 1939, and after some time during which negotiations continued and Germany occupied Denmark and Norway, France was defeated in June 1940, in a war that lasted all of six weeks. In the course of this Western campaign Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg were also attacked, overrun, and occupied.

Once Poland and France were knocked out of the war, the question facing Hitler was how to proceed with regard to England. The German Reich was not as well prepared for an invasion, conquest, and occupation of England as it had been for the war against Poland and France. It was still without a big navy; moreover, it had lost part of its fleet in its Norwegian campaign. The only chance for Hitler to land his army on the British Isles was to gain control of the air.

He tried to do this in August and September 1940, but he failed. England retained control over its air space, and that meant that a German in-

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vasion of England was not in the cards for the
foreseeable future. Whether it could still have suc-
ceeded even under optimum conditions as late as
1942 or 1943 is questionable; in the interim En-
gland had grown stronger on land as well.

The significance of the defeat of the German
air arm in the battle of Britain has been underes-
timated. The air war itself was not a particularly
dramatic development; it was not a catastrophe
on the order of, say, Stalingrad two years later.
However, it did mark a turning point, because it
showed that Hitler's victory in the West was in-
complete. If Hitler nonetheless planned to go
ahead with his war against Russia, he could no
longer do it "with all the power at [his] command."
A very tough, resourceful enemy was blocking the
way in the West, and moreover one with close ties
to the United States.

For a while Hitler made halfhearted efforts to
knock England out of the war, with air raids over
London and other English cities through the win-
ter of 1940 into the following spring. That strategy
was as unavailing as the later, far bigger British-
American air offensive over Germany, another
strategic miscalculation.

Hitler continued to be weighed down by the
war against England, and the question arose
whether under these circumstances he could af-
ford a war against Russia. After much to and fro
and many heated discussions, not to mention a
time-consuming involvement in the war between

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the question of the position taken by senior military leaders regard-
ing his individual decisions. These varied. Unanimous rejection,
unanimous agreement, or divided counsel followed each other as in
every war and under every regime. But it was always Hitler whose
restless spirit would first cast its spotlight into the dark future long
before the eyes of his military staff were able to perceive anything
tangible or threatening in that darkness—with one single exception:
the occupation of Norway. The danger that threatened our war effort
if England had been able to secure bases in Norway and thereby
block the sole reliable exit from the North Sea to the Atlantic was
perceived first by the navy. But—as in the case of all ideas he him-
self had not conceived—Hitler was initially skeptical and hesitan-
t, until in January 1940 he seized the initiative and ordered the most
daring of solutions, once there could no longer be any doubt about
the threatening intentions of England.

Let us leaf further, however, in the great memories which at some
time in the future will form a book on Hitler's strategy. First we
come upon the decision to attack in the West. The Commander-in-
Chief of the Army [General Walther von Brauchitsch] did not want
to do it. To remain on the defensive on the border and along the
Westwall, letting the war go to sleep, was his desire, his contribu-
tion to peace, which he sought to cloak behind military reasons,
particularly the inadequate preparation of the army for so gigantic
a task. Not all leading soldiers shared this opinion and belief, but it
was the prevailing opinion in the High Command of the Army.
Hitler ordered the attack through Belgium and Luxembourg, later
also through Holland. One has to use time, he said, it works for no
one automatically, but only for him who makes good use of it. And
he decided to attack in the course of the very same winter. The
generals all objected; there was not a single one who did not warn
against it. But it did them no good at all. Only the weather god was
harder than Hitler, denying us the needed period of clear freezing
weather. It was necessary to wait until the dry spring. May 10,
1940, was correctly chosen. Hitler staged his breakthrough via
Maubeuge toward Abbeville. He had overruled the General Staff's
thought of a broad encirclement [through Belgium, as in the Schlieff-
fen Plan] by initially careful but then increasingly tenacious and

1940

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unhesitating intervention in the operational leadership. Once more Hitler's will triumphed and his faith proved victorious.

First the [enemy] front collapsed; then Holland, Belgium, and France collapsed. The soldiers were confronted with a miracle. They were still amazed when Hitler gave the order to prepare for the invasion of England. Eight weeks earlier they would have regarded this order as the vagary of a madman. Now they applied themselves with faithful zeal to the work, careful and confident, exploring every dubious improvisation. But by September the British air force had not been subdued. Göring was skeptical; Raeder was cautious; in the Army High Command they were confident; Hitler wavered. He shared the army's belief that England could be beaten in a short time as soon as one was well established on the island. But whether the landing would succeed depended upon nautical imponderables which were strange to him. Perhaps this strategic decision was the only one in the course of the war in which Hitler let himself be counseled. The warnings of the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy together with an evaluation of the situation that I prepared for him decided the issue. The attempt to land in England was abandoned. Hitler turned toward the Mediterranean in order to strike at England there. But before doing so, he took a firm grip on the equipping of the army, which—all too slow, bureaucratic, and backward—had long been a thorn in his side. "The soldier should fight; that is his job. Everything else civilian specialists understand better." He created the Ministry for Weapons and Munitions under [Fritz] Todt, leaving only the building of airplanes and ships with the air force and the navy. From then on Hitler determined the monthly quota as well as the direction and scope of all production of weapons and munitions down to the last detail. All the Operations Staff [of the High Command of the Wehrmacht] had to do was to give him the exact figures: inventory, utilization, and production during the previous month. But beyond this, Hitler's astounding technical and tactical vision led him also to become the creator of modern weaponry for the army. It was due to him personally that the 75-mm anti-tank gun replaced the 37-mm and 50-mm guns in time, and that the short guns mounted on the tanks

were replaced with the like the *Tiger*, and the *König*. modern tanks at Hitler's

But let us return to the discussions. There was a militia became paramount during requested German instructed carefully, but step by step Spain showed a cold sh Canaris on the Spanish question I will not go in have to give up his plan approval. This military in of his military advisers, attack on the mighty re thought through and prepa

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*Jodl was absolutely correct who had been head of German Franco's successful effort to mented in this editor's monograph 1962), pp. 84-87, 169-70.—E

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were replaced with the long 75-mm and 88-mm guns. The Panther, the Tiger, and the Königstiger [i.e., Tiger II] were developed as modern tanks at Hitler's own initiative.

But let us return to the chronological sequence of strategic decisions. There was a military breathing pause. Political considerations became paramount during the second half of 1940. Rumania requested German instructional and training troops. Reluctantly and carefully, but step by step, Bulgaria attached itself to the Axis. Only Spain showed a cold shoulder. To what extent the influence of Canaris on the Spanish generalissimo played a role in this is a question I will not go into.⁴ Above all, it was bitter for Hitler to have to give up his plan to take Gibraltar with Spanish help or approval. This military intention of Hitler had the general sympathy of his military advisers, and even today I have no doubt that the attack on the mighty rock fortress, which we had meticulously thought through and prepared in detail, would have been successful.

But instead of being able to carry out this strategically correct plan, Hitler found himself constrained to hatch the cuckoo eggs that Italy had laid in the nest of our joint war effort. On his own initiative and despite the negative attitude of the Army High Command, Hitler had offered his friend Mussolini help in Africa. It was rejected with the explanation that tanks could not operate in the desert. But then in the last days of October 1940—in violation of all agreements not to disturb the peace of the Balkans—Mussolini attacked Greece. Hitler, who wanted to prevent this attack, arrived a few hours too late in Florence. He was enraged, but the god of war even more so. The latter had never been a friend of the Italians. And now he quickly changed sides. English tanks drove Graziani's beaten army back to the border of Cyrenaica, and instead of winning a quick victory over the Greeks, the Italians found themselves threatened with the loss of Albania and of the divisions which were holding on

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⁴Jodl was absolutely correct in implying that Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, who had been head of German military intelligence, played a crucial role in Franco's successful effort to stay out of the Second World War; that is documented in this editor's monograph, *Hitler, Franco und Gibraltar* (Wiesbaden, 1962), pp. 84-87, 169-70.—ED.

1940

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bodies at all." In this connection he accused professorial scholarship of leading away from instinct, from that "instinct" which Hitler accorded so important a place in his overall view of the world. Beyond this, he probably also had the uncomfortable feeling that his teachings would not stand up to meticulous analysis and evaluation at the hands of the professors.²

It would have been to Hitler's advantage to call in leading professionals, true experts, in order to be kept up to date on scientific research and developments. At best this was done only with medical and natural scientists, never, so far as I know, with scholars of archaeology, history, the fine arts, and so forth. If such men had been called in, however, Hitler would almost certainly have dominated the conversation. Yet it would have been very easy for him to have arranged for recognized experts to be invited from time to time to join him and his circle of mealtime companions, thereby affording a relaxed means of gaining new information. The reason Hitler did not choose to do this was suggested after the war by Dr. Karl Brandt, one of his personal physicians, in the following terms:

²Hitler's distaste for scholars was by no means reciprocated by the German academic community as a whole. A significant segment supported him months and even years before he came to power, undoubtedly lending him and his cause a certain respectability in the eyes of many uncertain observers. The distinguished German historian Friedrich Meinecke, a professor at Berlin, in a letter written early in December 1931, almost fourteen months before Hitler's appointment as chancellor, told a friend how he had vainly attempted to find as few as eight prominent colleagues to support an anti-Nazi public statement. People were already accommodating themselves to the "coming Nazi regime."

Even Meinecke himself, though he never wavered in his abhorrence of Hitler, could write in 1938 that the annexation of Austria had "thrust the whole of German history ahead in one leap and fulfilled old aspirations and ideals." Then, in 1940, the German defeat of France filled him with "profound emotion, pride, and joy," even though he still was unable to identify himself with the Third Reich. But at the same time (as he wrote on August 7, 1940, to the Austrian historian Heinrich von Srbik), he had a terrible sense of apprehension about the very nature of the Third Reich and Adolf Hitler: "It almost seems as if the propelling force behind great and necessary revolutions stems more from the evil than the good side of human nature. This brings us once more to the demonic character of historical life. But we will never be able to penetrate the veil entirely. There is nothing else for us to do but to be modest in our historical interpretations."—ED.

* epigraph - Friedrich Meinecke, 1940
after the fall of France

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ten thousand"—a term he were similarly petulant. rriffraff of idiotic stupid-leclared, "is more foolish so-called burgher class." red only tranquility and e Hanseatics, the citizens eaports, came in for an sation. There is no way o prejudiced against the o commerce and industry recover so swiftly from ver, "Führer and Reich part of the bourgeoisie,

I trainloads of functionaries a Mussolini had extended tiler was disgusted "by the to stay with the King in the lace irked him and left him se" (Alan Bullock, *Hitler*,

kanzler by Reichspräsident i. Thereupon Hitler united i) and head of government nd Reichskanzler, an act scite on August 19, 1934. tion, there is no question lid endorse him.—ED.

while also enjoying social contact with important representatives of the "upper ten thousand." Undoubtedly he sensed that many burghers and intellectuals rejected him or at best regarded him with reserve, but there is really no explanation for his negative attitude other than that he never overcame the resentments which had taken root during his youth and intensified during the years of his struggle for power. He clung to these resentments with that rigidity he maintained in all of his basic conceptions.¹

It is more difficult to account for Hitler's prejudice against professors. Since the nineteenth century they had made a vital contribution to Germany's reputation, and the results of their research—including the achievements of scholars who had nothing whatsoever to do with National Socialism—had been of great significance to the Third Reich. Certainly at the beginning of the war this was clear. But Hitler still did not like professors. "If the German professor were to be put in charge of the world for a few centuries," he declared in 1942, "there would be nothing but cretins running around after a million years—gigantic heads with hardly any

¹Hitler's relationship with the German bourgeoisie, the burgher class, is strikingly illustrated in Edouard Calic's recent edition of two conversations Hitler had with Richard Breiting, editor of the influential Saxon newspaper *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten*, in May and June 1931 (*Ohne Maske: Hitler-Breiting Geheimgespräche 1931*; Frankfurt, 1968). A member of Stresemann's moderately conservative party, a friend of later resistance leader Mayor Carl Goerdeler of Leipzig, and a man quite interested in the possibility of "using" Hitler and his movement as a brake against the serious menace of socialism and communism, Breiting had two long conferences with Hitler several months after the Nazis' first big breakthrough (from twelve to 107 seats) in the Reichstag elections of September 1930, but almost two years before Hitler would become chancellor. Hitler was scathingly condescending in his attitude toward the German middle classes. He did not need them; they needed him and his movement. He would make even faster work of them than of the Marxists. He would do whatever he wanted with them and they would obey unconditionally. Their talents were indispensable, to be sure, but only as specialists, and as such they had to cooperate and comply without question. The German bourgeoisie was rotten to the core. Once he reached power legally, Hitler would close down their Reichstag and convert it to a museum. Despite this sustained tirade, Breiting reacted relatively positively to Hitler. He was impressed by the man's personal stature, by his attitude toward big business, and by his determination to end the Marxist threat. Hitler might be a diamond in the rough, but he seemed to have a hard cutting edge that could be put to good use.—ED.

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are of the German people. es was not a mask put on children, and made genuine him.

rticularly illegitimate children considerable thought. He was m of providing security for ral unit of social existence, weds to get a start in life.⁵ nly in his public speeches, i his *Table Conversations*. connection had something y things he said could be ise despise him.

was not objectionable, but "maiden" really belonged opposition in 1941, par-stoms among the country : was no denying much of ble standards of morality m for the aristocracy to e upper middle class. On f man who accepts life as ling façade with "natural"

ghts which Hitler did not, ed to retain the esteem of : give us a deeper insight. hich Hitler drew from the lly oriented conception of

any of his German readers, ranting marriage loans and of fact, could attribute the gesse of the state during the increasing the birth rate but thereby reducing unemploy-

selective breeding. He saw nothing wrong in a racial elite having illegitimate children. Indeed he welcomed it. After the French campaign in 1940, for example, Hitler observed that he had seen much better "human material" among the youth in the combat areas of 1914-1918 than he had found there during the First World War. He felt that "German and English soldiers had brought about a Nordicizing process," the results of which are today incontestable."

In Hitler's eyes, this Nordicizing process was justified not only in enemy territory. On the contrary, he thought that it was desirable within Germany as well. When he bought his mountain retreat near Berchtesgaden, he explained in 1942, he had found such a mongrel population there that he really felt something had to be done quickly to improve it. "Credit has to be given to the SS Bodyguard Regiment for the fact that today there are numbers of strong and healthy children running around the area. It shows that elite troops should really be sent wherever the composition of the population is poor, in order to improve it. . . . Sometime it would also be a good idea to station elite troops in the Masurian Lakes and Bavarian Forest regions." If someone objected that such a procedure could undermine the morality of the German people, Hitler would become furious. With jibes at the Prussian princes' practice of keeping mistresses and at the upper classes' repudiation of their illegitimate children, he categorically dismissed conventional morality as hypocrisy and nothing more. He was prepared to concede only that two people in love might be bound together by their child.

This was one of the many cases in which Hitler's logical train of thought derailed into inconsistency. Had he followed through with his ideas, he would obviously have come to conclusions that were irreconcilable with his other conceptions. Clearly, protection of the family and "Nordicization" by elite troops were completely incompatible. Had he thought the matter through, Hitler would have been constrained to consider whether "Nordicizing" these areas—aside from the painful humiliation and shock of the parents and brothers—would not result in such indignation against the elite troops and

⁵Literally, *Aufmordungswerk*, crude Nazi racial jargon meaning "a job of Nordic upgrading by selective breeding."—ed.

March 1940

with Hitler at the new Chancery, which had been completed last year within a period of eight months. Workmen had worked night and day in order to have it ready for the Chancellor's New Year's Day reception for the Diplomatic Corps so that they might have a taste of what the new Berlin was going to look like.

Kirk¹⁰ accompanied me at my request. He had never before been permitted to see the Führer except at a distance.

The façade of the new building on the Wilhelmstrasse reminds me of a factory building. My car drove into a rectangular court with very high blank walls. At one end was a flight of broad steps leading into the Chancery. Monumental black nudes flanked the portico to which the steps led. The whole impression of the court was reminiscent of nothing other than a prison courtyard. A company of soldiers was drawn up on each side to give me the Nazi salute as I entered.

At the head of the steps I was greeted by the Reichsminister Meissner, the head of Hitler's Chancery. He spoke to me most cordially in English, as did all the other officials present.

We then formed a procession of some twenty couples headed by Meissner and myself, and with very slow and measured tread first traversed a tremendously long red marble hall, of which the walls and floor are both of marble; then up a flight of excessively slippery red marble steps into a gallery which, also of red marble, has windows on one side and tapestries on the other. The gallery is lined on the tapestry side by an interminable series of sofas, each with a table and four chairs in front of them. From the gallery open off a series of drawing rooms. Finally, we deployed into one of these, and I was requested to sit down until the Chancellor was ready to receive me.

In a very few minutes Meissner came to announce that Hitler was ready to see me, and I went with Kirk into the adjoining room, a very long drawing-room furnished with comfortable upholstered sofas and chairs, and overlooking the garden of Bismarck's old residence, in which Hitler now lives.

Hitler received me near the door. He greeted me very pleasantly, but with great formality. Ribbentrop and Meissner [*Schmidt, the interpreter*] were the only two German officials present at the interview.

Hitler is taller than I had judged from his photographs. He has, in real life, none of the somewhat effeminate appearance of which he has been accused. He looked in excellent physical condition and in good training. His color was good, and while his eyes were tired, they were clear. He was dignified both in speech and movement, and there was not the slightest impression of the comic effect from moustache and hair which one sees in his caricatures. His voice in conversation is low and well modulated. It had only once, during our hour and a half's conversation, the raucous stridency which is heard in his speeches

¹⁰ Alexander C. Kirk was the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin.

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—and it was only at that moment that his features lost their composure and that his eyes lost their decidedly "gemütlich" look. He spoke with clarity and precision, and always in a beautiful German, of which I could follow every word.

SHIRER: "AFIRE WITH SCORN, ANGER, HATE,
REVENGE, TRIUMPH" (1940)¹¹

On November 11, 1918, in a small clearing in the Forest of Compiègne, the German Empire capitulated to France and her allies. Far away, in a German military hospital, an obscure twenty-nine-year-old soldier named Adolf Hitler was shocked and filled with grief. On June 21, 1940, barely a month after he had launched his great offensive in the west, Hitler came to the same little clearing in the woods of Compiègne to take his revenge. Covering the event for the Columbia Broadcasting System was William L. Shirer. His account of Hitler's triumph is our next selection.

Paris, June 21

The armistice negotiations began at three fifteen p.m. A warm June sun beat down on the great elm and pine trees, and cast pleasant shadows on the wooded avenues as Hitler, with the German plenipotentiaries at his side, appeared. He alighted from his car in front of the French monument to Alsace-Lorraine which stands at the end of an avenue about two hundred yards from the clearing where the armistice car¹² waits on exactly the same spot it occupied twenty-two years ago.

The Alsace-Lorraine statue, I noted, was covered with German war flags so that you could not see its sculptured work nor read its inscription. But I had seen it some years before—the large sword representing the sword of the Allies, and its point sticking into a large, limp eagle, representing the old Empire of the Kaiser. And the inscription underneath in French saying: "TO THE HEROIC SOLDIERS OF FRANCE . . . DEFENDERS OF THE COUNTRY AND OF RIGHT . . . GLORIOUS LIBERATORS OF ALSACE-LORRAINE."

Through my glasses I saw the Führer stop, glance at the monument,

¹¹ From William L. Shirer, *Berlin Diary: The Journal of a Foreign Correspondent 1934-1941* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1941), pp. 420-22. Reprinted by permission of the author and publisher.

¹² The old railway coach (removed from a Paris museum) in which the French had dictated the terms of capitulation to a German delegation on November 11, 1918.

1940 1941

out, is totally unrealistic. It is as if we had forgotten everything we know about decision making. Never has an act of such magnitude as the Holocaust been decided upon in one conference and by one order alone. If we take for comparison's sake Hitler's decision to attack the Soviet Union, we can easily trace the process over many months or even years.

After decades of pondering the project and of interior and exterior preparations, Hitler informed his generals on July 31, 1940, of his resolve (*Entschluss*) to attack in the spring of 1941. Then military preparations began. A first operational draft of the general staff was ready on August 5, 1940. On November 12 instructions were given to continue all preparations that had been ordered orally. On December 18 the directive for Operation Barbarossa was issued. On May 1, 1941, the date for launching the offensive was set for June 22. The final order to attack was given by Hitler on June 17.

The fact that we do not have comparable documentary evidence for the preparation of the Holocaust must not lead us to suppose that this process was shorter. But it may well have been different. Although an unprovoked war of conquest was unusual, Hitler could feel that it was justified by historical experience and assume that a suitable pretext could be found when the time came. Moreover, once he had succeeded in convincing his generals of the necessity and the feasibility of the war, the campaign was, in its military aspect, a conventional operation that could be prepared and conducted with the aid of the traditional instrument of the general staff. After all, wars had been waged since time immemorial.

The mass slaughter of unarmed men, women, and children, however, was quite a different matter. Neither a convincing justification nor a pretext could be found easily. There were no preexisting organizational or technical instruments to fall back on. As Christopher Browning noted, the Nazis were venturing into uncharted territory and attempting the un-

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What had to be avoided was a coalition against Germany such as had existed in World War I, resulting in a war on several fronts that the country was too weak to win. Thus Hitler envisaged a series of precautionary measures to protect Germany. First, Italy and Britain were to be persuaded by means of concessions to tolerate German expansion. Then France was to be defeated in a preliminary war before the war of conquest against Russia was begun. Originally other powers such as the United States or Japan seemed too remote to require attention.

Although Hitler managed to conclude an agreement with Italy, he failed to reach one with Britain. This failure led Hitler to include Japan in his plans for the first time. His dealings with Japan were intended to shift British attention from Europe to East Asia. If an alliance could be brought about with Japan, which was menacing British Far Eastern positions, while the alliance with Italy threatened Britain in the Mediterranean, then the combination of alliances against Britain might be so powerful that England would finally prefer to accept a settlement granting Germany a free hand on the continent. Behind the screen of ideological propaganda, this was the real purpose of the Anti-Comintern Pact concluded with Japan in 1936 and joined by Italy in 1937. The effort failed, however. Britain entered the war together with France on September 3, 1939. Hitler then hoped that Britain would give in when it had lost its French ally and had been driven militarily from the continent. The western campaign of 1940 was intended to serve the dual purpose of defeating France and discouraging Britain. Again Hitler's stratagem failed. France was defeated, but Britain held out.

Nevertheless Hitler decided after the fall of France to attack the Soviet Union in May 1941 and to defeat it within five months. In the prevailing circumstances the eastern campaign was also to serve a dual purpose. It was meant to lead to the

1941,

July 31, 1940

Hitler Challenges America 69

conquest of living space as well as to discourage Britain once and for all. Now the United States came into the picture for the first time along with, once again, Japan.

Britain's hope, Hitler argued to his generals on July 31, 1940, lies with Russia and America. If and when the Russian hope vanishes, the American hope will vanish as well, because the fall of Russia will upgrade Japan in East Asia on a tremendous scale. This argument was partially meant by Hitler to convince his generals of the necessity and the feasibility of the Russian campaign. But in part it was also his real reasoning. The first and overriding purpose of the Russian campaign was conquest, but the second and subordinate purpose was to end the war with Britain. With the expected defeat of Russia, Britain's last hope would be obliterated. America would not intervene if Japan were pursuing an active policy in East Asia as a result of the German victory over the Soviet Union. Even if Britain still held out it would not matter, for with the conquest of Russia Germany would acquire an economic and strategic base from which it could carry on the war indefinitely.

During the preparations for the eastern campaign Hitler's reasoning followed this line quite consistently. He was not much concerned about Russia, which he still thought would collapse quickly. What he did worry about was the other powers, which could hinder Germany or assist the Soviet Union. This danger increased the longer the campaign lasted. If against his expectations the conquest of Russia could not be completed in the course of 1941, British and American operations of various kinds were to be feared. In fact the United States was already giving increasing support to the British war effort. Both powers, however, could be engaged by Japan in East Asia and thus be distracted from Europe and deterred from intervening there.

This was, for Hitler, the purpose of the Tripartite Pact concluded by Germany, Italy, and Japan on September 27, 1940.

and, above all, how the one could emerge from the other are questions that can find their answers in a historical analysis.

Hitler always kept in mind what he had written in his book *Mein Kampf*: "The basic foundation for establishing authority is always popularity."³ He immediately qualified that sentence and saw "in power . . . in force" the other principal basis of all authority.⁴ Nevertheless, no saying of his has been handed down to posterity that even remotely resembles the words engraved on Napoleon's tomb: "May my ashes rest on the banks of the Seine near the people whom I loved so dearly." That Hitler loved the Germans is a dubious proposition; indeed he did not even want to be buried on the Spree, but in Linz on the Danube.⁵

Just as Alexander the Great was not a Greek, Napoleon not a Frenchman, and Stalin not a Russian, so Hitler came from the outside, at the least from outside the boundaries of the German national state created by Bismarck, and he spoke of the Germans in a distant manner, as if he didn't really belong to them. "Here too I am as cold as ice," he remarked during the war. "If the German people are not prepared to do battle for their self-preservation, then fine, let them perish!"⁶ Even in public speeches he made these comments, as on December 18, 1940, to a group of officer candidates: "This nation will fade away" if it fails to assert its claim to existence.⁷ Then "it should vanish," he declared to a foreign statesman on November 27, 1941.⁸ Moreover he would "not shed a tear for it."⁹ To be sure he wanted to make Germany great, greater than it had ever been in history. But he was less concerned with Germans as individuals—with their well-being and their fortunes—than with German blood, which he shed coldheartedly in order to expand the nation.

The Germans, by contrast, loved him rather than feared him. Even though we must verify the general truth of this statement and will indeed do so, this much is indisputable: Under Hitler the Germans never doubted, despaired, or

* His fury is that human nature is not as good, generous, loyal and self-sacrificing in its love for him, not enough certainly to match his self-love.

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Hitler and the Germans

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 each other for over twelve years broken, and it was broken immediately. Perhaps nothing characterizes the relationship of the Germans to Hitler so aptly as a phrase that was making the rounds in those days and went like this: "If only the führer knew about that!" Being applicable and indeed applied to the petty nuisances of daily life as well as to the great horrors of the regime, it absolved the führer (who after all could not concern himself with everything) of responsibility for specific events and also elevated him to the ranks of the unimpeachable.

One example can serve as evidence. When the mentally ill were being put to death by the tens of thousands at the beginning of the war, the district leader of a Nazi women's organization (certainly no enemy of the regime) wrote to the wife of the chief justice of the Nazi party on November 25, 1940: "People are still clinging to the hope that the führer knows nothing about these things, that he can't possibly know, otherwise he would stop them." And again, "The matter must be brought to the attention of the führer before it is too late and there must be a way for the voice of the German people to reach the ear of its führer."¹⁰ A twofold deception! Naturally, Hitler knew what was to be brought to his attention. After all, it issued from his mouth and figured as his command. But far more important, the horrified reaction of the people not only reached him; he even listened to it, rescinded the order, and ended the operation.

In general, the relationship of the Germans to Hitler rested on deception, conscious deception on his part and self-deception on their part. He concealed his plans from them, although he knew exactly what he wanted, and they failed to recognize in him a causal agent even when he translated his intentions into action. They rewarded his deception with trust and, even under the worst circumstances, did not believe

1936, 1937, 1940, 1942, 1944

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of daily life, but then bolstered by foreign policy successes and later by military victories. Perhaps these responses were all too human, but still it seems to have been characteristic of this regime that it was more likely to win approval from the populace by diverting its attention from misery than by actually ameliorating conditions. Diversions of an intoxicating kind (presented in exactly that fashion) were abundantly available. Rarely has a generation been exposed to so many sensational new things in so few years.

The "Olympics, Spain, and the result of the London talks," states a report of August 1936, "are having a salutary effect on the morale of the populace and are helping us to smooth over all sorts of unpleasant things."¹⁴ In the following year, when relatively little happened, morale evidently reached a low point. "A sense of discontent among the people is stronger than ever," stated a report of May 1937. "The National Socialist government is being held responsible for the shortage of raw materials."¹⁵ The annexation of Austria then sparked "jubilation and joy." During the Sudeten crisis, "fear of war" reigned supreme, and after Munich there was once again "an elated mood."¹⁶

It is well known that the outbreak of war was greeted with little enthusiasm and with great apprehension. Nonetheless, a report on the events of June 1940 states that the victory in the west brought about "a degree of solidarity never hitherto achieved among the entire German people."¹⁷ After this high point, things went slowly downhill again. The uncertainty of the course of the war, the increasing food shortages, and the air raids on German cities prompted a pessimistic mood that set in during the summer of 1942 and, after the battle of Stalingrad, shaded into doubt and resignation and finally into a still hopeful fatalism. The daily struggle for existence and survival displaced politics and dominated all other considerations. It should be noted, however, that the assassination attempt of July 20, 1944, was not only, with few excep-

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tured by statistics. From time to time public referendums were held, but there was nothing to vote for between the registers of "yes" and "no." Even the officially announced election results, which very early recorded up to one-quarter "no" votes in some places, are unreliable, for falsification of election results is clearly documented in many cases.

But even when a nation is no longer polled, can no longer vote, and has lost the right to express opinions freely, public opinion still exists and can, within limits, be investigated. Even a dictator—especially a dictator—is in his own interest eager to know what his subjects and above all his enemies among those subjects think of him. Under Hitler, a kind of comprehensive polling of public opinion arose from the police surveillance and control of so-called ideological enemies and was incorporated into an extensive set of reports. These reports, which were collected and evaluated by several agencies but with especial zeal by the SD, the security department of the party, tell us more about public moods than about opinions. For the regime wanted above all to know whether morale was good or bad. It was not disposed to heeding the opinions of the populace; it intended to rule, and for that it needed popularity, as Hitler himself had stated.

It goes without saying that the utmost care must be used in drawing conclusions from reports on morale. Not that things were glossed over in the reports; that would have made them worthless. In the end they so dismayed the leadership that Bormann prohibited them in the summer of 1944.¹³ But there is a certain arbitrariness inherent in them. Statistical evidence of any precision is missing; reports often pertain only to certain parts of the Reich, and the spies did not, of course, find out what people were afraid to say. The result is an impression, not a definitive conclusion; a portrait of moods, not of opinions.

Generally speaking, one can say that morale fluctuated in a peculiar way. It was lowered principally by the economic cares

1940

Hitler unleashed them on the SA was the very real fear that its leaders were planning a coup against him. The victory became known as the Night of the Long Knives. Himmler personally supervised the firing squads.* An inexorable process of expansion in all directions had begun and soon the party also vanished in the mighty SS shadow so that there ceased to be any road to power that bypassed this black-uniformed body.⁴¹

We are told that while setting up concentration camps where ultimately millions were to be murdered, tortured, and enslaved, Himmler also worked on the occult aspects of the SS organization, drawing inspiration from disparate disciplines, including the Freemasons, the Knights Templars, the Teutonic Knights, the Order of the Garter, and the Fellowship of the Round Table.⁴² The SS is also said to have had certain affinities to the Jesuits, an enforced mysticism that Hitler found slightly ludicrous; in 1940, witnessing the pagan Yule celebrations of the elite SS *Leibstandarte*, Hitler commented to an adjutant that this would never take the place of *Silent Night*.⁴³

According to Ravenscroft, Himmler was so fascinated by the Holy Lance and undertook such a compulsive study of its history that in 1935 he had an exact replica of it made.⁴⁴ It was kept on his desk at the SS Wewelsberg castle resting on a faded red velvet cushion in an ancient-looking leather case—a temporary talisman until Hitler was able to claim the real relic.

Himmler's quarters at the castle were dedicated to the tenth-century Saxon king, Heinrich I—Henry the Fowler—who had stopped the Magyar horse archers from the East and laid the basis for the German confederation that became, under his son Otto I, the Holy Roman Empire.⁴⁵ Himmler biographer Peter Padfield finds doubtful the claim of Ravenscroft and other occult writers that Himmler thought himself to be a reincarnation of Heinrich.

*Among the SA leaders executed was Ernst Rohm, one of Hitler's oldest friends who had been a key figure in his early success, organizing secret government funds to the fledgling Nazis, introducing Hitler to influential figures, and ensuring the loyalty of the SA. Hitler gave Rohm the option of suicide, which he refused to take.

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troubled state of the relations between the two allies;
its arguments touched on a side of his own policy—
the Nazi-Soviet Pact—about which Hitler was never
altogether at ease.

The major problem in Germany's relations with
Russia was no longer represented by Poland. After
the partition, while part of the western half of Poland
was annexed to the Reich, the rest was formed into
the Government-General under Hans Frank. On 7
October, the day after his so-called 'peace speech,'
Hitler appointed Himmler as Head of a new organiza-
tion, the R.K.F.D.V., the Reich Commissariat for the
Strengthening of German Folkdom. Its first task was
to carry out the deportation of Poles and Jews from
the provinces annexed to Germany.

In the Government-General to which they were
deported, Frank, besides recruiting forced labour and
stripping the country of food and supplies, undertook
the responsibility for the 'Extraordinary Pacification
Action' the liquidation of the Polish educated class.
The treatment of the Jews was handed over to Himm-
ler and the S.S. "The final solution of the Jewish
problem', that sinister and terrible phrase, was the
cover name used to disguise S.S. plans for the exter-
mination of all men, women, and children of Jewish
blood in Europe: its first phase was put into opera-
tion in the Polish Government-General where, at
Auschwitz, close on a million human beings perished
before the end of the war. Poland, in fact, became the
working model of the Nazi New Order based upon
the elimination of the Jews and the complete sub-
jugation of inferior races, like the Slavs, to the
Aryan master-race represented by the S.S.

Whatever fears, therefore, the Russians may have
had that Hitler would use the Poles living under
German rule to stir up trouble among those living
under Soviet rule were soon removed by the brutal
way in which the Germans treated all Poles. The test
of German-Russian relations in the winter of 1939-

March 1940

War-Lord, 1939-45

40 was not Poland, but Finland. Hitler, who had accepted the absorption of the three Baltic States into the Russian sphere of influence, now had to sit by silently while the Russians used force to coerce the Finns, a people who had close ties with Germany and whose brave resistance to the Russians inevitably roused admiration.

Hitler can scarcely have been blind to the fact that the measures taken by Russia to strengthen her position in the Baltic were obviously aimed at defending herself against an attack by Germany. Yet he still judged the price of co-operation with the Soviet Union to be worth paying for its economic, political, and strategic advantages.

So important were the Russian supplies of raw materials for Germany that, on 30 March, Hitler ordered the delivery of German equipment to the U.S.S.R. to be given priority over deliveries to Germany's own Armed Forces. In return the Soviet Union's shipments to Germany in the first year included a million tons of cereals, half a million tons of wheat and 900,000 tons of oil. In the autumn of 1939 Russian propaganda and the Communist parties abroad gave support to the German thesis that the responsibility for continuing the war rested upon the Western Powers—the so-called Peace Offensive. The two Governments cooperated in bringing pressure to bear on Turkey to prevent the Turks from abandoning their neutrality, while the division of North-eastern Europe into spheres of influence was put into effect without a hitch. But the supreme advantage to Hitler was strategic: the possibility of making his attack in the west without worrying about the defence of Germany's eastern frontiers.

Like Stalin, Hitler was taking advantage of a situation which neither side expected to last long. For the moment the balance of advantage appeared to be in Stalin's favour, but Hitler was undismayed. If

The Inconclusive Victor

he could use Russian aid upon the Western Powers to dress the balance.

On 10 January 1940 the west to begin on the fore sunrise.

The very day of Hitler's German Air Force staff flying in Belgium while flying. He had with him the code the opening of Hitler's burnt part of it, enough alarm the Germans. This barely disguised relief of the winter was over, compared, Hitler at last agreed point in postponing the day to day.

Hitler was partly reconverted interest he began to feel for which came from The Commander-in-Chief Admiral Raeder, searching the Navy's power of at routes, hit on the idea of On 10 October he made the at that time was absorbed the Low Countries and French effect was not mentioned December, when the situation by the Russian attack on British and French troops through Norway, even Norway, was taken seriously most vulnerable link in Germany's dependence on large Sweden. By occupying N

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he could use Russian neutrality to inflict a defeat
upon the Western Powers, he would more than re-
dress the balance.

On 10 January 1940 Hitler ordered the attack in
the west to begin on the 17th at fifteen minutes be-
fore sunrise.

The very day of Hitler's decision—10 January—a
German Air Force staff officer made a forced land-
ing in Belgium while flying from Münster to Cologne.
He had with him the complete operational plan for
the opening of Hitler's offensive, and although he
burnt part of it, enough fell into Belgian hands to
alarm the Germans. This settled the matter, to the
barely disguised relief of the High Command. Until
the winter was over, and new plans could be pre-
pared, Hitler at last agreed that there was no further
point in postponing the start of the operation from
day to day.

Hitler was partly reconciled to this decision by the
interest he began to feel in a new project, the initia-
tive for which came from the Naval High Command.
The Commander-in-Chief of the German Navy, Ad-
miral Raeder, searching for a means of increasing
the Navy's power of attack against Britain's sea-
routes, hit on the idea of securing bases in Norway.
On 10 October he made the suggestion to Hitler, who
at that time was absorbed in the plans for invading
the Low Countries and France. The Norwegian proj-
ect was not mentioned again until the middle of
December, when the situation had been transformed
by the Russian attack on Finland. The possibility of
British and French troops being sent to aid Finland
through Norway, even of an allied occupation of
Norway, was taken seriously by the Germans. The
most vulnerable link in Germany's war economy was
her dependence on large supplies of iron ore from
Sweden. By occupying Norway the Western Powers

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this vital traffic, but German ships from the Atlantic.

of securing control of acted Hitler. Through y's Foreign Policy Bu- put in touch with Quis- of the small Norwegian ged the belief that, with be able to carry out a es needed could thus be n would not disturb the western frontier or en- e to attack France.

ressed by Raeder's argu- imes between 14 and 18 s for German support to . Hitler preferred the ause of its obvious econ- ure, he agreed to plans upation of Norway by e occupation of Denmark same time as the opera-

sh destroyer *Cossack* in- n-ship *Altmark* in Nor- d a number of British used Hitler's anger and n. He appointed General who had served in Fin- the preparations for the force employed was to be d Falkenhorst was given Quisling's part had dwi- the Germans were pre- ry occupation, relying on small forces.

an operation were great. tiler, it was contrary to

The Inconclusive Victory, 1939-40

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all the principles of naval warfare to attempt such an undertaking without command of the sea. Reports of British and French preparations for the occupation of Norwegian ports as part of the plan to come to Finland's aid kept the German High Command in a state of constant alarm lest they should be forestalled by the Allies.

Their anxiety was relieved when the Finns were driven to ask the Russians for an armistice and the danger of an Anglo-French landing receded. But, having gone so far, Hitler refused to turn back. 'Exercise Weser' (Norway) was to come before 'Case Yellow' (the attack in the west), and the preparations were to go forward whether the Allies proceeded with their plans or not. Hitler confirmed the order for operations to begin on 9 April.

Evidence of the German concentration of troops and naval forces along the Baltic coast in March and early April was not taken seriously by the Norwegian and Danish governments. The Germans, therefore, enjoyed the advantage of complete surprise.

Hitler signed the preliminary directive for 'Exercise Weser' on 1 March, and received Sumner Welles, the U.S. Under-Secretary of State, on the 2nd. The purpose of Welles's visit was to sound out the possibilities for the re-establishment of peace before the conflict began in earnest, and in particular to strengthen the reluctance of the Italians to be drawn into the war. Neither purpose commended itself to Hitler, and Sumner Welles's reception in Berlin was cool.

The American envoy's visit to Berlin, as he soon recognized, was a waste of time, so Welles returned to Rome after visits to Paris and London. The possibility that in Rome he would find a more sympathetic audience than in Berlin caused Hitler some anxiety. The Duce's letter of January had been left unanswered for two months: now, quite unexpectedly, the German Ambassador informed Ciano on

March 1940

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8 March that Ribbentrop would arrive in Rome in two days' time, before Welles returned, bringing with him Hitler's long-delayed reply.

The letter was couched in the most cordial terms, and Hitler played skilfully on the conflict in Mussolini's mind between fear and the desire to play a historic role. 'Sooner or later', he wrote, 'fate will force us after all to fight side by side. . . .'

Mussolini accepted the argument without dispute and replied that at 'the given moment' Italy would enter the war, but Ribbentrop could not pin him down to a specific date. Ribbentrop had, however, succeeded in reinforcing the Axis by his visit. Sumner Welles, who saw Mussolini again on 16 March, was impressed by the change in the Duce: 'He seemed to have thrown off some great weight.'

As soon as Ribbentrop returned to Berlin, he telephoned to Rome to ask Mussolini to meet Hitler on the Brenner on the 18th, and the Duce agreed. Ciano wrote that Mussolini still hoped to persuade Hitler to desist from his attack in the west, but he added gloomily: 'It cannot be denied that the Duce is fascinated by Hitler, a fascination which involves something deeply rooted in his make-up. The Führer will get more out of the Duce than Ribbentrop was able to.'

However much he might try to bolster up his resolution, Mussolini could not overcome the sense of inferiority he felt in face of Hitler. The sole successes which Mussolini valued were military successes. Hitler had dared to risk war, and he had not. Hitler had only to play on this feeling of humiliation to stimulate the Duce's longing to assert himself and revive his flagging belligerency. When they met on the Brenner, Hitler overwhelmed Mussolini with a flood of talk. Mussolini used the few minutes that were left him to re-affirm his intention of coming into the war.

Back in Rome the Duce might grumble at the

The Inconclusive Victory
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way in which Hitler talked all the time, but face to
face with him he was unable to conceal an anxious
deference. Hitler handled him with skill. The impres-
sion of German strength which he created and the
confidence with which he spoke stirred Mussolini's
old fear of being left out at the division of the spoils.
Three months later Italy entered the war.

Hitler said not a word to Mussolini of his inten-
tion of attacking Norway. From the beginning of
April, however, all his attention was directed to the
Baltic and the north.

One day after Hitler confirmed 9 April as the date
for 'Exercise Weser', the British Cabinet at last au-
thorized the Royal Navy to mine Norwegian waters,
an operation fixed for 8 April. In case of German
counter-action, British and French forces were em-
barked to occupy the very same Norwegian ports
selected by the German Navy as its own objectives.
Thus, between 7 and 9 April, two naval forces were
converging on Norway, and the scraps of news which
reached Berlin of British preparations heightened
the atmosphere of tension in Hitler's headquarters.
Raeder was staking virtually the whole German fleet
on the Norwegian gamble, and if it had the ill-luck to
encounter the British fleet in any force, disaster
could follow within a few hours.

The tactics of surprise proved brilliantly success-
ful. Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim, Stavanger, and Narvik
were captured at a blow. Quisling's *coup* was a
miserable failure; the Norwegian King and Govern-
ment escaped, and six weeks' hard fighting lay ahead
before the Allied troops, now hurriedly landed, were
driven out. None the less, the British had been 'com-
pletely outwitted' (the phrase is Churchill's) on their
own native element of the sea. The British Navy
inflicted considerable losses on the German forces,
but they were a small price to pay for safeguarding
the iron-ore supplies, securing the Baltic, and break-

ing out into the Atlantic, with bases along the whole of the Norwegian coast at the disposal of the German Navy and the German Air Force.

In the Norwegian expedition, Falkenhorst was directly responsible to Hitler, whose own command organization (the O.K.W., the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces) replaced the Army High Command (O.K.H.) for the planning and direction of operations. This led to considerable friction and departmental jealousy, and it marks the beginning of that continuous personal intervention in the daily conduct of operations which was more and more to absorb Hitler's attention and drive his generals to distraction. Hitler's temperament was singularly ill-fitted for the position of a commander-in-chief. He easily became excited, talked far too much and was apt to blame others for his own mistakes, or for adverse circumstances out of their control.

At the end of April Hitler felt sufficient confidence in the outcome of the Norwegian operations to fix a provisional date for the opening of the western campaign in the first week of May. After a slight delay due to bad weather, at dawn on 10 May 1940 the battle in the west was joined at last.

Little though Hitler may have realized it then, he owed his success in the Battle of France more than anything else to the long delay in opening the attack which had so much irked him at the time.

The original plan for the attack had assigned the chief role to the most northerly of the three German Army Groups in the west, Army Group B under von Bock. This was to carry out a wide sweeping movement through the Low Countries, supported by Army Group A (Rundstedt), which held the centre of the German line opposite the Ardennes, and by Army Group C (Leeb), which held the left wing facing the Maginot Line. For this purpose virtually the whole of the German panzer forces were assigned to Bock on the right wing. However, this was a repetition of

The Inconclusive Victory,

the German advance in 1918 to take the Western Allies sending the tank forces in innumerable canals and small streams to collide head-on with the French armies advancing in

An alternative plan had been suggested by Rundstedt's Chief of Staff, who argued that the decision should be made in the centre, through the Ardennes and the Channel coast. Success would be French completely by surprise, off the Ardennes as unsuitable for defence and this part of the French line would be defended than almost any other. If it proved successful, it would mean the British and French forces would be severed, severing their lines of communication, trapping them off from France and forcing them to fight with their backs to the sea.

Manstein's suggestion was adopted by the Army High Command, but, it was not successful in getting his scheme into Hitler's attention. The proposals had a great deal of surprise and risk to win, but of much importance. In the end, it was decided the whole plan of attack was to be based on Manstein's lines, transferring the panzer forces from the right wing to the left under Rundstedt. By March 1940, the plan was Hitler's own—he seems to have thought of it himself—and it was ready to be put into operation.

The German Army which was to attack France on the morning of 10 May consisted of eighty-nine divisions, with ten panzer divisions, with thousands of tanks and vehicles, a thousand of which

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the German advance in 1914 and therefore unlikely to take the Western Allies by surprise. It meant sending the tank forces into country broken by innumerable canals and small rivers, where they would collide head-on with the pick of the British and French armies advancing into Belgium.

An alternative plan had already been worked out by Rundstedt's Chief of Staff, General von Manstein, who argued that the decisive thrust should be made in the centre, through the Ardennes, aiming at Sedan and the Channel coast. Such a move would take the French completely by surprise, for they had written off the Ardennes as unsuitable for tank operations, and this part of the French Front was more weakly defended than almost any other. If the German plan proved successful, it would destroy the hinge upon which the British and French advance into Belgium depended, severing their lines of communication, cutting them off from France and forcing them into a trap with their backs to the Belgian coast.

Manstein's suggestion was frowned on by the Army High Command, but, thanks to the delays, he succeeded in getting his scheme brought to Hitler's attention. The proposals had precisely those qualities of surprise and risk to which Hitler attached so much importance. In the course of February he ordered the whole plan of attack to be recast along Manstein's lines, transferring the all-important panzer forces from the right wing to the centre under Rundstedt. By March Manstein's plan had become Hitler's own—he seems to have believed that he had thought of it himself—and by May the new orders were ready to be put into operation.

The German Army which invaded the Low Countries and France on the morning of 10 May consisted of eighty-nine divisions, with a further forty-seven held in reserve. It included the formidable weapon of ten panzer divisions, with three thousand armoured vehicles, a thousand of which at least were heavy

May 1940

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tanks. The first sensational success was the overrunning of the Dutch and Belgian defence systems. The key to this was the use of small forces of highly trained parachute and glider troops which captured the vital bridges before they could be destroyed. The famous fortress of Eben Emael on the Albert Canal was taken according to a plan conceived by Hitler. A detachment of less than a hundred parachute engineers equipped with a powerful new explosive landed on the roof. The success was built up by German propaganda as a demonstration of the power of Germany's secret weapons.

But the crux of the operation, still unsuspected by the Western Powers, was the thrust through the Ardennes. Rundstedt's Army Group, ranged along the frontier from Aachen to the Moselle, disposed of forty-four divisions, including three panzer corps under the command of General von Kleist. The armoured column was over a hundred miles long, stretching back fifty miles the other side of the Rhine. The German armour quickly traversed the Ardennes, passed the French frontier on 12 May and were over the Meuse on the 13th. The High Command indeed became alarmed at the ease with which Kleist was advancing.

- Hitler shared this anxiety. Preoccupied with the possibility of a French counter-attack from the south, he personally intervened to halt the advance of General Guderian's leading panzer divisions, which had reached the Oise on the night of the 16th. But on the evening of the 18th he was persuaded to allow the tanks to resume their advance. Backed by an irresistible superiority in the air, the German armoured thrust broke right through the French front and threw the Allied plans into confusion, trapping the British Expeditionary Force and the First French Army between the converging forces of Bock's Army Group on the north and Rundstedt's on the south.

The Inconclusive Victory,

The German plan of encirclement was brilliant improvisation. Between 27 May and British and French troops from the beaches and the possibility of such an event had been denied to the British. Not been ordered by Hitler of Dunkirk on 24 May, but fought its way back to the costs to preserve his arm phase of the offensive which for Paris and France. Fortified his decision, and on were allowed to resume though it was too late. This first takes was to have moment future of the war

At the time, however, they appeared slight beside the successes. So Mussolini, as a result of the consequences of the Duce's mind to fear of the mood of his brother-in-law, found time in the midst of writing a series of letters to poured scorn on the feeble French. Mussolini's replies more optimistic than the last, culminated in declaring war on 10 June.

Hitler was delighted at the German people, however, shocked for the alliance than the Italian, indeed, was so bad that his June 1940 made their new contemptible in German eyes to fight in September 1939.

Meanwhile, on 5 June, the attack by driving south

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The German plan of encirclement was defeated only
by the brilliant improvisation of the Dunkirk evacua-
tion. Between 27 May and 4 June a total of 338,000
British and French troops were got away by sea
from the beaches and harbour of Dunkirk. Yet the
possibility of such an evacuation might well have
been denied to the British if Guderian's tanks had
not been ordered by Hitler to halt a few miles south
of Dunkirk on 24 May, before the British Army had
fought its way back to the coast. Hitler wanted at all
costs to preserve his armoured force for the next
phase of the offensive which would decide the battle
for Paris and France. Forty-eight hours later he re-
versed his decision, and on 27 May the panzer troops
were allowed to resume their advance. But by then
it was too late. This first of Hitler's military mis-
takes was to have momentous consequences for the
future of the war.

At the time, however, the failure at Dunkirk ap-
peared slight beside the continuing news of German
successes. So Mussolini, as well as Hitler, judged.
Fear of the consequences of going to war gave place
in the Duce's mind to fear of arriving too late. Gaug-
ing the mood of his brother dictator with skill, Hitler
found time in the midst of his preoccupations to
write a series of letters to Mussolini in which he
poured scorn on the feebleness of the British and
French. Mussolini's replies were each more enthusi-
astic than the last, culminating in the decision to
declare war on 10 June.

Hitler was delighted at Mussolini's decision. The
German people, however, showed no more enthusiasm
for the alliance than the Italians. Mussolini's timing,
indeed, was so bad that his declaration of war in
June 1940 made their new allies appear even more
contemptible in German eyes than the Italian failure
to fight in September 1939.

Meanwhile, on 5 June, the German Army renewed
the attack by driving south across the Somme. The

French had lost nearly a third of their Army in Belgium and only two out of the fourteen British divisions now remained in France. In eleven days the battle was over. On 14 June Paris was occupied by the Germans and the panzer divisions were racing for the Rhône Valley, the Mediterranean, and the Spanish frontier. On the evening of 16 June M. Reynaud resigned, and the same night Marshal Pétain formed a new French Government, whose sole aim was to negotiate an armistice. Less than six weeks after the opening of the campaign Hitler was on his way to Munich to discuss with Mussolini the terms to be imposed on France.

Before the war Hitler had scored a series of political triumphs, culminating in the Nazi-Soviet Pact, which could challenge comparison with the diplomacy of Bismarck. Now he had led the German Army to a series of military triumphs which challenged comparison with the victories of Frederick the Great and even Napoleon. 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, to point, for instance, to the luck Hitler had in encountering such weakness and incompetence on the other side, to his good fortune in finding a Manstein to construct his plan of campaign for him and men like Guderian to put it into operation. But if there was weakness and incompetence on the other side, it was Hitler who divined it. If Manstein designed the plan of campaign it was Hitler who took it up. If Guderian was the man who showed what the German panzer divisions could do when used with imagination it was Hitler who grasped the importance of armour, and provided the new German Army with ten such divisions at a time when there was still strong opposition inside the Army itself to such ideas. If Hitler, therefore, is justly to be made responsible for the later

The Inconclusive Victory, .

disasters of the German Army a major share of the credit for the German generals cannot

But what use did Hitler have for victory? The conflict with Italy not from any demands he had on the Eastern Powers themselves, but to agree to a free hand for Germany in Eastern Europe. The British any reason for continuing their policy. Their last ally on whom their Army had been driven now surely accept the imposition of German hegemony in Europe. For his part Hitler came to terms. For his part Hitler to conclude an alliance with Germany to recognize the continued existence of the British Empire. England would have colonies and recognize Germany in Europe, but that was all.

A final settlement with France wait until the end of the war. The armistice terms offered by Germany have considerable influence on the final, a French decision to remain in North Africa or the departure of the Royal Navy would be a determination to go on fighting. On the other hand, French acceptance of the armistice terms might well make

Mussolini was in a very eager to become the heir of Hitler in North Africa and to secure the Mediterranean. As guarantees, the whole of French territory would be rendered of the French fleet. But some bitterness to Ciano or Hitler had won the war and the last word.

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disasters of the German Army, he is entitled to the
major share of the credit for the victories of 1940:
the German generals cannot have it both ways.

But what use did Hitler intend to make of his
victory? The conflict with Britain and France arose
not from any demands he had to make on the West-
ern Powers themselves, but from their refusal to
agree to a free hand for Germany in Central and
Eastern Europe. The British had now, he felt, lost
any reason for continuing to adhere to their former
policy. Their last ally on the Continent had gone,
their Army had been driven into the sea, they must
now surely accept the impossibility of preventing a
German hegemony in Europe and, like sensible people,
come to terms. For his part, he was perfectly ready
to conclude an alliance with Great Britain and to
recognize the continued existence of the British Em-
pire. England would have to return the German
colonies and recognize Germany's dominant position
in Europe, but that was all.

A final settlement with France could be allowed to
wait until the end of the war, but the character of
the armistice terms offered to France now might
have considerable influence on the British. In particu-
lar, a French decision to continue the fight from
North Africa or the departure of the French Fleet to
join the Royal Navy would strengthen the British
determination to go on fighting themselves. On the
other hand, French acceptance of the German armis-
tice terms might well make the British think twice.

Mussolini was in a very different mood. He was
eager to become the heir of the French Empire in
North Africa and to secure the mastery of the Medi-
terranean. As guarantees, the Duce wanted to occupy
the whole of French territory and to enforce the sur-
render of the French fleet. But, as he confessed with
some bitterness to Ciano on the train to Munich,
Hitler had won the war and Hitler would have the
last word.

The German reception of the Italians was cordial, but Ribbentrop made it quite plain that Hitler would not agree to make demands of the French which might drive them to continue the war from North Africa or England. For this reason, no less than for the effect on British opinion, Mussolini's annexationist ambitions would have to be deferred. Hitler proposed to occupy only three-fifths of France, to allow a French Government in Unoccupied France, to promise not to make use of the French fleet during the war and to leave the French colonies untouched.

These were heavy blows for Mussolini, but he was in no position to argue. Hitler agreed not to conclude an armistice with France until she had come to terms with Italy as well, but he declined Mussolini's suggestion of joint German-Italian negotiations with the French. He had no intention of sharing his triumph.

- For the signing of the armistice Hitler had appointed the exact place in the Forest of Compiègne, north-east of Paris, where Foch had dictated the terms of capitulation to the German delegation on 11 November 1918. The old restaurant car in which the negotiations had taken place was brought out from its Paris museum and set up on the identical spot it had occupied in 1918.

It was a hot June afternoon when Hitler led his small but impressive retinue—Göring, Keitel, Brauchitsch, Raeder, Ribbentrop, and Hess—through the elms and pines up to the block of granite on which the French inscription read: 'Here on 11 November 1918 succumbed the criminal pride of the German Reich . . . vanquished by the free peoples which it tried to enslave.'

Hitler received the French delegates in silence. He stayed to listen to the reading of the preamble, then rose, gave a stiff salute with his outstretched arm, and, accompanied by his retinue, left the railway car.

As he strode back down the waiting cars the German *über Alles*, and the Nazi Hitler, time agitator, who told them that he would never rest. Treaty of Versailles, had career. He had kept his promise 1918 was avenged.

With France Hitler had declared. The French Government comparative moderation of the armistice was signed. But the news which Hitler since the middle of June, the British were willing to concede still failed to come. Tentative neutral capitals produced Churchill, speaking in the declared the Government's whatever the odds, 'so that and its Commonwealth last will still say: "This was the"

Hitler at last summoned more than a month after the month's silence left little Hitler's genuine astonishment resolved to continue the war for a move on the part of Hitler decided to make a appeal once more to reassemble Great Britain as much as self in a position to make the vanquished begging speaking in the name of why this war must go on.'

Hitler had already issued invasion of Britain three days Britain would not come to

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The Inconclusive Victory, 1939-40

As he strode back down the avenue of trees to the waiting cars the German band played *Deutschland über Alles*, and the Nazi Horst Wessel Song. The one-time agitator, who told the Munich crowds in 1920 that he would never rest until he had torn up the Treaty of Versailles, had reached the peak of his career. He had kept his promise: the humiliation of 1918 was avenged.

With France Hitler had every reason to be satisfied. The French Government had been relieved by the comparative moderation of the German demands, and the armistice was signed without further difficulty. But the news which Hitler had been waiting for since the middle of June, a sign for London that the British were willing to consider peace negotiations, still failed to come. Tentative soundings through the neutral capitals produced no result. On 18 June Churchill, speaking in the House of Commons, declared the Government's determination to fight on whatever the odds, 'so that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say: "This was their finest hour".'

Hitler at last summoned the Reichstag for 19 July, more than a month after the collapse of France. The month's silence left little doubt that the British, to Hitler's genuine astonishment and even regret, were resolved to continue the war. After waiting in vain for a move on the part of the British Government Hitler decided to make a last gesture. 'In this hour, I feel it to be my duty before my own conscience to appeal once more to reason and common sense in Great Britain as much as elsewhere. I consider myself in a position to make this appeal since I am not the vanquished begging favours, but the victor speaking in the name of reason. I can see no reason why this war must go on.'

Hitler had already issued the directive for the invasion of Britain three days before his speech. If Britain would not come to terms she must be forced

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to submit. So, throughout the rest of the summer of 1940 and well into the autumn, the preparations for a direct assault on the British Isles continued, and all the world waited for the news that Hitler had launched his invasion armada across the Channel.

How then did it come about that, five months after his speech to the Reichstag, Hitler signed the order for the invasion, not of Britain, but of the Soviet Union? Why did he make the mistake of attacking Russia before he had finished with Britain, thereby deliberately incurring the dangers of a war on two fronts?

Until the summer of 1940 Hitler had never seriously considered how a war against Britain could be fought and won. Once the French had been defeated and the British thrust out of continental Europe, he had no further interest in continuing the war in the west. Although, as early as November 1939, Raeder had set his naval staff to work on the problems involved in crossing the English Channel, until the end of June 1940 Hitler was not interested. He still assumed the British would come to terms.

In July Hitler rather reluctantly directed that preparations for the invasion of England be completed by the middle of August. Clearly, the problems to be overcome were formidable. Hitler spoke to Raeder in gloomy terms of the difficulties of the operation.

Raeder needed no convincing. Not only was he powerfully impressed by Germany's naval inferiority, but he saw no possibility at all of providing sufficient transports for the forty divisions which the Army planned to land. An acrimonious debate followed between the Army and the Navy on the number of divisions to be put across the Channel and the width of the front on which landings were to be made.

In mid-August Hitler finally accepted the Navy's

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arguments against attempting originally planned. In effect, vasion to a subordinate reliability of the Luftwaffe to first at the British power a selves. Göring had no doubts August, 1,500 German aircrafting attack of 'Operation Eagle' the R.A.F.

On 1 September the move German embarkation posts. I saw Hitler on the 6th, he regarded 'Operation Sea-Lion' finally convinced that Britain achieved, even without the Luftwaffe.

On 7 September, the German first of its mass raids on London escorted by 648 fighters, they delivered on a city. Further on Sunday, the 15th, the Luftwaffe a final assault on the battered climax of the Battle of Britain attacks on the R.A.F. to them proved to be a major mistake. comparative respite gave them the chance to recover from the verge of exhaustion: on the waves of German bombers and heavy losses to the attackers, a successful landing were seen. 'Sea-Lion' was postponed indefinitely and cancelled in January 1942.

Already, before the issue was a sure of the Luftwaffe, Hitler himself whether the final decision was not to be quickly obtained. other plans which he was ready. Before July was out, even before begun its all-out offensive against

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arguments against attempting a landing on the scale originally planned. In effect, this meant reducing invasion to a subordinate role dependent upon the ability of the Luftwaffe to strike a decisive blow first at the British power and will to defend themselves. Göring had no doubts that it could and, on 13 August, 1,500 German aircraft took part in the opening attack of 'Operation Eagle' planned to eliminate the R.A.F.

On 1 September the movement of shipping to the German embarkation posts began. But when Raeder saw Hitler on the 6th, he found him inclined to regard 'Operation Sea-Lion' as unnecessary: 'he is finally convinced that Britain's defeat will be achieved, even without the landing'.

On 7 September, the German Air Force made the first of its mass raids on London, with 625 bombers escorted by 648 fighters, the heaviest attack ever delivered on a city. Further night raids followed and on Sunday, the 15th, the Luftwaffe set out to deliver a final assault on the battered capital. This was the climax of the Battle of Britain. The switch from attacks on the R.A.F. to the bombing of London proved to be a major mistake in tactics. The week's comparative respite gave the R.A.F. Fighter Command the chance to recover when it had been on the verge of exhaustion: on the 15th it broke up the waves of German bombers and drove them off with heavy losses to the attackers. Thus the conditions for a successful landing were still lacking. 'Operation Sea-Lion' was postponed indefinitely, and was quietly cancelled in January 1942.

Already, before the issue was decided by the failure of the Luftwaffe, Hitler was beginning to ask himself whether the final defeat of the British, if it was not to be quickly obtained, need hold up the further plans which he was revolving in his mind. Before July was out, even before the Luftwaffe had begun its all-out offensive against the British, he

* Göring's loss of status

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gave orders to start preliminary planning for an attack on Russia.

Hitler was strengthened in his resolve not to delay a settlement with Russia too long by the advantage which the Russians were taking of his preoccupation with the west. In June 1940 while the Battle of France was still in progress, the Soviet Government annexed the Baltic States without informing the Germans in advance, and followed this by heavy pressure on Rumania to make a further cession of territory. Always sensitive to any change in the east, Hitler's suspicions of the Russians mounted in proportion to the treachery of his own intentions.

The Luftwaffe maintained its attacks on London and other big cities well into the winter of 1940-1 and Hitler was perfectly willing to see whether the heavy German air-raids might not shake the British resolution to continue the war. In the meantime, however, the planning of Operation Barbarossa (the invasion of Russia) went steadily forward independently of a decision on the operation against Britain. On 29 July General Jodl told the head of the O.K.W., General Warlimont, that Hitler had made up his mind to prepare for war against Russia.

Warlimont's staff at once set to work, and on 9 August got out the first directive to start work in the deployment areas in the east for the reception of the large masses of troops which would be needed.

At roughly the same time Hitler also gave orders to the Army General Staff under Halder, quite independently of Warlimont's team, to prepare a plan of campaign for operations against the Soviet Union. The plan was presented on 5 December, and Hitler approved it, stressing that the primary aim was to prevent Russian armies withdrawing into the depths of the country and to destroy them in the first encounter. The number of divisions to be committed was fixed at 130 to 140 for the entire operation.

The movement of troops to the east began in the

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summer of 1940. In November of the O.K.W. set to work. Russia was established and survey of the whole of Russia (the arms industry) and of material supplies (especially of

Thus, when Hitler came to the attention of invading Russia in December, it was no hastily impromptu work which already had behind it the work by the planning department of the O.K.H.

There was a third possibility of invasion of either Britain or Raeder persistently urged the Mediterranean, and the adjacent Africa and the Middle East was the most vulnerable position, the weak link against which to concentrate all her strength.

As he developed his case Hitler, on 6 and 26 September, forwarded additional arguments, that of this area for supplying so many so badly needed, and that or even American, landing by way of the Spanish and Portuguese Atlantic. Raeder proposed that the Canary Islands should be secured, of north-west Africa strengthened with Vichy France. At the same time in cooperation with Italy, the offensive against Suez, and forward through Palestine and

There was much to be said for keeping Britain in the centre of the enemy; they made full use of Italy and Spain, and the

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summer of 1940. In November the Economic Section of the O.K.W. set to work. A special department for Russia was established and among its tasks was a survey of the whole of Russian industry (especially the arms industry) and of the sources of raw material supplies (especially of petroleum).

Thus, when Hitler came finally to express his intention of invading Russia in the directive of 18 December, it was no hastily improvised decision, but one which already had behind it several months of hard work by the planning departments of the O.K.W. and the O.K.H.

There was a third possibility, an alternative to the invasion of either Britain or Russia, which Admiral Raeder persistently urged Hitler to consider—the Mediterranean, and the adjacent territories of North Africa and the Middle East. Here, Raeder argued, was the most vulnerable point in Britain's imperial position, the weak link against which Germany ought to concentrate all her strength.

As he developed his case in two discussions with Hitler, on 6 and 26 September, Raeder brought forward additional arguments, the economic importance of this area for supplying the raw materials Germany so badly needed, and the dangers of a British, or even American, landing in French West Africa by way of the Spanish and Portuguese islands in the Atlantic. Raeder proposed that Gibraltar and the Canary Islands should be secured, and the protection of north-west Africa strengthened in cooperation with Vichy France. At the same time, the Germans, in cooperation with Italy, should launch a major offensive against Suez, and from there advance northwards through Palestine and Syria to Turkey.

There was much to be said for his proposals. They kept Britain in the centre of the picture as the chief enemy; they made full use of Germany's alliances with Italy and Spain, and the projected operations

were much more within the compass of German strength than the conquest of Russia proved to be. If Hitler had appreciated the importance of sea-power he would have recognized the force of the Admiral's arguments.

The Führer showed interest in Raeder's suggestions, and in the last four months of 1940 devoted considerable time and energy to plans for operations in the western Mediterranean, but his mind was already firmly made up on the invasion of Russia, and his interest in the Mediterranean was governed by very different assumptions from those of the German Naval Staff.

Hitler's aims in the Mediterranean and African theatres were, first, to add to Britain's difficulties by closing the Mediterranean to her shipping and, second, to safeguard North-west Africa and the Atlantic islands—the Cape Verde group, the Azores, the Canaries, and Madeira—against possible Allied landings. The Atlantic islands could be used as a stepping-stone to West Africa, and Africa was the back door to Europe. In August French Equatorial Africa had declared for General de Gaulle, and to secure that area was a common-sense precaution on Hitler's part.

From beginning to end, however, Hitler looked to Franco's Spain to undertake the main responsibility in the western Mediterranean, and, less hopefully, to Vichy France for the defence of North-west Africa, just as he insisted that the burden of operations in the eastern Mediterranean must fall on Italy. At no time did he contemplate the use of German forces in anything more than a supporting role. There is no evidence at all that he ever seriously considered Raeder's proposals as an alternative to his own plan for attacking Russia. What he did was to single out, against Raeder's advice, those parts which fitted in with his own very different view of the future of the

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war. At the same time, he the entry of Spain, and it into the war in order to see Britain fully occupied with

Even these limited objections Hitler's power to achieve, superior skill of the Spanish trap, into which Mussolini his régime too closely with

General Franco had first to enter the war in June seemed likely that the division to begin. As the summer of capitulation or invasion of place, Franco's enthusiasm lay stress on the conditions of Spanish intervention. The claims, large-scale economic petroleum, and the provision. In September 1940 Franco Minister, Serrano Suñer, to allay the growing German interest partly in order to spy out the

Ribbentrop pressed Suñer by which Spain would enter the Spanish demands for an evasive on the question of Spain. In his turn, Suñer avoided a and continued to insist that be met before she could risk

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war. At the same time, he did all he could to secure the entry of Spain, and if possible France as well, into the war in order to safeguard the west and keep Britain fully occupied while he turned to the east.

Even these limited objectives proved to be beyond Hitler's power to achieve, largely because of the superior skill of the Spanish dictator in avoiding the trap, into which Mussolini had fallen, of identifying his régime too closely with a German alliance.

General Franco had first expressed his willingness to enter the war in June 1940 at a time when it seemed likely that the division of the spoils was about to begin. As the summer wore on, however, and the capitulation or invasion of Britain failed to take place, Franco's enthusiasm cooled and he began to lay stress on the conditions which were a prerequisite of Spanish intervention. These included territorial claims, large-scale economic assistance in grain and petroleum, and the provision of military equipment. In September 1940 Franco sent his future Foreign Minister, Serrano Suñer, to Berlin, partly in order to allay the growing German irritation with Spain and partly in order to spy out the land.

Ribbentrop pressed Suñer hard for a definite date by which Spain would enter the war, but he described the Spanish demands for aid as excessive, and was evasive on the question of Spain's territorial claims. In his turn, Suñer avoided any definite commitments and continued to insist that Spain's demands must be met before she could risk intervention.

Suñer took a violent dislike to Ribbentrop's preposterous vanity and overbearing methods in trying to get his own way. Hitler made a different impression on him. The Führer had assumed the role of the 'world-historical' genius for the occasion of Suñer's visit, exhibiting the calm confidence of the master of Europe and leaning over the maps to demonstrate with assured gestures the ease with which he could

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take Gibraltar. Unlike Ribbentrop, he took care neither to utter any complaints nor to exert pressure on his visitor.

D.T. For the rest of Suñer's visit everything possible was done to impress him with the power and efficiency of the Third Reich. At the end, exhausted and oppressed, the Spanish Minister escaped with relief. But before he left, Suñer had a second interview with Hitler, in which the Führer, dropping the impressive part he had played at their first meeting, displayed a childlike pleasure in the gift Franco had sent him and astonished the Spaniard by his lack of dignity and by the unaffected behaviour of a German *petit bourgeois*. This contrast between the grandiose pretensions of the régime and the underlying vulgarity and childishness of its rulers was the most permanent impression which Suñer carried away from his visit to Berlin.

From the point of view of the war nothing had been decided. The Spaniards refused to commit themselves to a precise date, even if they were to receive all they asked for.

A week later, on 4 October, Hitler and Mussolini met on the Brenner to review the situation. This time Hitler gave a double reason for refusing to cede French Morocco to Spain: his plan for a large German empire in Central Africa, for which part of the Moroccan coast would be needed as an intermediate base; and his fear that such a step would lead the French colonies in North and West Africa to join de Gaulle. Hitler developed the theme of collaboration with France at some length, much to the irritation of Mussolini, who feared that Vichy might be ingratiating itself with Hitler, and so depriving him of his anticipated reward, the major share of the French colonial empire. The idea of drawing France more fully into the Axis camp, however, continued to intrigue Hitler, despite the Duce's protests, and towards the end of October he resolved to clear up his

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difficulties with Spain and to Franco on the Spanish with the leaders of Vichy

The meeting with Franco on a few occasions since he had met Germany on which Hitler had a personal encounter. Hitler never ceased to vex him. Hitler's way to flatter the Spaniard was the trouble of a long journey offered Spain immediate aid in Gibraltar. Admittedly, Hitler was confident that with vague promises with the impression which was bound to leave on Franco persuading the Spaniards in the near future and plan had cast them.

The two dictators met in the town of Hendaye on 23 October. An impressive account of the position and the hopelessness proposed the immediate cession which Spain would come in 1941. Gibraltar would be returned and would at once become Spanish.

To Hitler's mounting irritation appeared unimpressed and the need of economic and military awkward questions about the quantities required either in the quantities required to suggest that, if England British Government and Fleet from Canada with America control himself, Hitler at said there was no point in to sit down and renew his efforts. Franco refused to commit himself.

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difficulties with Spain and France by a personal visit
to Franco on the Spanish frontier and a meeting
with the leaders of Vichy France on the way.

The meeting with Franco proved to be one of the
few occasions since he had become the Dictator of
Germany on which Hitler found himself worsted in
a personal encounter. The memory of his failure
never ceased to vex him. For Hitler went out of his
way to flatter the Spanish leader. He put himself to
the trouble of a long journey across France and he
offered Spain immediate aid in the capture of Gibralt-
tar. Admittedly, Hitler was unwilling to agree to the
cession of French Morocco. Nevertheless, he was
confident that with vague promises for the future and
with the impression which his dynamic personality
was bound to leave on Franco he would succeed in
persuading the Spaniards to agree to enter the war
in the near future and play the part for which he
had cast them.

The two dictators met at the Spanish frontier
town of Hendaye on 23 October. Hitler began with
an impressive account of the strength of Germany's
position and the hopelessness of England's. He then
proposed the immediate conclusion of a treaty, by
which Spain would come into the war in January
1941. Gibraltar would be taken on 10 January and
would at once become Spanish.

To Hitler's mounting irritation, however, Franco
appeared unimpressed and began to insist on Spain's
need of economic and military assistance, and to ask
awkward questions about Germany's ability to give
either in the quantities required. He even ventured
to suggest that, if England were conquered, the
British Government and Fleet would continue the war
from Canada with American support. Barely able to
control himself, Hitler at one point stood up and
said there was no point in continuing the talks, only
to sit down and renew his efforts to win Franco over.
Franco refused to commit himself to anything beyond

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vague generalities. The Führer for once had to admit defeat, after a conversation lasting nine hours.

By contrast, Hitler's interview with Pétain at Montoire on the following day appeared to go well. The aged Marshal of France was one of the few men who ever impressed Hitler, perhaps because he had played a prominent part in the defeat of Germany in 1918. Hitler made no attempt to disguise the difficulty of France's position. 'Once this struggle is ended,' he told the Marshal, 'it is evident that either France or England will have to bear the territorial and material costs of the conflict.' When, however, Pétain expressed himself ready to accept the principle of collaboration, it was agreed that the Axis Powers and France had an identical interest in seeing Britain defeated as soon as possible and that France should support the measures they might take to this end. In return, Hitler agreed that France should receive compensation for territorial losses in Africa from Britain and be left with an empire equivalent to the one she still possessed.

A meeting with Mussolini took place almost immediately after Hitler had seen Franco and Pétain. Its occasion was an item of news which took Hitler by surprise and was to prove the turning-point in his plans for the Mediterranean and Africa.

On 28 October the Italians attacked Greece, not merely without Hitler's agreement, but in flat contradiction of his wishes. This affected the whole future of the war, but here we are concerned only with its effects on Hitler's interest in the southern theatre of operations.

These did not at first appear to be great. True the Italian setbacks in Greece faced Hitler with the prospect of having to come to Mussolini's aid in the Balkans. This, and the improvement in Britain's position as a result of her occupation of Crete and a number of the Aegean Islands certainly put an end to any idea of German offensive operations in the

eastern Mediterranean. Italian drive on Suez, which Hitler had ever agreed, only to be given, if at all, reached Mersa Matruh. western Mediterranean Felix' was to be carried off, supporting the Spaniards in

During November Hitler the Spaniards warily recommitment. On 7 December he sent German troops to 10 January and begin operations on that date. This time refusal. He had little suggested, he replied, nor condition to enter the war. of the first British Desert of Sidi Barrani in the sea. firmed all Franco's doubts soon in full retreat across ognize his failure with Hitler issued the brief notice not be carried out as they obtain.'

For a moment Hitler's successes might lead to the colonial empire under German. December he ordered pre-emptive emergency operation, 'At necessary, the occupation the capture of the French. 13 December Laval, the was dismissed from his government and placed under secured his release, but Marshal Pétain stubbornly receive the ashes of the

eastern Mediterranean. Even German aid for the Italian drive on Suez, which was the most to which Hitler had ever agreed, was now held back; it was only to be given, if at all, after the Italians had reached Mersa Matruh. But plans for action in the western Mediterranean were confirmed. 'Operation Felix' was to be carried out with German troops supporting the Spaniards in the assault on Gibraltar.

During November Hitler pressed Franco hard, but the Spaniards warily refused to give any definite commitment. On 7 December Admiral Canaris presented the Spanish dictator with a proposal from Hitler to send German troops across the frontier on 10 January and begin operations against the British on that date. This time Franco gave Hitler a blunt refusal. He had little confidence in the plans suggested, he replied, nor was Spain in an economic condition to enter the war yet. The sudden opening of the first British Desert Offensive and the victory of Sidi Barrani in the second week of December confirmed all Franco's doubts. The Italian Army was soon in full retreat across the desert. Forced to recognize his failure with Franco, on 11 December Hitler issued the brief notice: "'Operation Felix" will not be carried out as the political conditions no longer obtain.'

For a moment Hitler even feared that the British successes might lead to the break-away of the French colonial empire under General Weygand, and on 10 December he ordered preparations to be made for an emergency operation, 'Attila', which would secure, if necessary, the occupation of the whole of France and the capture of the French Fleet and Air Force. On 13 December Laval, the advocate of collaboration, was dismissed from his office in the Vichy Government and placed under arrest. The Germans soon secured his release, but not his return to office, and Marshal Pétain stubbornly refused to go to Paris to receive the ashes of the Duke of Reichstadt, Napo-

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leon's son, which Hitler had ordered to be sent from Vienna as a symbolic gesture to the French. Hitler had to abandon the hopes he entertained in the autumn of 1940 of winning the French over to active cooperation against the British.

In the New Year Hitler made one final effort to persuade Franco to come into the war, writing personally to the Caudillo on 6 February and invoking Mussolini's intervention as well. Neither approach had any effect. Mussolini met Franco at Bordighera on 12 February 1941, but, far from changing the Spanish point of view, only echoed Franco's complaints of Hitler's illusions about France. Hitler's own letter to Franco was strongly worded. 'Spain will never get other friends than those given her in the Germany and Italy of today. . . . Caudillo, I believe that we three men, the Duce, you, and I, are bound together by the most rigorous compulsion of history, and that thus we in this historical analysis ought to obey as the supreme commandment the realization that, in such difficult times, not so much an apparently wise caution as a bold heart can save nations.'

Three weeks later Hitler received Franco's reply. The Caudillo was profuse in his protestations of loyalty, but he maintained that attitude of polite evasion which, throughout the negotiations, had baffled Hitler's clumsy efforts to pin him down. The Spanish dictator was to appear high on the list of those who disappointed the Führer by their failure to fulfil the historic role for which he had cast them. It was a stigma which that wily politician knew how to bear with fortitude and eventually to turn to profit.

'THE WORLD WILL

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In the summer of 1940 the extent of the German victoriously taken advantage of occupy the whole of their the 1939 Agreement. By and Lithuania were incorporated. A Russian ultimatum to Rumania demanded the cession of the and the Northern Bukovina: the Rumanians to comply, determined to prevent any wards the west.

His immediate object was the prevention of a situation in which might provide the Soviet Government intervention. The danger to his neighbours, whose territories were aroused by the Russian attack. The Bulgarian claim to the Balkans was settled, but the Hungarian was more than Rumanian accepted, and relations between them deteriorated to a point where

Hitler could not afford to copy the Rumanian oil from the Rumanian State disintegrated. Therefore, he used his influence over the Rumanians in the frame of mind, and, when Ribbentrop summoned both on the end of August to accept a s

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

'THE WORLD WILL HOLD ITS BREATH'

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In the summer of 1940 the Russians, alarmed by the extent of the German victories in the west, had hurriedly taken advantage of Hitler's preoccupation to occupy the whole of their sphere of influence under the 1939 Agreement. By August, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were incorporated in the Soviet Union. A Russian ultimatum to Rumania at the end of June demanded the cession of the provinces of Bessarabia and the Northern Bukovina. Hitler could only advise the Rumanians to comply, but henceforward he was determined to prevent any further Russian move towards the west.

His immediate object was to avoid the development of a situation in the Balkans which would provide the Soviet Government with an excuse for intervention. The danger came from Rumania's neighbours, whose territorial ambitions had been aroused by the Russian acquisition of Bessarabia. The Bulgarian claim to the South Dobrudja was soon settled, but the Hungarian demand for Transylvania was more than Rumanian national pride would accept, and relations between the two States rapidly deteriorated to a point where war was a possibility.

Hitler could not afford to see Russian troops occupying the Rumanian oilfields in the event of the Rumanian State disintegrating. Behind the scenes, therefore, he used his influence to bring the Hungarians and the Rumanians into a more reasonable frame of mind, and, when advice proved ineffectual, Ribbentrop summoned both parties to Vienna at the end of August to accept a settlement dictated by the

two Axis Powers. Ribbentrop only obtained the Hungarians' consent by shouting at them in a threatening manner, while the Rumanian Foreign Minister, Manoilescu, fell across the table in a faint when he saw the line of partition which Ribbentrop had drawn.

The crisis ended very much to Hitler's advantage. A few days after the Vienna Award, King Carol abdicated in favour of his son, and General Antonescu, an admirer of the Führer, became Rumanian Prime Minister. Before the end of September Antonescu, who was soon to become one of Hitler's favourites, set up a dictatorship, adhered to the Axis Pact (23 September) and 'requested' the dispatch of German troops to help guarantee the defence of Rumania against Russia. A secret order from the Führer's H.Q. on 20 September directed that the troops should be sent. 'To the world their tasks will be to guide friendly Rumania in organizing and instructing her forces.' However, the directive said, their real tasks—to be kept secret from both the Rumanians and the troops themselves—included protecting the oil district and preparing for possible war with Russia.

The reorganization of the Rumanian Army on German lines began in the autumn of 1940, and the German Military Mission was followed by German troops, including A.A. regiments to protect the oilfields, and the 13th Panzer Division which was transferred for training. Hitler had soon established a hold over Rumania as a satellite State which was not to be shaken until the end of the war.

These German moves were far from welcome in Moscow. On 1 September Molotov summoned the German Ambassador and described the Vienna Award as a breach of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, which provided for previous consultation. Molotov pointed out that the German guarantee to Rumania was directed against the U.S.S.R.

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These protests, however count, although he offered Rumanian membership of the League from which the Soviet Union was excluded. Much more serious was the establishment of German influence over Rumania which the establishment over Rumania was receiving.

Mussolini had for long sought to extend Italian influence in the Balkans, the Danube. It was fear of the south-east which had posed the *Anschluss*, and he failed to eradicate the threat which he watched any German move in the Danube or the Adriatic.

Mussolini's ambitions in the Balkans led to the possibility of Mussolini forestalling him. At the interview on 7 July 1940 Hitler was told by the Italian Minister the need for Italian support in the case of Yugoslav aggression, down by the Duce as an ultimatum. This warning was weeks and extended to the objective of an Italian move in the Balkans.

These German hints were not to be taken lightly. But in a letter of 2 September that the measures he had taken to strengthen Yugoslav frontiers were not to be taken as Italian resources would be used in Egypt. Hitler took care to tell him in the settlement in Rumania, and when Ribbentrop in the middle of September he said that Italy and Greece are two zones of interest. Italy can adopt whatever policy it wishes, many's full support.'

German-Italian cooperation was to be closer than usual,

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These protests, however, Hitler could afford to dis-
count, although he offered a sop in the form of Rus-
sian membership of the new Danubian Commission,
from which the Soviet Union had originally been ex-
cluded. Much more serious was the resentment with
which the establishment of a German protectorate
over Rumania was received in Rome.

Mussolini had for long entertained ambitions to
extend Italian influence in the Balkans and along
the Danube. It was fear of German expansion towards
the south-east which had led him originally to op-
pose the *Anschluss*, and all Hitler's fair words had
failed to eradicate the suspicion with which he
watched any German move in the direction of the
Danube or the Adriatic. Hitler was well aware of
Mussolini's ambitions in the Balkans and also alive
to the possibility of Mussolini taking action there to
forestall him. At the interview he had with Ciano on
7 July 1940 Hitler was at pains to impress on the
Italian Minister the need to delay any such action
in the case of Yugoslavia, a country long marked
down by the Duce as an object of his imperial de-
signs. This warning was renewed in the succeeding
weeks and extended to Greece, the other possible
objective of an Italian move.

These German hints were not much to the Duce's
liking. But in a letter of 27 August he assured Hitler
that the measures he had taken on the Greek and
Yugoslav frontiers were purely defensive: all the
Italian resources would be devoted to the attack on
Egypt. Hitler took care to associate the Italians with
him in the settlement imposed on Hungary and Ru-
mania, and when Ribbentrop visited Rome in the
middle of September he repeated that 'Yugoslavia
and Greece are two zones of Italian interest in which
Italy can adopt whatever policy she sees fit with Ger-
many's full support.'

German-Italian cooperation at this time appeared
to be closer than usual, and Mussolini readily fell

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in with Ribbentrop's proposal of a new Tripartite Pact to be signed by Germany, Italy, and Japan. At the end of September Ciano travelled to Berlin for the signature of the Pact. Every effort was made to impress its importance on the minds of a people who were becoming more sceptical as the war entered its second year.

A week later another meeting between the Führer and the Duce on the Brenner Pass appeared to confirm the solidarity of the Axis partnership. What Hitler did not mention, however, was the steps he was already taking to secure German control over Rumania.

When the movement of German troops became known during the next week, Mussolini's anger at Hitler's duplicity showed how fragile were the bonds of confidence between the two régimes. Once again the Italian dictator felt that Hitler had stolen a march on him. Belated attempts to send an Italian contingent as well were unsuccessful, and the indignant Duce burst out to Ciano: 'Hitler always faces me with a *fait accompli*. This time I am going to pay him back in his own coin. He will find out from the newspapers that I have occupied Greece.'

This time the consequences of Mussolini's pique were more serious than Italy's occupation of Albania as a tit-for-tat after Hitler's march into Prague. The role which Hitler had assigned the Italian forces in his strategic plan was the invasion of Egypt, and on 13 September the Italian Army under Graziani had crossed the Egyptian frontier and begun a slow advance eastwards. Even against the scanty British forces opposing them this soon proved to be a task demanding all the resources Mussolini could command. The Duce's sorely bruised vanity demanded a bold *coup* to restore Fascist prestige, and early on 28 October Italian troops began the invasion of Greece from Albania.

At the last minute Mussolini informed Hitler of

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of Mussolini's suspicion of France—and ended with a belated but reassuring account of his relations with Rumania.

Appearances had been preserved. But Hitler's actions on returning to Germany show that he had no illusions about the problems with which the Italians' blunder confronted him. New orders were issued in the directive of 12 November. Although the dispatch of German forces to the support of the Italian drive on Suez was to be considered only after the Italians had reached Mersa Matruh, provision was made for the rapid transfer of a German armoured division to North Africa if necessary. Meanwhile the German forces in Rumania were to be reinforced, and an Army Group of ten divisions assembled to march into Greek Thrace if the need should arise. Hitler still hoped to be able to carry 'Operation Felix' out against Gibraltar, but it is evident that he anticipated trouble in the Balkans, either from British air attacks on Rumania or from an Italian failure in Greece, and was already making preparations to meet it in advance.

Hitler, moreover, had to look still further ahead. The plans for an attack on Russia, on which the Army General Staff had been engaged since August, were now taking shape. While his immediate anxiety, therefore, was the possibility of a British landing in Greece and an Italian collapse, Hitler was bound to view any action he might be obliged to take in the context of his larger design.

Russian suspicions had already been aroused, not only by the guarantee given to Rumania, but also by an agreement between the German and Finnish Governments for the movement of German troops through Finland to the outlying garrisons in Northern Norway. When the German Chargé d'Affaires in Moscow called on Molotov on 26 September he was

'The World Will Hold Its Breath' pressed by the Soviet Foreign Office for a copy of the agreement regarding Germany and Finland, including the German Foreign Office's reply to the Russian request, but Molotov was asking for more information and about the dispatch of a German force to Rumania. Anxious to allay the suspicion suggested that Molotov should go in the first instance to the extension of the war to the East and the possibility of German troops through Bulgaria—according to the Soviet Foreign Minister.

Molotov arrived in Germany on 27 November. The Führer at once showed him the most lofty plane: he believed that the development of the conflict could be avoided so far as Germany was concerned. This was particularly in order as the German and Russian leaders were men who possessed sufficient influence in their countries to decide the direction. . . .

Molotov, a cold and stubborn to the point of pedantry, was his characteristic long and then, in equally characteristic series of pointed questions, asked for cooperation in the present, as was doing in Finland, which had been in the Russian sphere of influence. What was the significance of the Pact? There were also issues arising from Russia's Balkan and Bl

respect to Bulgaria, Rumania and Turkey.' On all these points, Molotov said, he would like to have explanations.

Hitler was so taken aback that he made the excuse of a possible air raid and broke off the discussion until the following day.

When they met again next morning, Hitler made an effort to forestall Molotov's remarks by admitting that the necessities of war had obliged Germany to intervene in areas where she had no permanent interests, such as the Balkans and Finland. Germany had lived up to her side of the Agreement, he said, while Russia had occupied the Northern Bukovina and part of Lithuania, neither of which had been mentioned in the Agreement at all. He made a determined effort to keep his temper and bring the discussion round to 'more important problems', the partition of the British Empire after its impending defeat.

But as soon as Hitler finished, Molotov resumed where he had left off: the next question was the Balkans and the German guarantee to Rumania, 'aimed against the interests of Soviet Russia, if one might express oneself so bluntly'. With mounting impatience, Hitler went over the familiar ground again: Germany had no permanent interests in the Balkans, wartime needs alone had taken her there, the guarantee was not directed against Russia, and so on.

The talks left Hitler in a state of violent irritation. Franco had only angered him by evasion; Molotov had answered back and argued with him. That night he was unexpectedly absent from the banquet which Molotov gave to his hosts in the Russian Embassy.

Half-way through the banquet a British air-raid drove the two foreign ministers to take shelter below ground. Ribbentrop with characteristic maladroitness seized the occasion to confront Molotov with the draft of a new agreement which would have brought the Soviet Union into the Tripartite Pact.

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The core of the treaty was taking to respect each other's influence. The significance by two accompanying protocols to remain secret. The first defined spheres of influence. Apart from Germany's territorial Central Africa, and Italy's eastern Africa. Japan's dominions in eastern Asia to the south of Japan, and the Soviet Union U.S.S.R. in the direction of

If he could persuade Molotov to such a settlement, Hitler might be able to divert Russia from towards Europe, the Balkans—areas in which she was bound by many and Italy—southward. Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean had no interest and where she became embroiled with the British. The transparent proposal which the traditions and the interests Ribbentrop hoped, however, to achieve by the second protocol, and Italian cooperation in her commitments to the West to collaboration with the new edition, the German Foreign Ministry but tempting terms of Germany. Russia a Non-Aggression Pact as a result of which Japan might be in the Soviet spheres of influence Sinkiang and to do a deal over with its valuable coal and oil

Molotov, who had had no draft in advance, was the last carried away by Ribbentrop's mazy. His reply made it un-

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The core of the treaty was Article II, an under-
taking to respect each other's natural spheres of
influence. The significance of this was made clear
by two accompanying protocols, both of which were
to remain secret. The first defined the Four Powers'
spheres of influence. Apart from revisions in Eu-
rope, Germany's territorial aspirations centred in
Central Africa, and Italy's in northern and north-
eastern Africa. Japan's domain was in the area of
eastern Asia to the south of the Island Empire of
Japan, and the Soviet Union's area was south of the
U.S.S.R. in the direction of the Indian Ocean.

If he could persuade Molotov and Stalin to accept
such a settlement, Hitler believed that he would
be able to divert Russia from her historic expansion
towards Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean
—areas in which she was bound to clash with Ger-
many and Italy—southwards to areas such as the
Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, where Germany
had no interest and where Russia would at once
become embroiled with the British. It was a bold but
transparent proposal which cut right across both
the traditions and the interests of Russia. Hitler and
Ribbentrop hoped, however, to make it more attrac-
tive by the second protocol, which promised German
and Italian cooperation in detaching Turkey from
her commitments to the West and winning her over
to collaboration with the new bloc of Powers. In ad-
dition, the German Foreign Minister spoke in vague
but tempting terms of German help in securing for
Russia a Non-Aggression Pact with Japan, as a re-
sult of which Japan might be persuaded to recognize
the Soviet spheres of influence in Outer Mongolia and
Sinkiang and to do a deal over the island of Sakhalin,
with its valuable coal and oil resources.

Molotov, who had had no chance to examine the
draft in advance, was the last man to let himself be
carried away by Ribbentrop's barnstorming diplo-
macy. His reply made it unmistakably clear that

Russia was not prepared to disinterest herself in Europe. Turkey, Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary were also of concern to the Soviet Union. 'It would further interest the Soviet Government to learn what the Axis contemplated with regard to Yugoslavia and Greece, and likewise what Germany intended with regard to Poland. . . . The Soviet Government was also interested in the question of Swedish neutrality . . . and the question of the passages out of the Baltic Sea.'

Ribbentrop, complaining that he had been 'queried too closely' by his Russian colleague, made one last effort to pull the conversation back to the agenda which he had proposed. 'He could only repeat again and again that the decisive question was whether the Soviet Union was prepared and in a position to cooperate with us in the great liquidation of the British Empire.'

But Ribbentrop's last exasperated plea met with no more response than Hitler's. To Ribbentrop's repeated assurances that Britain was finished, Molotov replied: 'If that is so, why are we in this shelter and whose are these bombs which fall?'

On 25 November, less than a fortnight after Molotov's visit to Berlin, the Soviet Government sent an official reply accepting Ribbentrop's suggested Four-Power Pact, on condition that the Germans agreed to a number of additional demands. These included the immediate withdrawal of German troops from Finland; a mutual assistance pact between Russia and Bulgaria, including the grant of a base for Russian land and naval forces within range of the Straits; a further Russian base to be granted by Turkey on the Bosphorus and Dardanelles; and Japan's renunciation of her rights to coal and oil concessions in northern Sakhalin. Provided these claims were accepted, Russia was prepared to sign the Pact, rewriting the definition of her own sphere of expan-

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No reply was ever sent to proposals, despite German assurances. Note was being studied. Hitler signed to divert Russia away from becoming clear from Stalin's position on regarding Eastern Europe of influence, Hitler lost intentions. If he had still entertained giving the order to prepare 'rossa' before Molotov's visit

Hitler now reinforced his Russia and thus secure Germany in the east by the argument convinced himself, that Russia tack Germany. Russian objection in Finland and the British evidence of a Russian intervention iron-ore supplies from Sweden Rumania. From this it was the existence of an agreement Great Britain. Thus German ended with encirclement, and the indignant attitude of the defend himself. The capture of this for the lie it was, and the systematic preparation against a people whose government was anxious to avoid giving the German dictator.

Meanwhile, Italy's attack led into heavy trouble, and in a late November 1940, Hitler told the consequences of the Italian act grave. The reluctance of Bulgaria, and Vichy France to come fortified; Russian alarm about

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sion to make its centre the area south of Baku and
Batum in the general direction of the Persian Gulf.

No reply was ever sent to the Soviet counter-pro-
posals, despite German assurances that the Russian
Note was being studied. Hitler's offer had been de-
signed to divert Russia away from Europe. Once it
became clear from Stalin's reply that Russia insisted
on regarding Eastern Europe as within her sphere
of influence, Hitler lost interest in any further nego-
tiations. If he had still entertained any doubts about
giving the order to prepare for 'Operation Barba-
rossa' before Molotov's visit he had none left after it.

Hitler now reinforced his determination to invade
Russia and thus secure Germany's future Lebens-
raum in the east by the argument, of which he soon
convinced himself, that Russia was preparing to at-
tack Germany. Russian objections to German inter-
vention in Finland and the Balkans were twisted into
evidence of a Russian intention to cut off German
iron-ore supplies from Sweden and oil supplies from
Rumania. From this it was only a step to postulating
the existence of an agreement between Russia and
Great Britain. Thus Germany was once more threat-
ened with encirclement, and Hitler was able to adopt
the indignant attitude of the innocent man driven to
defend himself. The captured German papers reveal
this for the lie it was, and document, step by step,
the systematic preparation of an act of aggression
against a people whose government to the last day
was anxious to avoid giving any pretext for war to
the German dictator.

Meanwhile, Italy's attack on the Greeks had run
into heavy trouble, and in a letter to Mussolini on 20
November 1940, Hitler told the Duce frankly that the
consequences of the Italian action were likely to prove
grave. The reluctance of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Tur-
key, and Vichy France to commit themselves had been
fortified; Russian alarm about the Balkans and the

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Straits had been increased, while Britain had been given the opportunity to secure bases in Greece from which to bomb Rumania and southern Italy.

The measures with which Hitler proposed to meet these difficulties were comprehensive. Spain must come into the war at once, seize Gibraltar and guarantee north-west Africa. Russia must be turned away from the Balkans, Turkey persuaded to stop any threats against Bulgaria, Yugoslavia induced to collaborate with the Axis against Greece, and Rumania pressed to accept German reinforcements. To these political tasks, Hitler added increased air attacks on the British Navy and its bases in the eastern Mediterranean, in which the German Air Force would assist the Italians. The German squadrons must, however, be sent back by 1 May at the latest, and land operations against Egypt would have to be abandoned for the time being. The principal military effort would go into a German attack by March 1941 to clear the British out of Thrace.

Mussolini's comment on reading Hitler's letter was brief: 'He has really smacked my fingers.' However, he accepted Hitler's proposals.

In the meantime Hitler was engaged in securing the political prerequisites for his intervention in Greece. A succession of Balkan rulers was imperiously summoned to Germany. On 5 December Hitler wrote again to Mussolini. Yugoslavia and Bulgaria were proving difficult—the latter under Russian pressure—but he had hopes of bringing them over, and Mussolini was much relieved at the more confident tone of the letter.

Unfortunately for Mussolini, the degree of Fascist incompetence had not yet been fully revealed. On 7 December the Italian Ambassador begged Ribbentrop for immediate help to relieve the situation on the other side of the Adriatic, where the Italians were in danger of a complete rout. When Hitler received the Ambassador the next day and asked for an early

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meeting with the Duce, Mussolini refused to face
him. To add to the Duce's troubles, the Battle of Sidi
Barrani, which began on 9 December, led to the col-
lapse of the Italian threat to Egypt and the headlong
retreat of Graziani's forces back across Libya.

In this crisis Hitler kept his head. He refused to be
diverted from his main objectives. Between 10 De-
cember and 19 December he issued a series of orders
which were designed not only to prop up his failing
Italian ally, but to carry out his long-range plans.

On 10 December Hitler ordered formations of the
German Air Force to be moved to the south of Italy,
from where they were to attack Alexandria, the
Suez Canal, and the Straits between Sicily.

On 13 December a directive for the invasion of
Greece ('Operation Marita') was issued. A German
task force was to be formed in Rumania ready to
thrust across Bulgaria as soon as favourable weather
came, and to occupy the Thracian coast of Greece.
The first objective was to deny the British air bases
in Thrace, from which they could bomb Rumania and
Italy, but if necessary the operation was to be ex-
tended to the occupation of the whole of the Greek
mainland.

On 18 December Hitler signed Directive No. 21
for 'Barbarossa': 'The German Armed Forces must
be prepared to crush Soviet Russia in a quick cam-
paign even before the end of the war against England.
...' The active cooperation of Finland, Hungary,
and Rumania was counted on, and in December both
the Chief of the Finnish General Staff and the Hun-
garian Minister of War visited Germany. General
Antonescu, who had already seen Hitler in November,
came to Berchtesgaden a second time in January
1941.

Finally, on 19 December, Hitler saw the Italian
Ambassador and promised increased economic aid
for Italy, on condition that German experts should
go to Italy and advise on its use. In return more Ital-

Italian workmen were to be sent to Germany. This was one more step in the reduction of Italy to the status of a German satellite.

With these measures put in train, Hitler was confident that he could master the crisis and still be ready for the attack on Russia by 15 May, the date fixed for the completion of preparations. He said nothing of such a possibility to Mussolini, but in the letter which he wrote to the Duce on the last day of 1940 he was cordial in tone and did his best to encourage Mussolini and to assure him of his own unshaken confidence in the future.

Early in the New Year the chiefs of the three Services were summoned to the Berghof, where a war council lasting two days was held, on 8-9 January 1941. Hitler reviewed what could be done for Italy. His general mood was still one of confidence. Britain could not win; she went on fighting only because of the hopes she entertained of American and Russian intervention. Hitler described Stalin as 'a cold-blooded blackmailer who would, if expedient, repudiate any written treaty at any time.'

Ten days later Mussolini reluctantly visited the Berghof. Smarting under the humiliations of Libya and Greece, he looked forward without relish to the Germans' patronizing condolences. To his surprise Hitler behaved with tact and cordiality.

Mussolini found Hitler in a very anti-Russian mood, and Ribbentrop called a sharp halt to ill-timed Italian attempts to improve their relations with Moscow. On the second day of the visit, Monday 20 January, Hitler made a speech of two hours on his coming intervention in Greece which much impressed the Italian military men by the grasp of technical matters it displayed. Demonstrating his points with expressive gestures on the map, he impressed upon his audience the picture of a master of strategy who had foreseen every possibility and who was in complete command of the situation.

Hitler did not, however, attacking Russia. It could be in no position in 1941 to give operations about to begin; this argument could certainly second of Hitler's partners Japan, whose relations withanced precariously on the edge of an invasion of Manchuria. Japan and Russia had eyed suspicion and hostility. Yet to bring Japan into the war he against Russia; on the contrary he could to divert her away from territories towards the south.

Hitler wanted Japan to enter at a possible moment, but it was against Russia, that he sought war in Europe, Hitler and the German Foreign Minister Mett Berlin in March 1941, was vir a question of time before British defeat. An attack by Japan not only have a decisive effect that there was no further peace war, it would also provide the of Japanese ambitions in Europe when circumstances formed a her favour.

Hitler admitted that there missed them as slight. England to defend her possessions in, yet ready, and an attack strengthen the tendency towards in the United States. If, none the attack. Japan could rely on Germany would at once attack against Japan.

In all their conversations I

every inch a soldier. What a guy! Hess sends his stooge as usual; what a zero, he can't stand up to Göring. Thus the dwindling party is gradually frozen out."

"Britain," ruminated Göring at this session, "has nothing to gain in this war. But we might inherit the British Empire."

At their council's session on the sixth, Goebbels objected to Göring's plan to print the party emblem on food-ration cards, arguing that it would hardly advance the party's popularity. "I'm afraid, dear Dr. Goebbels," retorted Darre, "that this is not a war that can be won by popularity." Göring nodded vigorously.

Thomas's files show the Defense Council allocating oil and steel between the U-boat, Ju 88, explosives, and ammunition production programs. "The Führer," Thomas heard Göring say on September 11, in one of the few indications that Hitler consulted him on the harsh Nazi occupation policies, "intends to establish great Reich domains in Poland, and to endow particularly deserving [German] personages with farms and large estates." Hinting at the bloody purges just beginning in Poland, Göring claimed that the Polish clergy were directing a protracted guerrilla warfare against the Nazi invaders.

After this meeting, Darre noted with some disbelief the field marshal's optimism that Hitler would yet make a deal with Britain. "All the indications are," commented the minister in his diary, "that the Führer is facing a war lasting years."

By the end of the year 1939 the Defense Council had fallen into disuse. "Why does Adolf Hitler just let domestic affairs drift?" complained Darre in his private chronicle on December 4. "We ministers can't get through to him anymore. . . . In civil matters he deals with Göring alone now."

Astonishingly—because they are not even hinted at in British official histories—Hermann Göring maintained his secret channels of communication to British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain during these nervous months of what was later called the "phony war." He also entered into a round of talks with emissaries of President Franklin D. Roosevelt through contacts established by Dr. Joachim Hertslet, the Four-Year Plan's agent in Mexico. Göring talked in Berlin with the influential Swedish banker Marcus Wallenberg, and urged him to press the British to accept the German peace plan; and he sent his anglophile friend, Prince Max Egon zu Hohenlohe-Langenburg, to initiate secret talks with British diplomats in Switzerland.

The most startling feature of Göring's diplomatic activities that winter of 1939/40 was that he hinted to the British that he was willing to take over the real power in Germany from Hitler, and that he would halt the persecution of Jews and pull out of the "non-German" parts of Poland; Hitler would be shunted off into "some sort of presidential role."

His peace offensive began on September 8. On that day he phoned Dahlerus in Stockholm with the triumphant news that two-thirds of the Polish Army

1939/40

DOCTOR

was now surrounded. He was bombing Britain first. "In Britain to act first in ever workers on the following c willing to make what he ca Simultaneously he direct to send a message in co William Rhodes Davis. The Davis in New York. ALL later, a second code messa SEPTEMBER 26 ROME TO ME (The FBI, who decoded the Göring from other items.) O with Roosevelt (as the preside directed Hertslet to cable aift a Göring-controlled Reich MENT AFTER POLAND WAR IF TRAL U.S.A. GOVERNMENT. In Washington the labor-un showed this extraordinary m by code to Berlin the next da DISCUSSED WITH FRANKLIN D. THIS SIDE READY PROVIDING H American code message to H twentieth, announcing that D he would actually be in Berli for history, nothing came of. Equally circumspectly, thou other contacts with London: tairmen were shot down in Ge sent their letters to London, w alive and well. (The indignant forward any more such letters. After the Soviet Union spran 17, Göring telephoned Dahlen about it?" he asked. "I am remaining here," Dah renewed approach to the Briti is willing to do all he can to a the credit." If Göring could me ground, this would give him th driving back in Berlin on the twen that the British were refusing to what Göring had to offer, they sa

May 1940

field marshal's esteem, not least in surprised him practicing Napoleonic

But to mock his elephantine vanity tribulation to both Norway and Yellow, pe. In a string of secret conferences and planned the all-important sur-Belgian fortifications that would open the archives that Göring had either

paign. e days of perfect flying weather. For that weather, Hitler postponed zero piers could hear the bafflement and gendered among the still-unidentified calling from Luxembourg was heard en't they?" In Holland, all leave was ards of strategic bridges doubled. On telegram from the Belgian envoy at the rman traitor* had arrived from Berlin rels in the Vatican" (as Göring always deadline.

ils. They were losing the element of still too uncertain to begin.

25 VICTORY IN THE WEST

Placing Göring briefly in command in Berlin, Adolf Hitler departed for the new western front on May 9, 1940. As the next dawn's clear spring sun lifted on the eastern horizon, nearly 4,000 Nazi warplanes—including 1,482 bombers and 248 twin-engined and 1,016 single-engined fighter planes—scythed unannounced into France and across the neutral Low Countries, hammering the enemy's air defenses and providing close battlefield support for the advancing tanks and infantry.

Dressed in summer whites and sporting some of his most optimistic rings, Field Marshal Hermann Göring set out in his special train from Carinhall to join his generals at Kurfürst, the air staff's permanent headquarters just outside Berlin. Waiting with the other exuberant Luftwaffe generals there, Milch wrote in his pocket diary, "Afternoon, the field marshal arrives in train. Huge victories, great [enemy] losses! Eben Emael [the most important Belgian fortress] captured by air force."

For five days the air-force commander would live aboard his train at Kurfürst while his generals fawned on him. His new special train, code-named *Asia*, was adorned with velvet upholstery, tapestries, rich paneling, and an outsized bath that would not have been out of place in his other

* the soul of the stone

mansions in Berlin and Carinhall. Since the Nazi party was above all a *motoring* party, the train boasted of not only the usual two freight cars bristling with flak guns, but also a string of flat tops on which he had ordered an assortment of his finest automobiles to be loaded, including command cars built by Buick and La Salle, two Ford Mercuries, a Citroën, a Ford pickup, and two other Mercedes vehicles (a six-wheeled cross-country car and a shooting brake). This train also provided a fully equipped darkroom for Sonderführer Eitel Lange, his personal photographer; a mobile hospital with six beds, and an operating theater; and Göring's personal barber shop, whose surviving inventory shows that he was not accustomed to travel without hand mirrors, compacts and powder puffs, perfume atomizers with rubber bulbs, jars of cream, bottles of hair cologne, and sun lamps.

From the comfort and safety of this train he followed the triumphs of the German armies. Each day General Milch climbed aboard with darkroom-damp aerial photographs that he had personally taken of the fighting at Dinant and Charleville. On May 11, 1940, he told Göring that they had already obliterated a thousand enemy planes. At Sedan, France, the German troops threw a bridgehead across the River Meuse, and Bruno Loerzer's II Air Corps was giving good support to General Heinz Guderian's armor as it rammed into France. Göring rushed the euphoric reports to Hitler's headquarters with a swiftness that the army could not match. His name was written there in letters of gold. The Luftwaffe's operations had gone without a hitch. Later interrogators would find it hard to stop Hermann Göring talking endlessly of these glorious exploits of May 1940. He prattled happily about one Dutch Army lieutenant who called up his supreme commander, General Winkelmann, to ask permission to blow the vital bridge over the Albert Canal. "There are paratroops coming down all around!" The general had refused, stating that blowing the bridge would cut off two of his divisions. "No paratroops," he exclaimed, "would dare to drop so far behind our lines." Minutes later the lieutenant had phoned him again: "General," he said, "I am about to be taken prisoner."

Air supremacy was once again decisive, as it had proven in Norway. Göring's air force had displayed its now-familiar power on May 14 against Rotterdam: Thirty-six bombers were dispatched to silence a Dutch artillery position in the old port city. Soon after they took off, the Dutch fortress commander capitulated, and Göring's paratroop general, Student, fired red signal flares to halt the bombing attack. One wave, however, missed the flares and completed its bombing run. The resulting fires got out of hand and ravaged the old city, killing nine hundred people.

Göring was unrepentant. "I'll tell you what happened," he said heatedly under interrogation. "The fire brigades were so scared to death that they refused to move out and do anything about the fires. You can ask the burgomaster of Rotterdam about that and he will tell you the same thing. All those stories of 'thousands of dead'"—Churchill had repeatedly talked of

May 1940

VICTO

"thirty thousand" killed at offensive—"are pure inventi

Late on May 15, 1940, Hermz to the western front.

Hitched to the train now w general staff," a unit that wo air staff housed in its own cor himself with a number of sme some but unencumbered with officers serving under Jescho cartographers and teleprinter a Bernd von Brauchitsch (son i He briefed Göring on the da against Germany, he would u reassure his chief.

Göring's extra-long comma on May 16, close to a tunn country. A special wooden pl enable the portly field marsh and his closer cronies partool the No. 1 dining car, while t the less comfortably appointed on for Brauchitsch's young tea with the sewer inlets beneath. Göring claimed for himself tl ordered all other lavatories se

Once Göring ordered Fritz dummy air-raid alert. The re sent it plunging into the tunn from their railside sockets. Tra the sheltering tunnel and emer ing's handsome adjutants pull field marshal screamed, red-fa

He soon forgave Gömnert a breakthrough at Sedan on May later Göring sent for the Swed he invite the French to sue for p "to grant reasonable conditio ordered his chief of air staff t nek," he boomed grandly, "le he handed out the first eight Ki day the British expeditionary fe Channel ports, abandoning the

up the phone and bragged to Hitler that his bombers would set those ports ablaze, then wipe out the enemy troops trapped in northern France. VIII Air Corps commander Richthofen noted Göring's orders in his diary: "Destroy the British in the pocket."

Hitler indulged his air-force commander, ordering his tank forces on May 24 to hold back. "The air-force," wrote General Franz Halder, chief of the general staff, in his diary that evening, "is to finish off the encircled army!" "Our air-force," Göring announced, beaming, to his deputy, "is to mop up the British. I've persuaded the Führer to hold the army back." The halt order was controversial, but it made sense to the generals at the time: There was a belief that the campaign was all but over; there was no question of "going easy" on the British. "The Führer wants us to give them a lesson they'll never forget," Göring told Milch.

As his squadrons geared up for this task, Göring shifted his train *Asia* forward once more, to Polch, then flew off in a Junkers 52 to gloat over the destruction at Rotterdam. Taking just Loerzer and Udet with him he continued by road to Amsterdam, treasure city of the world of art and antiques. His growing lust for costly baubles temporarily satisfied with well-timed purchases, he flew in a Storch light plane back to Hitler's headquarters to report on the "mopping up" at Dunkirk. "Only fishing boats are coming over for the British," he scoffed. "Let's hope that the Tommies can swim!"

As he left France on May 30 and returned to Potsdam, he was unaware that three hundred thousand British and French troops were slipping away from the beaches of Dunkirk. Three hundred German bombers stood impotently by, grounded by ten-tenths cloud. Milch broke the bad news about the completed evacuation to Göring when *Asia* returned to France on June 5. "I saw six or seven dead Negroes," Milch told him, "and perhaps twenty or thirty other dead. The rest have got clean away. They abandoned their equipment and fled." He suggested that they throw airborne troops straight over to seize a beachhead and capture airfields in southern England, just as they had in Norway.

Göring dismissed the idea. "It can't be done," he said. He had only one airborne division, he would later explain. "If I had had four, I would have gone straight over to Britain."

The worst of the fighting in France over, he resumed his direction of the war economy, summoning Cabinet-style meetings aboard his train. Looking not unlike Prince Danilo in *The Merry Widow*, he appeared afterward in his dining car resplendent in white uniform, sash, and sparkling brooches, his belly held in by a belt inlaid with jeweled golden plates. First Lieutenant Göring, his nephew, went off on scavenging expeditions across occupied France. From a clothing store at Rheims he "liberated" a truckload of shirts, stockings, and other booty, which was duly parceled out among the officers on the field marshal's staff with a note, "A gift of field Marshal Göring." His charisma was undeniable. One Luftwaffe officer said that for all his fancy

* at odds with other explanation
See Shirer

May 1940

VICT

uniforms Göring was still: "Pity he's so fat." "He's got whom Göring had recently: knobbed cane and an outside cap—a bit ridiculous, to tell Göring tell fighter pilots no behind. "I wanted the ground commander. "*Donnerwetter* even hear your own machine

Attempting to stay inform squadron-commander level. 'down over Britain, "listens to Adolf Galland in preference us and kept asking, "What do 'First, broadcasting should command squadron commanders, not at home all our best men as in"

Once he ordered a forester for him to shoot. Donning his Jeschonnek, and other staff with him. Milch finished not only dessert as well. Göring returned his stand and missed the deer and dinner over, he spluttered to an aide. "Take down this o by dinner. All officers are to

Hermann Göring believed the an armistice. "All this planning four-engined bomber project a

Göring had begun one of art collection from the galleries notepaper of the Amstel Hotel delivered to Carinhall on June paintings by Rubens and others and seven more bought from Rembrandt, Pieter Breughel the Elder.

When, one week later, on written on the basis of his front: its specifications as a bomber, C just around the corner to him as ceremony at Compiègne on June dering," wrote Lieutenant Gen

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over, he resumed his direction of the staff meetings aboard his train. Looking for a widow, he appeared afterward in his uniform, sash, and sparkling brooches, his jeweled golden plates. First Lieutenant Halder's expeditions across occupied France as he "liberated" a truckload of shirts, were duly parceled out among the officers. "A gift of field Marshal Göring." The staff officer said that for all his fancy

exploration
See Shires

uniforms Göring was still a *Kamerad*. "First-rate guy," agreed another. "Pity he's so fat." "He's got a pot belly," said another officer, a lieutenant whom Göring had recently decorated, "he looks a bit unhealthy, carries a knobbed cane and an outsize pistol, and wears brown boots and a white cap—a bit ridiculous, to tell the truth." One squadron commander heard Göring tell fighter pilots not to panic if they heard a Spitfire coming up behind. "I wanted the ground to open and swallow me up!" said the squadron commander. "*Donnerwetter*, the ignorance! In a plane's cockpit you can't even hear your own machine guns."

Attempting to stay informed, Göring called conferences right down to squadron-commander level. "Hermann," reported one pilot to comrades shot down over Britain, "listens to men like [Major Werner] Mölders and [Colonel Adolf] Galland in preference to any of his generals. He had one meal with us and kept asking, 'What do you think, major?' And people tell him, too: 'First, broadcasting should cease at dusk; second, only experienced men as squadron commanders, not men who've never seen combat; third, don't send home all our best men as instructors.'"

Once he ordered a forester from Carinhall to bring a deer down to France for him to shoot. Donning hunting costume, he sallied forth, leaving Milch, Jeschonnek, and other staff members to hold the situation conference without him. Milch finished not only the conference without him, but dinner and dessert as well. Göring returned in a foul temper, having fallen asleep on his stand and missed the deer when it appeared. Finding both conference and dinner over, he spluttered angrily, then brightened. "Right," he snapped to an aide. "Take down this order. Staff conference in ten minutes followed by dinner. All officers are to attend and eat dinner as usual."

Hermann Göring believed the war virtually over. The French had asked for an armistice. "All this planning," asserted Udet, downgrading the He 177 four-engined bomber project after he returned to Berlin, "is garbage."

Göring had begun one of his major wartime pursuits, beefing up his art collection from the galleries of the defeated nations. On the expensive notepaper of the Amstel Hotel, Amsterdam, he penned a "list of pictures delivered to Carinhall on June 10, 1940"—nineteen priceless Flemish paintings by Rubens and other Old Masters from the Königs collection and seven more bought from other sources including several works by Rembrandt, Pieter Breughel the Elder, and Göring's favorite, Lucas Cranach the Elder.

When, one week later, on June 18, Milch warned Göring in a report written on the basis of his front-line inspections that the Ju 88 was not meeting its specifications as a bomber, Göring turned a deaf ear. Final victory seemed just around the corner to him as he took his generals to the pompous armistice ceremony at Compiègne on June 23. "The town of Compiègne is still smoldering," wrote Lieutenant General Hoffmann von Waldau in his diary:

Barely any population left, houses sliced open to display their shattered contents, stray dogs roaming the streets. Huge applause from the soldiers, Labor Front, and auxiliary services. Our "Hermann" really is immensely popular. Drive through the fine forest and broad avenues to the dining car of [Marshal] Foch. [The car of France's famous World War I commander was a static exhibit in the forest.] An avenue leads to a large clearing surrounded by pine trees; the dining car is at its center.

At 3:20 P.M. the French appear . . . Their airman displays a studied nonchalance. After the Preamble has been read, the Führer departs. It was an uplifting hour.

Hitler's commanders followed him in a carefully prescribed order, with Göring immediately behind, then Ribbentrop, Hess, and Raeder. Squeezing his bulk behind the long dining table in *Asia* afterward, Göring declared happily, "You know, even as a boy I always knew that one day I should become a *Feldherr* [warlord]!"

Through a man whom Beppo Schmid would identify in his papers simply as a "third party," Göring learned that Hitler was proposing only to *simulate* invasion preparations against Britain under the code name *Sea Lion*, a "gigantic bluff" to bring the British into line. This suited the field marshal down to the ground. He did not want to invade Britain; talking in private with Milch, he dismissed the notion of an invasion as superfluous. Schmid was not surprised when the air staff made no call for the targeting preparations that a real invasion operation would have required. On June 22, Waldau recorded that regrouping had begun, but after attending a command conference called by Göring on the following day he recorded, "Nothing of military significance [is planned] before [Hitler's] Reichstag speech"—which would not be for two or three weeks.

On June 25 Jeschonnek frankly told the major liaison between the air staff and the high command (OKW), Baron Sigismund von Falkenstein, "There isn't going to be any *Sea Lion*. And I haven't got time to bother about it." Expanding this remark in a postscript that day to Waldau about the air force's possible role in an invasion, Falkenstein wrote that Jeschonnek had refused any comment "since in his opinion the Führer has not the slightest intention of crossing the [English] Channel."

Hitler and Göring both believed that air attacks on Britain's shipping lifeline would suffice to force Churchill to see things their way. Göring ordered his squadrons to begin small-scale raids on British ports and harbors—but attacks on inland towns were explicitly forbidden.

Göring himself had been drawn back to Amsterdam to run a greedy eye over the amazing art collection of a bankrupt Dutch dealer, J. Goudstikker.

His absence on these curious shopping expeditions was a relief for the air

June 1940

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Before delivering his sp real contempt for Göring's advance. He delivered his that Göring realized at onc in the fire."

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The new Reichsmarscha that day to hear his plans f For most of those entering commander's accumulating tents, compiled a few weeks two green leather-topped t and chairs, with their gree crest—a mailed fist clutchin two of baroque pewter style

July 1940

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force. On June 27, his chief of operations, Waldau, commented in his private diary, "Field marshal is away on his travels, a blessing for us." Two days later he returned in Asia to Berlin, and here he would stay until early September—which testified to his complete lack of interest in the "phony" *Sea Lion* operation. Idling out at Carinhall, he drooled over his new art acquisitions, and considered which of his generals to ennoble at the end of the war. He rewarded his friend Ernst Udet immediately with the Knight's Cross on July 5, although Udet's desk job as director of air armament had involved hardly any heroism at all.

Hitler told Göring that he was planning to make a magnanimous peace offer to Britain in his major Reichstag speech. The field marshal warned that the British would insist on a total withdrawal from Norway, Poland, and the west—though they *might* allow Germany to retain Alsace-Lorraine and the Polish Corridor. Hitler quieted Göring with the disclosure that he was going to promote him at the same Reichstag session to "Reichsmarschall," or six-star general. There had only been one other in German history, Prince Eugen of Savoy. Göring swelled with pride and began poring over suitable fabrics for the new uniform immediately—a color that would establish that he was Reichsmarschall of all three services, and not just of the Luftwaffe. He finally plumped for a soft pearl gray. Valet Robert murmured that it was a woman's fabric. "If I wear it," hissed Göring, "then it's for men."

Before delivering his speech on July 19 Hitler once again displayed his real contempt for Göring's authority by refusing to let him see his speech in advance. He delivered his peace offer to the British in such clumsy terms that Göring realized at once, as he told interrogators later, that "the fat was in the fire."

As Reichsmarschall, however, he was the highest-ranking officer in Europe, indeed the world. Göring hurried home and tried on the new uniform before a mirror, then paraded it for Hitler's benefit in the Chancellery. Hitler handed him the parchment title deed as Reichsmarschall in a specially designed casket encrusted with diamonds and emeralds that Göring would later describe as the most precious gift he had ever received from the Führer. "Göring," wrote General von Richthofen, visiting Carinhall on July 21, "was radiant, full of the Führer's acclamation of him, full of his house, of his paintings, of his daughter—in short, full of everything."

The new Reichsmarschall had invited the generals over to Carinhall on that day to hear his plans for the next weeks of the air war against Britain. For most of those entering his large study it was their first glimpse of their commander's accumulating wealth. A detailed inventory of this room's contents, compiled a few weeks earlier, survives: four long marble-topped tables, two green leather-topped tables, six smaller round tables; an outside desk and chairs, with their green leather upholstery embossed with the Göring crest—a mailed fist clutching a ring. Six chandeliers illuminated the room, two of baroque pewter style, two of gilt (gifts from the city of Aachen), and

two of silver and crystal (gifts of the Reich Handicrafts Association on his most recent birthday). Fourteen wood carvings, including three medieval Madonnas (one donated by the publisher Brockhaus at Christmas) stood in niches between the twenty-two paintings that Göring's experts had selected for him—some of them literally beyond price, like Leonardo da Vinci's "Leda," while others were dictated by a sense of history, like Lenbach's 1888 portrait of Bismarck, and Knirr's painting of the Führer.

This naked display of wealth had its purpose, of course. It was an implicit statement by Göring that his piratical authority was absolute—and an unspoken promise that similar riches awaited all those who followed him.

Looking around this sumptuous chamber, Göring made out the faces of Kesselring, Sperrle, and Milch—all three had been promoted to field marshal. He told them that the *Endkampf* against Britain would begin in about one week, since Britain was refusing to throw in the sponge. Meanwhile he directed them to attack Britain's merchant shipping, promising to follow with "violent attacks" (he did not say on what) "to unsettle the whole country." Ten days later Hitler told his army generals that he intended to await the results of the first ten days of this "intensified air warfare." His purpose was to bully Britain into accepting his peace offer. In secret, Göring resumed his clandestine contacts with London, inviting, on July 24, the Dutch airline director Albert Plesman to Carinhall to act as an intermediary.

But the air war did not produce the results Hitler had expected. He himself had applied such irksome restrictions to it—prohibiting attacks by night or on civilian targets, and upholding a total embargo on bombing London—that Göring was prevented from unfolding his real air power against the enemy. It was a strategic error, particular since the fine summer months were already upon them. He now had about 230 twin-engined Me 110's available, but they were proving too cumbersome for combat: he had some 760 Me 109's, but these could not reach London with enough fuel for combat. The British Air Force was, moreover, showing unwelcome signs of resilience. With each day that passed it was recovering, yet Hitler was still pussyfooting. Directing Göring on August 1 to "eliminate the British Air Force in combat," he still expressly forbade "terror air raids."

With a feeling of hopelessness Göring called his field marshals back to Carinhall on August 6 and outlined the details of *Eagle Day*—the opening strike of a three-day grand slam against the British airfields and radar stations, designed to force the remaining British squadrons up into lethal air combat. Several days passed while he awaited the right three days, and when he launched *Eagle Day* on the thirteenth, it went off half-cocked. As the weather worsened that day, Kesselring recalled his force, Luftflotte 2, and the next two days would see only halfhearted skirmishing. On the fourteenth, Göring heard Hitler say while briefing the newly promoted field marshals at the Chancellery that *Sea Lion*, the invasion, was purely a threat—"a last resort, if other pressures [on Britain] fail." Later that day the Reichsmarschall

Aug 1940

VICTOR

angrily summoned Milch and Carinhall to express his displeasure.

Air-crew morale was spiraling as tailplane shot away. The Luftwaffe in his own skies. The Me 110 Mass fire raids on London went to the Luftwaffe that day, August 1, "angry lion" look. Milch noted in his leather diary: "Still not cities in

At Carinhall Göring continued. Berchtesgaden Hitler began to blast the British into submission, stated Hitler's absolute prohibition, later, however, Churchill took center of Berlin. Three nights killing eight people. Outraged, by to retaliate against London at even now, and on the fourth the still forbidding raids on London, had by now occurred. When two embargo, it was Göring who hesitated to crush once and for all his Göring's reluctance, as did the wrote on September 6, "This afternoon Let's hope the Reichsmarschall state

Göring departed unhappily for personal command of the Battle of Britain on to La Boissière le Déluge, a Flanked by Field Marshal Kesselring (Air Corps) he stood that afternoon in pride as his bombers thundered over London. That night 380 Londoners were killed in a new form of air war, for which responsibility.

Provoked by the August 1940 raid, Göring trashed the meticulous staff plan he had done so at the very instant of its premacy by gouging out the radar stations. As the Battle of Britain depended. As the Battle of Britain from a chivalrous dueling in the raids, Göring again lost interest. General Jeschonnek, one of the few who did not think that Germany would

* D.O. Now he wanted to be seen as humane. Once you've conquered the world, you can be as soft as you want and kind.

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Aug 1940

ich Handicrafts Association on his carvings, including three medieval (Brockhaus at Christmas) stood in that Göring's experts had selected at price, like Leonardo da Vinci's a sense of history, like Lenbach's painting of the Führer.

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Later that day the Reichsmarschall

angrily summoned Milch and the two other Luftwaffe field marshals out to Carinhall to express his displeasure at the air offensive's failure.

Air-crew morale was spiraling downward like an He 111 bomber with its tailplane shot away. The Luftwaffe was now fighting a determined enemy in his own skies. The Me 110 was being mauled. The Ju 88 was defective. Mass fire raids on London were still denied them. Repeating Hitler's words to the Luftwaffe that day, August 15, Göring's face adopted the familiar "angry lion" look. Milch noted Hitler's bombing embargoes in his green leather diary: "Still not cities in general, and in particular not London."

At Carinhall Göring continued to sweat that summer out. Down at Berchtesgaden Hitler began to seek scapegoats. Göring anxiously offered to blast the British into submission, but on August 24 the high command again stated Hitler's absolute prohibition on terror raids on London. Two nights later, however, Churchill took the initiative, ordering the first raids on the center of Berlin. Three nights later the RAF bombers returned to Berlin, killing eight people. Outraged, Hitler directed the Reichsmarschall to stand by to retaliate against London at the end of the month. He hated the decision even now, and on the fourth the high command recorded that the Führer was still forbidding raids on London, although half a dozen British raids on Berlin had by now occurred. When two days later Hitler finally lifted the year-long embargo, it was Göring who hesitated, aware that the first bombs on London would crush once and for all his hopes of peace. Beppo Schmid observed Göring's reluctance, as did the hard-bitten General von Richthofen, who wrote on September 6, "This afternoon the decision comes to raid London. Let's hope the Reichsmarschall stands firm. I've got my doubts on that score."

Göring departed unhappily for Holland, announcing that he was taking personal command of the Battle of Britain. On the seventh, his train moved on to La Boissière le Déluge, a little rail station near the Channel coast. Flanked by Field Marshal Kesselring (Luftflotte 2) and General Loerzer (II Air Corps) he stood that afternoon on the cliffs, swelling with newfound pride as his bombers thundered overhead to raid London for the first time. That night 380 Londoners were killed—it was the beginning of a murderous new form of air war, for which Hitler and Churchill would bear equal responsibility.

Provoked by the August 1940 raids on Berlin, Hitler and Göring had thus trashed the meticulous staff planning in Schmid's target-dossier *Blue*. They had done so at the very instant when the Luftwaffe had almost gained supremacy by gouging out the radar stations on which Britain's fighter defenses depended. As the Battle of Britain underwent this fateful metamorphosis from a chivalrous dueling in the skies to a brutal exchanging of bombing raids, Göring again lost interest. Once, seated in *Asia's* dining car, he asked General Jeschonnek, one of the foremost advocates of this terror bombing, "Do you think that Germany would cave in if Berlin was wiped out?"

To Rosenzweig
the world
so good and kind

→ like Jehovah's witness
of Danahof spirit steel deep

"Of course not!" retorted Jeschonnek stoutly, then smiled thinly as he realized what he had said. "British morale," he then suggested, "is more brittle than our own."

"That's where you are wrong," said Göring.

By the end of September 1940 his bombers had killed seven thousand Londoners, but he saw no sign of a political collapse. As the glamor of command-train life faded, he moved to Paris, took over a floor at the Ritz, had an especially large bath installed, wolfed down caviar, and began to live in a fantasy world of his own. Once his signals officer had to put him through on the phone, using "command flash" priority, to Emmy and Edda at Carinhall. "Can you hear, Emmy?" he shouted, seated on his hotel bed in a green silk kimono. "I'm standing on Cap Gris Nez at this very moment, while my magnificent airplanes are thundering overhead to England!"

Clanking with brand-new medals, his commanders watched his antics with more amusement than anger. Burdened on September 12 with the Golden Flying Badge with Diamonds, Richthofen mused sardonically in his diary, "One gets to look more and more like an ox in the Whit [Sunday] Parade."

Aware that his air force was meeting its match in the skies over southern England, Göring was mentally and physically drained. He returned briefly to Berlin early that October, but did not enjoy it as the sirens now often wailed there, forcing four million Berliners to seek shelter—many of them muttering incantations about "Meier the Broom": To his earlier promise to change his name to Meier, Göring had foolishly added another, to eat a broomstick, if one enemy bomber should reach the Reich capital. On October 3, he had to preside over a ministerial conference on providing flak defenses and air-raid shelters for the city. Two days later he saw Hitler briefly—the Führer directed him not to concern himself with food shortages in France and Belgium, but to treat the "Nordic" countries Norway, Denmark, and Holland well "for political reasons"—and then returned unenthusiastically to France. The diary of the later-famous Hermann Göring Regiment records that his train *Asia* arrived back at headquarters at 8:00 P.M. on October 10, 1940.

While losing the initiative in the Battle of Britain, Hitler had taken the first steps to seize an historic initiative in the east. He was preparing for the coming Nazi assault on the Soviet Union. Göring had remained at Carinhall while Hitler and his army generals brooded over these momentous decisions in Bavaria, and he had not been consulted. At the August 14 Chancellery conference he had not paid much attention to Hitler's apparent afterthought, that he would attack the Russians if they deviated from their present pro-Nazi policies or if they turned against Finland or Romania. Those "ifs" probably occluded Göring's perception of danger; besides, Hitler undertook not to make up his mind until May 1941 which way to turn next—whether against Britain or the Soviet Union. Talking to munitions expert Georg

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Thomas that day, Göring men their war supplies to Russia predicted, according to the not interest in meeting Russian evidence that the obese and ind about what the army might be diary registered that the air fo organization for *Eastern Build* under which the army was cur if left in "ignorance of the 'br sured that the buildup was purely twenty-ninth, arms chief Thoma concern was to prevent any fur

The Reichsmarschall would n unaware of the planning in Berli he loitered at the Casino de Pa Friedrich Karl von Hanesse, the c of the Reichsmarschall's compa diary on October 22 that he ha himself and the "Big Chief." " "to have to keep somebody con

Five days later Göring took A. railroad network, inspecting Ger at Le Havre before trundling on west of Deauville, the fashionab tablished VIII Air Corps headqua languidly around the airfields o where the peasants were already h he were in East Prussia, and the rest and recuperation; his heart w in-law Count Eric von Rosen he day of October, attending a wel training at Deauville, the Reichs tended to go on leave "for a mor

He began the long return jour at La Boissière in pouring rain o day or two in Paris, and on the fo capital of Occupied France he w commander in chief of a now-stru noted art connoisseur. Indeed, the of France's fleeing Jews were abo

Milch summed up this secret conference in one word in his own notebook: "Ost" [East]. And Jeschonnek informed his staff at La Boissière that Hitler had resolved to "sever the head of the danger menacing us in the east."

Göring still hankered after peace with Britain. On January 14, the Swedish Count Bonde, who had visited Lord Halifax quite recently, was brought in. Göring was crestfallen to learn that Bonde had brought no particular message from the British. "We have offered Britain peace twice," said Göring wistfully. "If I send any message now, they will take it as a sign of weakness." He resumed his art pursuits. The diary glimpses him at Carinhall on the eighteenth, haggling with his art agents Miedl and Hofer. He swam and sauna'd often, but his health had worsened perceptibly, and after addressing air-force officers on the nineteenth he suffered a midnight heart attack. Clearly it was not his first, since his diary treats it almost routinely. Professor Siebert took an electrocardiogram, and on the twenty-second Göring was fit enough to meet Kesselring, Jeschonnek, and other generals again.

The coming war with Russia overshadowed all else. His differences with Hitler over forward strategy became more marked as the shaping of *Barbarossa* now began. For some weeks Göring found that he was getting phone calls discouraging him from attending Hitler's daily war conference, the *Führerlage*. "I don't know what's up," Emmy heard her husband remark. "The Führer stops me going over. Something's going on." The diary confirms this. Between November 14 and mid-March he met Hitler only four times, and they telephoned each other only rarely—e.g., on January 16, when he reported that X Air Corps had sunk the British cruisers *Southampton* and *York* and the aircraft carrier *Illustrious*.

General Kurt Student, the Parachute Division's commander, came out to Carinhall with Jeschonnek on January 24 and stayed aboard Göring's train when it left for Berchtesgaden. As they talked that evening, Student found the Reichsmarschall bitterly opposed to *Barbarossa*. Arriving at Berchtesgaden, Göring tackled Hitler at midday, lunched with him, and stayed with him alone until 8:00 P.M. They were probably arguing, because General Student would recall four years later that Hitler left afterward "sunk deep in thought." According to Student, Göring was already thinking he had succeeded—"Thank God, no war with Russia!"—when Hitler phoned two days later: "Göring," he said, "I have changed my mind. We shall attack in the east."

By that time Hermann Göring was back in Berlin, immersed in three days of Cabinet-level conferences on raw materials and the coming campaign in the Balkans. On January 28, 1941, he was again summoned to the Führer's presence, this time in the Reich Chancellery. On the following day the Reichsmarschall revealed in a three-hour conference with his arms experts and economics advisers, according to Körner's later testimony, that war with Russia was definite. He asked each of those seated around the table for his

* after the praise comes more criticism
Hitler, who knows nothing about
air war, is criticizing an airman who

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view. Fritz Todt, Friedrich Krauch, and Fritz Fromm unthinkable," citing precocious Göring. The exasperated himself, pointed out pensively Germany's chronic grain shortage Thomas to set up a

Visibly agitated, he took that Hitler had decided to let Gastein to take the cure for the only political conversational marschall. How unlike Car you for weeks?" she asked very political animal," he He now told her that Hitler Göring, because I knew you

Disconsolate at his failure 30, 1941—the party's annual member staff. He parked his Hague and Amsterdam with Jew and Gentile as he traded. Arriving back at La Boissière first day of February amid strife from Milch but stayed in bed Alfred Rosenberg and his had an art raid on Paris that two days, from February 4 to 6, he pursued the barely legal

His thieving friend General Hanesse had housed his office du Faubourg Saint-Honoré; former residence of the Rot Luftwaffe hostel complete with and cutlery. Göring liked the fine tapestries and carpets his

Here in Paris, Göring and Günther Prien, who had sunk around fine jewelers like Per word shopping in his diary, shows that he was visited at Army's "art-protection office" bullying official whose high-ranking, that of a *Feldführer* in]

→ knows we
modern art

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

meticulous and indefatigable German editor of his speeches and proclamations has noted, the phrase "of all time" is repeated in speech after speech.

The compulsive and deadly serious games that he played about time—such as how fast he could dress—involved "defeating" time. Yet Hitler never really won these games. Time was constantly coming back to taunt him. Thus he would tell his intimates over and over, "I have no time." He had "no time to be ill"; he had no time to tie his own tie, so he wore pretied cravats or had one tied for him by his valet.³⁹

At the end of his career, he blamed time for his defeat. "The war came too soon," he said in one of his last soliloquies. "I did not have the time to form people according to my politics. . . . we never have enough time. Always conditions press down upon us and we . . . lack time. Time always . . . works against us."⁴⁰

Hitler never had enough time. Yet no ruler in all history wasted more of it in pointless little trips and excursions, in being driven about in his cars, in hours of interminable talk and twaddle. Perhaps he felt that if he was filling up the hours with words, he was in some way dominating or "killing" time. Certainly he was destroying it for other people.

Constantly he tried to deceive time. Had there been any important way that time had deceived him? We should try to find out.

Death and Decapitation Motifs

Throughout his life, Hitler was infatuated with death. Even in moments of victory, death was on his mind. At the close of the tremendous Nuremberg Party Rally of 1934, which he had billed as "The Triumph of the Will," his thoughts turned less to triumph than to his own death: "When my eyes are closed in death, I do not know, but the Party will live on." And in the midst of World War II, he kept talking to his entourage about the imminence of his own death.⁴¹

Hitler was captivated by the depiction of putrefaction and death in Makart's huge canvas *Plague in Florence*, which he wanted desperately for the museum he was planning for his hometown of Linz. When he finally acquired the painting in 1940, a secretary reports that he was as overjoyed as a schoolboy and clapped his hands as he exulted over the piles of greenish yellow corpses. He had filmstrips made of the execution of criminals and enjoyed watching them die. He also tried to quiet fears of his own death by asserting that he had the power to determine the death of others, saying, "I do not play at war, I command in war. . . . I insist that I have the right to send the youth to their death."⁴²

Hitler hated the moon because he considered it to be dead. On a lovely, star-filled autumnal night in 1924 while he was a prisoner at Landsberg am Lech, he turned to his fellow inmate Rudolf Hess and

1940, 1924

The Image and the Man

remarked: "You know, Rudi, it's only this thing dead, and terrible, and inhuman. . . . It is as if in the moon a part of moon once sent down over the earth. . . . a ghostly fellow."⁴³

During the 1920s, Hitler was very woman named Mimi Reiter—of whom with her, he took her to the graveyard and stood staring down at the grave for some thing that Miss Reiter never quite understood [Ich bin noch nicht so weit]. Once, in a her favorite food, *Wienerschnitzel*. What asked if she had done something wrong and have it, but I don't understand why wanted to devour a corpse . . . the flies. Many years later, Hitler still made fun of their meat broth "corpse tea," and he told ing story about crayfish: A deceased g threw her body into a brook to lure the body, and the relatives then caught and cation, while a guest was dining on sm were best fattened when fed with dead c

All his life, Hitler showed unusual i crabs, partly because *Krebs* (crabs) i was particularly concerned about dy which had killed his mother. He talked was morbidly preoccupied with the deathly afraid of water. During a boat example, he panicked and "seemed abs would capsize." Typically, he insisted it were so badly frightened they ought to r

Hitler's concern about death was Third Reich. The Nazis were much n celebrations than they were in feting li staged at the tombs of Prussian kings, Tannenberg, at memorial services for I November commemoration of the marty leitmotif of death sounded impressively.

Major political and military deci Führer's fear of imminent death and c He expressed his sense of urgency whei for president in 1932: "I don't have time year. I've got to get to power shortly to ing the time remaining for me. I have another occasion: "I need ten years of have not long enough to live. . . ."⁴⁴

Hitler's decision to go to war in

DOLF HITLER

The Image and the Man

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it up at an early
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placement of the piano in the music room and the shape of the vases in the halls.

Years later, he had other building fantasies, even beyond those described by Speer. Another admirer recalled that shortly after the invasion of Norway in 1940 he made plans to convert the fjords into a colossal resort with mile upon mile of public baths and playgrounds. The swimming pools of the fjords, he said, must be "the high point in the bath life of the future of Europe." There the most beautiful women on the continent would swim, sunbathe, dance, and play. Power coming from hydroelectric sources in Norway would light the huge resort area during the short Northern days and warm the glass-enclosed swimming pools. Although his architect, Dr. Fritz Todt, was then in the midst of important war plans, Hitler insisted that he stop to draw up detailed plans for the entire area. He was also told to build huge bridges to connect the resort with the *Reichsautobahn*.¹⁰³

Hitler's extraordinary capacity for self-deception is illustrated in his fantasy about one of the greatest turning points of his political career. In his memoirs, and in a dozen midnight reveries, he lingered lovingly over what he believed to be the triumphant reception of his first important political speech in the Munich Hofbräuhaus on 24 February 1920. He recalled vividly his anxiety before that important event, asserting that he personally planned the whole affair with great care and that he converted and captivated a hostile audience. It was this night that proved him an orator and mover of men. A great personal victory, it was also the most important meeting in the history of the struggling little German Workers' Party. Hitler chose this event as a fitting close for the first volume of his memoirs: "I was confronted by . . . people united by a new conviction, a new faith, a new will. . . . A fire had been lighted, and out of its flames there was bound to come some day the sword which was to regain the freedom of the Germanic Siegfried and the life of the German nation. And side by side with the coming rise, I sensed that there walked the Goddess of Inexorable Revenge. . . . Thus the hall became slowly empty. The movement took its course."¹⁰⁴

That Hitler's fantasy does not at all jibe with historical fact has been carefully documented. The main speaker that night was not Hitler at all, but a Dr. Dingfelder; Hitler's name was not even mentioned in Party advertisements announcing the meeting. The *Völkischer Beobachter* was less than enthusiastic about the future Führer's efforts: only one sentence on an inside page was given to his speech. Moreover, it was the hated Marxists who prevailed that night. As the jubilant, singing crowd left the meeting, the Platzl reverberated to the sound of the *Internationale*.¹⁰⁵

Such is the "historical truth" of the matter—yet it might be noted that a more important historical truth is the reality of Hitler's fantasies about himself. He believed in them, and his beliefs altered the course of history.

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

more particularly like his mother—the masses “permit sexual substance to enter the body,” and in so doing they become contaminated with poison and lose their purity.³⁴

The association of his mother's body being poisoned by a Jew—whether through sexual union or through medical treatment—and the body of the Motherland's being exposed to racial poisoning is manifest through dozens of speeches and writings. Only a few examples can be cited here:

The Jews eat like poisonous abscesses into the nation. . . . A continuous stream of poison is being driven into the outermost blood vessels of this once heroic body by a mysterious power.

We will not pause until the last trace of this poison is removed from the body of our people.

The Jewish poison was able to penetrate the bloodstream of our people unhindered to do its work.

The Jew becomes a ferment of decomposition among people and races.³⁵

In talking about his own relationships with the Motherland, Hitler used a peculiar phrase which seems to indicate an unconscious desire to possess his mother. Not only did he speak of “seizing power” in Germany, but he used a feminine form for the country, saying that he had conquered her. Thus, in his headquarters at the *Wolfsschanze* on the night of 16–17 January 1942, he retold for the hundredth time the saga of how the unknown hero had come to a nation in order “to conquer her” (*Um eine Nation zu erobern*).³⁶

Years before he had confided to an intimate that he could not marry because “my only bride is my Motherland.”³⁷

Foundations of Hitler's Anti-Semitism

The anti-Semite is a man who wishes to be a pitiless stone, a furious torrent, a devastating thunderbolt—anything except a man.

—Jean-Paul Sartre

Apologists for the Third Reich simply misunderstand when they say that “Hitler was all right—he just went too far with the Jewish problem.” Anti-Semitism was not peripheral to his system, and not one of its “excesses”; it was absolutely essential to it. It was the justification for the whole ideology. As President Theodor Heuss observed, anti-Semitism was as important to Hitler as economics was to Marx. Both claimed to have discovered “iron laws of history.” For Marx, history was class conflict; for Hitler it was racial conflict. Marx considered the bourgeoisie as the enemy of the proletariat; Hitler called

1940

From Private Neurosis to F

the Jew the enemy of the society; for Hitler the go:

In Hitler's mind, a tionalism and socialism As he put it in an early s

Socialism can only and anti-Semitism. gether.³⁹

Hitler was an oppos about anti-Semitism. Th in a conversation of 19: “seized by a sort of pa power he would see to i The method of the mur about filth, stench, putre

As soon as I have erected, for exampl Jews will be hange until they stink. T possible. As soon : follow and that w exterminated. Exac cities until German

Anti-Semitism was it was even more than t wanted personally to be regret that I am Chanc SA or SS man and be or bludgeon.”⁴¹ As we to trigger violent emotio

Hitler tried to exte never managed to do s he felt Jewishness to be a demon to be exorcise that it was imperative to *das Gift . . . in uns ausn* despaired of ever doing who can never be erad Jew is always within us [

German historians sonal anti-Semitism but were “practical” and “ra political opportunist he

when plagued by uncertainty and self-doubt, he turned to Wagner for inspiration and direction. Now, on 23 July 1940, he journeyed to the shrine at Bayreuth to attend a performance of *Die Götterdämmerung*. Once again Wagner worked his magic upon him. His portrayal of heroic catastrophe, the destruction of gods and men, somehow reassured Hitler and confirmed his conviction of heroic destiny. In the darkness of the loge he passionately kissed the hand of Frau Winifred Wagner. He left Bayreuth composed, his mind made up. Within the week he issued the orders that would lead to his own *Götterdämmerung*.¹⁴⁰

Thus, in the spring of 1941, with the European continent in his grip, instead of consolidating his vast New Order, instead of concentrating his forces against his only remaining foe, an isolated and desperately wounded England, Hitler turned to court his nemesis: he sent his armies marching into Russia. He did so at a time when the Soviet Union was his most valued ally, shipping him thousands upon thousands of tons of vital war supplies, including huge stocks of oil which the Russians were purchasing from the United States and sending on to Germany through Vladivostok and across Siberia. One of the more memorable pictures in the annals of warfare shows Hitler's soldiers, as they marched eastward into Russia, looking at Soviet freight trains traveling westward loaded with supplies for Hitler's Wehrmacht.¹⁵⁰

Both rational and irrational factors seem to have been at work in Hitler's momentous decision. He wanted the wheat of the Ukraine and oil of the Caucasus; * he had long planned to find *Lebensraum* for his Reich in Eastern Europe; he was getting old and wanted to win his race with death; he mistrusted the Russians and—against all evidence to the contrary—was convinced that they were about to attack him at any moment; and his racial theory demanded that the Slavs be enslaved. Furthermore, since no one else had conquered Russia, this was his chance to prove that he was "the greatest military commander of all time"—far greater than Charles XII or Napoleon. There was also Hitler's fascination with space. "In my youth I dreamed constantly of vast spaces," he mused one night in his "Wolf's Lair" headquarters, "now life has enabled me to give the dream reality. . . . Space lends wings to my imagination. . . ." ¹⁵¹

All these reasons were probably operative. But in addition, he may, unconsciously, have gone to war with the Soviet Union because of a compulsion to punish himself and to fail. The reason Hitler himself gave was that he invaded Russia in order to defeat England—not, one would think, the most direct way to achieve that objective. The result was the opposite of the stated intent. England was greatly relieved and

* But the argument that Hitler invaded Russia because he needed war supplies is blunted by two facts: Stalin was already shipping him hundreds of thousands of tons of phosphates, iron ore, scrap iron, and chrome ore, as well as oil, platinum, rubber, and timber. Further, Hitler already had at his disposal great quantities of oil and wheat after his army had moved into Rumania in September 1940 to "protect" Rumanian oil and wheat fields. See Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, 1:207, 190.

strengthened when Hitler himself in a two-front war

It is a remarkable fact. Hitler did not ask Japan, any way. Indeed, he gave Operation must be given foreign policy believes the spring of 1941, might well at the time of Hitler's in even to consult his ally n forth cited the incident as Rich has concluded that i while the Wehrmacht was: conquered Russia. The sa count for Hitler's "extraor secure Japanese coopera invasion."¹⁵⁴

Hitler's attitude contri of 1941-1942, when it was get if he were to defeat Ru aid from Japan, he refuse hinder American shipmei Vladivostok as a modest re United States. His conduct bility that unconsciously, c

The struggle against t undertaking requiring eno tion of the entire economic never gave the order for su the invasion, he actually g: production!¹⁵⁵

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strengthened when Hitler abandoned "Operation Sea Lion" and involved himself in a two-front war.

It is a remarkable fact that in launching the invasion of Russia, Hitler did not ask Japan, his ally in the Tripartite Pact, to help him in any way. Indeed, he gave explicit orders that "no hint of the *Barbarossa Operation* must be given the Japanese."¹⁵² A close student of Japanese foreign policy believes that Japan, whose options were still open in the spring of 1941, might well have been persuaded to attack the Russians at the time of Hitler's invasion. But Hitler's refusal to ask for aid or even to consult his ally needlessly offended the Japanese, who henceforth cited the incident as an example of Hitler's "perfidy."¹⁵³ Norman Rich has concluded that if Japan had attacked Russia in the Far East while the Wehrmacht was invading from the West, Hitler could have conquered Russia. The same writer can find no adequate reason to account for Hitler's "extraordinary attitude" in failing "to do anything to secure Japanese cooperation of any kind" before launching the invasion.¹⁵⁴

Hitler's attitude continued to be extraordinary. As late as the winter of 1941-1942, when it was clear that he would need all the help he could get if he were to defeat Russia, when all reason demanded that he seek aid from Japan, he refused to do so. He did not even ask his ally to hinder American shipments of supplies to the Soviet Union via Vladivostok as a modest return for his own declaration of war on the United States. His conduct was indeed irrational. It suggests the possibility that unconsciously, once again, he was asking for punishment.

The struggle against the Soviet Union, everyone knew, was a vast undertaking requiring enormous amounts of supplies—the mobilization of the entire economic power of a great industrial nation. But Hitler never gave the order for such mobilization. In fact, on the very eve of the invasion, he actually gave orders to *reduce* the level of armaments production!¹⁵⁵

This was no act of mere bravado. Hitler was not nearly so confident of an easy victory over Russia as has been alleged. It is noteworthy how often he repeated a metaphor which bespeaks a premonition of misfortune. At three o'clock on the morning after the invasion he told his press secretary, "I feel as if I've opened a door into a dark, unseen room—without knowing what's lurking behind the door." To his private secretaries he also talked about opening a door into a darkened room, and concluded apprehensively, "One never knows what is hidden there." He said the same thing to Bormann and repeated it to Ribbentrop. And again in a speech of October 1941 to his generals, in which he attempted to explain why it was necessary to attack the Soviet Union, he said, "At every such step a door opens behind which only a mystery [*Geheimnis*] is hidden, and lies in wait. . . ." ¹⁵⁶

When Hitler was a little boy, had he ever opened a door into a darkened room to be confronted by some terrifying secret?

There were other premonitions of disaster. A full month in advance

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had sent a voluminous memorandum to Hitler, dealing with the effects upon German history of the alternating influences of East and West, and giving a warning against becoming in any way involved with Bolshevism. Hitler upon receiving it had one of his frequent outbursts of rage, and Heydrich was forced to place Rechberg under arrest. However, after a short time I managed to get him released.

At the time of the negotiations between Hitler and Pétain at Montoire in 1940, Rechberg submitted another memorandum on the treatment of France, urging a sincere policy of collaboration from which the seeds of a new Europe could spring. How much Hitler was influenced by it can be judged from the fact that he again had Rechberg arrested.

But once more I was able to secure his release, and I continued to maintain close contact with him, especially in 1943 and 1944. Later I was able to use various memoranda made by Rechberg in my efforts to influence the German leadership towards a peaceful solution of Europe's problems. He was ready at that time to forget the injustices that had been done to him, and contributed much to my attempts to achieve a compromise peace with the West.

My chief opponents, Ernst Kaltenbrunner, who since 1944 had been head of the SD, and Mueller, succeeded, however, in having Rechberg arrested once again after the plot against Hitler of July 20, 1944. He was then placed in 'honorary custody' in the Hotel Dreesen at Bad Godesberg, where he was interned until the end of the war with various French generals and political personalities, including the sister of General de Gaulle.

But to return to 1937, such was the background of the report I made to Heydrich, little realizing at that time the historic decisions which it foreshadowed.

Heydrich had received information from a White Russian emigré, General Skoblin, that Tukhachevsky, Marshal of the Soviet Union, was plotting with the German General Staff to overthrow the Stalin régime.

Heydrich at once grasped the tremendous importance of this piece of intelligence. If used correctly, a blow could be struck at the leadership of the Red Army from which it would not recover for many years.

It was better, his needs.

Jahnke was of a different opinion. Skoblin might be playing a double game. He might have been concocted by Skoblin on Stalin's orders. Jahnke's purpose in this: he wanted to avoid by arousing Heydrich's suspicion. At that time, would be able to act against which Tukhachevsky was the leader of internal problems in the Soviet Union. He wished to initiate proceedings against Skoblin, but preferred that the incriminating memorandum remain unconvicted.

Heydrich remained unconvinced. Indeed, his suspicions were turned to point, he felt, was motivated by Staff. Heydrich at once placed Jahnke in prison for months.

Meanwhile Heydrich submitted a memorandum to Tukhachevsky to Hitler. The memorandum contained no documentary proof. German Army leaders in Tukhachevsky's circle recognized this, and himself as incriminating the German general. This if he could thereby weaken the Red Army which was threatening the Reich. It must be remembered that the authenticity of Skoblin's information subsequently happened I think he was therefore merely to strengthen to information that was in itself.

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Hitler at this moment was faced with whether to align himself with Skoblin or with Jahnke. And it was within this large framework that he made up his mind how to use Skoblin. He brought him. On the one hand, Skoblin's presence might have meant the end of Russia as a world power. It would have involved Germany in a struggle to unmask Tukhachevsky might be a disaster, or might equally well put

* see Bullock

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Jahnke was of a different opinion. He warned Heydrich that
Skoblin might be playing a double game, and that the information
might have been concocted by the Russians and passed on by
Skoblin on Stalin's orders. Jahnke thought Stalin had a double
purpose in this: he wanted to weaken the German General Staff
by arousing Heydrich's suspicions against them, and, at the same
time, would be able to act against the Soviet military clique, of
which Tukhachevsky was the head. Jahnke thought that because
of internal problems in the Soviet Government, Stalin did not
wish to initiate proceedings against the generals himself and would
prefer that the incriminating material should come from abroad.

Heydrich remained unconvinced by Jahnke's subtle reasoning.
Indeed, his suspicions were turned against Jahnke, whose view-
point, he felt, was motivated by loyalty towards the General
Staff. Heydrich at once placed Jahnke under house arrest for three
months.

Meanwhile Heydrich submitted Skoblin's information on Tikh-
achevsky to Hitler. The material itself was not complete. It
contained no documentary proof of active participation by the
German Army leaders in Tukhachevsky's conspiracy. Heydrich
recognized this, and himself added fictitious material aimed at
incriminating the German generals. He felt himself justified in
this if he could thereby weaken the growing strength of the Red
Army which was threatening the superiority of the Reichswehr.
It must be remembered that Heydrich was convinced of the
authenticity of Skoblin's information, and in view of what sub-
sequently happened I think he was proved right. His forgeries
were therefore merely to strengthen and lend further conviction
to information that was in itself valid.

Hitler at this moment was faced with the momentous decision
whether to align himself with the Western powers or against
them. And it was within this larger decision that he had also to
make up his mind how to use the material that Heydrich had
brought him. On the one hand, support for Tukhachevsky might
have meant the end of Russia as a world power—but failure
would have involved Germany in war; on the other hand, to
unmask Tukhachevsky might be helping Stalin to strengthen his
forces, or might equally well push him into destroying a large

** see Bullock's work on this*

part of his General Staff. Hitler finally decided against Tukhachevsky and intervened in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union on Stalin's side.

This decision to back Stalin instead of Tukhachevsky and the generals determined the whole course of German policy until 1941 and can be rightly regarded as one of the most fateful decisions of our time. It eventually brought Germany into a temporary alliance with the Soviet Union and encouraged Hitler to attack the West before turning against Russia. Once Hitler had made his decision, Heydrich, of course, supported him.

Hitler expressly ordered that the German Army Staff should be kept from knowing anything of the contemplated move against Tukhachevsky, fearing that the Soviet Marshal might be forewarned by them. So one night Heydrich dispatched two special squads to break into the secret archives of the General Staff and of the Abwehr, the Army Intelligence Service, run by Admiral Canaris. Burglary experts from the Headquarters of the Criminal Police accompanied the squads. In three places they found and removed material concerning the collaboration of the German General Staff and the Red Army. Important material was also found in Admiral Canaris's files. To conceal the break-in, fires were started which soon destroyed all evidence of it. In the resulting confusion the special squads escaped safely and unnoticed.

It has been claimed that the material assembled by Heydrich to implicate Tukhachevsky consisted largely of forgeries. Actually, very little of it was forged, indeed no more than was necessary to fill in certain gaps. This is corroborated by the fact that the entire and remarkably voluminous dossier was made ready and presented to Hitler within the brief space of four days.

After careful consideration it was decided to contact Stalin through the following channels: one of our diplomatic agents, who worked under SS Standartenfuehrer Boehme, was a German emigrant living in Prague. Through him, Boehme made contact with a trusted friend of Dr Beneš, then President of the Czechoslovak Republic. Dr Beneš at once wrote a personal letter to Stalin, whose reply came back to Heydrich through the same channels, asking him to establish contact with a certain member of the Soviet Embassy in Berlin. We did so, and the Russian at

once flew to Moscow and returned as an envoy of Stalin, who presented him as then Chief of the GPU.

Stalin asked what price we had offered Hitler nor Heydrich had considered financial prospects in the affair. However, Heydrich asked for three million roubles, after no more than a cursory estimate, paid at once.

The material against Tukhachevsky and his fellow-conspirators in the middle of May 1937. Tukhachevsky was held in secret custody chiefly of Soviet Marshals and Red Army was prepared by a Military Council Andrei Vishinsky.

Tukhachevsky and his fellow-conspirators on the evening of June 4, 1937. After his attempt at suicide, the trial began. It ended at nine o'clock the same evening. Dispatches of that day, all the details of the case. Practically no other details of the case. The summing up for the prosecution minutes. He demanded expulsion of the Army and their death by shooting, hours later. On Stalin's orders, Ma fell a victim to one of the later purges. Of the judges of the court, or survive today.

I personally had to destroy most of the material paid to us by the Russians, for it was not the numbers of which had been given to the GPU. Whenever one of our agents in the Soviet Union, he was arrested with

Thus the affair of Marshal Tukhachevsky step towards the rapprochement between the turning point that marked the Eastern front by an alliance with Russia and the West.

Score
* Oskar Stalin

Bill and Roosevelt were

judices, formulated as with pathological in- who was absolute ruler- istic thinking, no matter- ical experience, was dis- ere a component part of- as the Germans them- fusion of all the Ger- them against the Com-

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with Himmler. It was- ts to negotiate a peace- e were both standing- hand across the entire- e pointed to tiny Ger- e can be no salvation,'- and across China, and- ne day Russia should- the Fuehrer said in this- England!"

create, with the help of- ch was to be built up as- ally, after 1940, recog- ise, he transformed this- asian Space'. Relying- eve the domination of- nquered peoples in this- as a new colonial space- in would be excluded.

1940

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OPERATION 'SEA-LION'

A setback for the Wehrmacht—Security arrangements for the invasion of Denmark and Norway—Reporting on the Venlo incident—Spies in France's heavy industries—Hitler's hesitation after Dunkirk—Preparations ordered for the invasion of England—These plans cancelled—Hitler's 'aquaphobia'—Differences between Goering and Himmler—Hitler decides to concentrate on the East

THE BEGINNING of the year 1940 found me overburdened with work. My chief task was the reorganization of the Counter-Espionage Department, which was to occupy me for the rest of that year. In addition, through continually receiving orders to carry out special assignments I sometimes found myself working for as long as seventeen hours a day. Even the early morning rides, which were my sole form of relaxation, were now combined with my work. Every day I went riding with Admiral Canaris, Chief of Military Intelligence, and as we rode we discussed problems of mutual interest with a view to co-ordinating the work of our respective agencies.

At the beginning of the year the German High Command met with a very embarrassing setback. Two Wehrmacht officers on their way to Cologne were invited to break their journey at Munster to visit an old friend. One of these officers was a special courier carrying highly important secret documents, namely the plans for the attack on Holland and Belgium.

At Munster the reunion proved so enjoyable that the two officers missed the train for Cologne. So their friend, who was a major in the Luftwaffe, offered to fly them there, and they agreed. But in poor visibility the major lost his way and they made a forced landing near Malines in Belgium. The officers at once decided to burn their documents, but found they had no matches, and before they could think of another method of destroying them, they were arrested by the Belgian authorities. At the police station while they were alone in a waiting-room they made

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another attempt to destroy their papers by thrusting them into a stove, but the papers would not catch fire. They were only slightly singed, and the Belgians had no difficulty in saving them and then deciphering them.

When Hitler heard what had happened he raved. He at once suspected that premeditated treason was involved and wanted to have the two officers shot out of hand. Further investigations revealed, however, that at the very worst they were guilty only of criminal negligence.

The Western Powers were, of course, shocked and alarmed when at first they saw the plans for the attack. However, they finally decided that the documents had been placed in their hands by the Germans purposely in order to mislead them. They probably could not imagine that we had been guilty of such a crass blunder.

Shortly after this incident Himmler called me late at night. He told me that he had been unable to reach Heydrich and that I should prepare the draft of an order on secrecy regulations for the Wehrmacht. The order was also to apply to all other branches of the administration and Hitler wanted to issue it that very night.

Himmler was so excited and so confused that I found it impossible to understand just what Hitler did want. Each time I tried to get him to explain a little more clearly he became impatient and irritable and finally ordered me to have the draft ready within two hours.

I sat at my desk for at least half an hour just staring in front of me. Finally I managed to sketch out what seemed to be the main points, but when Himmler placed this draft before Hitler two hours later the Fuehrer was not satisfied with it. He therefore dictated the order himself, calling it: *Order No. 1 to all Wehrmacht and Civilian Authorities.*

The main point of Hitler's version was that all matters dealing with the conduct of the war should only be made known to and discussed with persons immediately concerned. This, of course, was nothing new as far as Himmler's and Heydrich's organizations were concerned, where the separation of planning and administration had been an established principle for a long time, and even went so far that the heads of departments hardly ever

informed each other of what was going on. However, that excessive secrecy in the operation, but led to a dangerous situation for the people to cover up their mistakes.

At the beginning of May 1940, the 'Weseruebung' to cover a possible occupation of Denmark. The following task was assigned to the contacts with Norway, which were from Hamburg; these were German-Norwegian shipping processing firms. (The Norwegians were staffed by our agents.) It was to provide weather information, which would also be of the greatest importance for the operations. The data, disguised as reports on fishing, was transmitted and proved satisfactory.

Hitler's decision to occupy Denmark from our Secret Service was concentrating their efforts. It now became my task to coordinate the operations—transport and concentration of the invasion.

But the rapidity with which the force had to be mobilized was extremely difficult. I concentrated on the ports of embarkation, roads, and passenger train stations. In Stettin, however, the situation was extremely precarious. The weather was going up. The tents of large bodies of troops were being moved. The NCO's and officers were preparing for the Alpine troops from Austria. The going attitude that is characteristic of the German people.

May '40

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gether, and his attitude towards me was always kind and paternal. Whether in Spain, Portugal, Hungary, Poland, Finland or Scandinavia, Canaris always had a fund of knowledge about the peculiarities of the countries, and especially about their cooking and their wines. In the South he always made sure—in spite of the great heat—that I wore a woollen stomacher! And he would ply me with all sorts of medicaments and with pills which he himself constantly took.

He often asked me to attend the various meetings of his organization, and I was thus able to acquaint myself with the weaknesses of the Military Intelligence Service. In this huge over-inflated organization, Canaris's methods were far too humane. His subordinates were able to twist him round their little fingers, and when he was eventually forced to take strong measures, he would always try to make up for his severity afterwards.

In many ways he was of an almost mystical turn of mind. Though he was a Protestant, he was a great admirer of the Roman Catholic Church, of its organization and of the strength of its faith. He was greatly influenced by Italy and the Vatican and many of his conspiratorial activities could be traced back to this influence.

His first attempts at peace negotiations dated back to 1939 and were centred on the Vatican. It was for this reason that Heydrich gave the 'file Canaris'—dealing with the circle round the Admiral and General Oster, of the Supreme Military Command—the code name *Schwarze Kapelle* (from the Black Chapel in Rome). Heydrich opened this file on Canaris to be able to bring about his downfall at any given moment.

During the last days of May 1940 I became deeply involved in these intrigues, in which, of course, Canaris featured prominently. I was working in my office one evening when Heydrich telephoned me and told me in his high, nasal voice to come to his office. Mueller had also been summoned, and when he and I entered the room, Heydrich motioned us to sit down without saying a word. For almost a minute we sat round the table in silence. Mueller watched the smoke of his cigar thoughtfully and drummed nervously with his fingers. I waited for what was coming.

Heydrich opened the conversation by asking, 'What about the in Munich—Josef Mueller, very pretty clear that this is the case of the Vatican?' (Later it turned out that the Jesuit Father, Dr Leibert, had been tempted to sponsor a peace agreement without Hitler. The D'Arcy Osborne, had assured the Government would be in a change of régime in Germany. Heydrich had launched in the West. He had said that the Sudeten territories could reach an agreement of the French Government.)

Then Heydrich turned to me and asked, 'Do you remember that this Josef Mueller was your service—I believe, in Munich, in 1938?'

Not for the first time I remembered. Dr Knochen, an old friend of mine, had told me that a man named Josef Mueller was a very clever man. He had said that the levels of the Papal hierarchy were very high. Mueller was a very clever man. He had said that he trusted him, his reports were very good. Heydrich, who had no doubt of Mueller, he said: 'See to it that you are watched.'

He then went on to ask me if I knew of any important cases of treason in Germany. I told him that two wireless messages had been sent to the Minister at the Vatican in 1938. In them he gave the exact date and time—thirty-six hours before it was known that this information was also in the hands of The Fuehrer's enraged ab-

¹ Hans von Dohnanyi, a judge, was executed in April 1945.

Jan '40

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the Duccellini, told him the tale about the "strong faces" of Moscow, and even compared the Kremlin military guards to the Duce's guards, causing the usually garrulous Ciano to sink into an icy silence. Relations between Berlin and Rome had cooled, and Ciano had obviously been sent to remove some of the chill. Mussolini was infuriated by the Soviet treaty, and much of the Italian public felt betrayed by it.

Back in Rome, Ciano made a speech that sent several stiletto thrusts toward Germany. On January 3, 1940, Mussolini wrote to Hitler: "You will not be surprised if I tell you that the German-Russian agreement has had painful repercussions in Spain. The earth which covers the dead — yours and ours and the Spanish — is still fresh."⁶ He wrote that he realized the necessity for the pact, "since Ribbentrop's efforts toward the nonintervention of the French and the British were not realized," thereby taking a slap at his least favorite German.

Then there followed the bitter complaints of a friend betrayed: "But I, a born revolutionary who has not modified his way of thinking, tell you that you cannot abandon the anti-Semitic and anti-Bolshevist banner, which you have been flying for twenty years and for which so many of your comrades have died. You cannot renounce your gospel, in which the German people have blindly believed."

He suggested that Germany's territorial needs still lay in Russia, and suggested reconciliation with the "courageous Poles, liberated from the Jews." He said he approved of Hitler's plan to concentrate the Jews in a large ghetto in Lublin. Obviously the views he had expressed five years earlier had deserted him by 1939.*

Almost in response, on October 6 Hitler made a lengthy speech at the Kroll Opera House in Berlin, supported by his usual audience of *Sieg Heil* yellers, offering European peace in the vaguest of terms. It was his usual procedure: to follow punitive measures with soft talk until the next aggressive act. It was roundly ignored by the Allies, who had taken the measure of his duplicity. On October 21, a statement released by von Ribbentrop said the Allies had ignored the Führer's offer and had thrown down the glove of challenge.⁷

Now it was von Ribbentrop's turn to go to Rome to patch the cracks in the Hitler-Duce base and also to make sure that Mussolini's weakness-induced neutrality did not widen. As if to help von Ribbentrop regain Italian loyalty, the British had imposed a sea blockade of all coal shipped by Germany to Italy, raising great bitterness in coal-

*On November 13, 1934, Mussolini berated the visiting German Jewish leader Nahum Goldmann, accompanied by the Chief Rabbi of Rome, for being afraid of Hitler. "You will long survive him."

Feb '40

starved Italy. Despite Mussolini's disgust with the Soviet treaty, von Ribbentrop's mission was easier to accomplish than he had anticipated. Also, the Duce was himself mortified by his neutrality and hungry to prove himself an equal to the man in the field-gray uniform. Hitler had donned his new gray uniform jacket with a gold eagle and swastika on the left sleeve (in the SS manner) on the day Poland was invaded. "I have," he declared in a speech, "once more put on my favorite coat, that of the soldier, and I do not intend to take it off again until victory is won." It sounded portentous. Actually, it was only a change in color from his usual tan Nazi Party jacket. Hitler liked symbolism.

Late in February 1940 there came one of those curious interludes which occur when well-meaning but unauthorized people attempt to play peacemaker. Sumner Welles, under secretary of state for Cordell Hull, persuaded President Roosevelt, who was a personal friend, to let him go to Europe on a fact-finding mission. The trip was a precursor of the many political "fact finding" junkets that are so popular among U.S. congressmen. Welles, a tall, calm diplomat from the patrician equestrian village of Bernardville, New Jersey, soon met with every available Italian and German senior official, including Hitler and Mussolini. His memoirs reflected shock that Mussolini, whom he knew, had deteriorated physically and looked bloated, clumsy, and ten years older than his fifty-six. He also chronicled his frustrating interviews with von Ribbentrop. The latter was unsmiling and curt, and "refused" to understand English, insisting on an interpreter. All the Nazi bigwigs, according to Schmidt, who interpreted these meetings, told Sumner Welles identically warlike and unconciliatory things and all in the same words. Welles returned to Washington, having learned only the truth: Germany wanted to fight on, and Italy would probably join in. Welles spoke of a split between Mussolini and Ciano, but he knew who was the boss. By unhappy coincidence, his visit to Rome coincided with the British coal blockade.

On March 10, 1940, when in his turn von Ribbentrop arrived in Rome to woo Mussolini, his private train disgorged an entourage of thirty-five, including legal and economic experts, two hairdressers, a masseur, a doctor, and a gymnastics coach. He carried an "exceedingly long" letter from Hitler, which rebutted the Mussolini assertion that Germany had attacked Poland through some sort of miscalculation about London and Paris.⁸ Instead, Hitler wrote, he wanted to involve himself in war with the west earlier rather than later, a point of view he had presented to others. Finally, he wrote what amounted to: "Duce, all is forgiven. I understand why you could not go to war.

But now it is time to take spoils." Von Ribbentrop was confronting Hitler's Soviet treaty, he and all other senior officials concerned with the matter but he had made up his mind yet. No matter how long a definite date, Berlin empty-handed between Führer and March 19. If this was a cosmetic semblance, it pleased Mussolini to the Vatican. The Cardinal Pacelli and Hitler, however, Cardinale gave true expression. He complained that "I did, I would have said. He did not reach for comfort he may have had. Von Ribbentrop did Mussolini. After could to retreat from were warned by him and saber rattling. March 16 and repose now that he determined to cross Berlin phoned, Mussolini, annoyed thought that by now to say no to him even dictators stopped a mountain pass at Mussolini and Ciano platform and escort informal photograph covered table in Mi

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But now it is time to share in the fight so that you can share in the spoils." Von Ribbentrop was certain to fan anti-British feeling by expressing Hitler's outrage over the coal embargo. When von Ribbentrop was confronted once more with the Duce's doubts about the Soviet treaty, he trotted out the argument he had devised for Hitler and all other senior Nazis except Rosenberg: "The Soviets were no longer exporting world revolution. Stalin was just a Russian patriot, concerned with the fate of Soviet citizens." Mussolini was skeptical, but he had made up his mind. Yes, he would join Germany. But not yet. No matter how persistently von Ribbentrop tried to press him for a definite date, Mussolini remained vague. To avoid returning to Berlin emptyhanded, von Ribbentrop quickly arranged a meeting between Führer and Duce, to take place at the Brenner Pass around March 19. If this was acceptable, von Ribbentrop could give the cosmetic semblance of success to his inconclusive Rome efforts.

It pleased Mussolini that the German delegation was also invited to the Vatican. The conversation between Pope Pius XII, the former Cardinal Pacelli and papal nuncio in Berlin, seemed cordial enough. However, Cardinal Secretary Maglioni, mincing no words, probably gave true expression to the Vatican's point of view. Von Ribbentrop complained that "if Cardinal Maglioni had continued to talk as he did, I would have stood up and left. I was ready to reach for my cap!" He did not reach for his cap. Instead, he seems to have discounted any comfort he may have received from the cordial Pius XII.

Von Ribbentrop faked the results of his Mussolini meetings, but so did Mussolini. After the Germans departed, he tried as well as he could to retreat from his promise to make war. The Italian newspapers were warned by his press aides to dampen the Duce's martial sounds and saber rattling. *Piano, piano!* Sumner Welles returned to Rome on March 16 and reported to Washington that Mussolini seemed more at ease now that he had postponed entry into the war and "had not determined to cross the Rubicon."

Berlin phoned, "Is March 18 for the Brenner Pass acceptable?" Mussolini, annoyed at being pushed, balked but agreed.⁹ Ciano thought that by now Benito Mussolini was too cowed by Adolf Hitler to say no to him ever again. On the agreed day, the trains of the two dictators stopped on neighboring tracks in the deep snow of the mountain pass at the little station near the German-Italian border. Mussolini and Ciano welcomed Hitler and von Ribbentrop on the icy platform and escorted them to the Duce's well-heated salon car. In an informal photograph of the conference, Hitler sits at a narrow lace-covered table in Mussolini's lavishly paneled custom carriage. At his

May 19 40

side, the Duce shows a heavy-chinned, bulldog face, darkened with the shadow of the heavily bearded. Ciano, sitting across the table, is a handsome man with slick hair, who has been fattened and softened by a sybaritic life. Both of the Italians are wearing the gray uniform of the Fascist senior echelon, chests covered with decoration ribbons. They are both in dark shirts and ties. Hitler, sitting between them, looks embarrassed and reluctant to be photographed. His uniform appears to be his standard new field-gray jacket with gold party badge, Iron Cross First Class, and World War Combat Wounded Badge. The glittering Italians seem very much in command, but the appearances in the photo are deceiving. Hitler immediately launched into an extended, unstoppable monologue to justify the Soviet pact ("Stalin has become a nationalist patriot"). If Italy wanted to be number one in the Mediterranean, she would have to fight England and France, whether she was ready or not. In any case, Germany would not postpone her timetable. France and Britain would be attacked as planned.

Pushed hard, Mussolini agreed to a plan that would allot a limited number of Italian divisions to a joint attack on southern France. The entire Italian Army would enter the battle if the Germans gained early victories.

Even though Italy's senior army commanders turned it down, the plan was to stand. Mussolini would become a combatant, and von Ribbentrop and Ciano became recalcitrant harnessmates. Ciano hated von Ribbentrop, and his diaries reflected the feeling: "Everyone in Rome dislikes Ribbentrop."¹⁰

Shortly before the Brenner Pass meeting, SS Chief Himmler met with the senior generals of Army Group A at their Koblenz headquarters to deal with their outrage over the excesses of the SS in Poland and Danzig. In the case of Danzig, where Gauleiter Forster had complained that the Army interfered with his brutal "pacification" methods, Army troops had been moved out so that the SS were no longer under their control. In Poland that did not apply. The Army was still there, and in great numbers, commanded by very senior generals who could not be bullied. After his initial annoyance, listening to Himmler's report, Hitler's reaction to General Blaskowitz's complaint was simple. How could an Army command be entrusted to a man who was so childish? At Koblenz, the complaints about the SS Einsatzkommandos were brought to a painful head when Himmler told the generals, "Everything I do is done with the full knowledge of the Führer." The implications were inescapable. Like all German offi-

ers, the generals had said, as Himmler said, "I continue to serve him?" refuse? Three years later, Erich von Manstein, who, after the disaster, was asked by Hitler to join their ranks, was a strategist, knowing that the German field marshal.

The 1940 generals, many's honor, a much directed catastrophe of went away, grumbling, would soon shake the dust and leave everything in Blaskowitz. He never fo-

The curtain now rose for Friday, May 10, 1940. *Es begann* (The High Command view of the widening of Dutch soil and the res Army attacked at dawn front.

This was a triumph June 5, 1940. Report Losses of the Wehrmacht *Heldentot* (Died he ranks: Missing: 8463 Wounded: 42,523 of Aircraft lost: 432)

The overture to the attack was being crushed by Germany. Britain did little, and France, did even less. It seemed to wonder why against the Ruhr industrial ground, no matter how committed in Poland. There

May 1940

not explosives. Channon's applicable lack of aggressive powers in Britain, that attack—there is no real war. Hitler to peace?"

von Ribbentrop's enemy Winston Churchill planned the first imaginative attack in Norway on neutral Norway. The other Norwegian interference. It was all very He had regained center stage known in Berlin and "covert" attack on Denmark Denmark, undefended, was asked to help German ships in Norway's six divisions, landed on Norwegian soil, and were in some difficulty until they forced the withdrawal of the Germans surrendered on June 9. The man whose name became synonymous with Norway's new chief by the name of Haakon, King Haakon, fled to England to fight on from the end of early April 1940.

von Ribbentrop called together the press, and interpreter secretary to the attack on the west coast. "The Führer had said that the attack on the west coast would be shot."¹²

that I would not be able to go to the old Presidential Palace in Berlin, an expensive renovated residence, at the cost of

the British intercepted a message warning of the attack. von Ribbentrop was in the ministry. A special detec-

tive checked the entire staff, and no one was found. Von Ribbentrop was safe.

On May 10, he gave official notification of the invasion to the Dutch and Belgian ambassadors — while their countries were being attacked. Then he boomed out to the assembled foreign press the declaration that the attack had been launched "to forestall a wild act of desperation on the part of the Allies" by their "new conscienceless leader . . . Churchill."

Winston Churchill, former First Sea Lord, was at last Britain's prime minister, the very Churchill who had ranked second only to Robert Vansittart on the list of Joachim von Ribbentrop's British enemies. Churchill was now promoted to the most hated. Immediately after he announced the German invasion of the Netherlands and Belgium, von Ribbentrop swung to a black mood. He had to listen to his bitter party foe, Joseph Goebbels, read on the radio the very statements von Ribbentrop had just devised for the whole world to hear. How dare Goebbels pre-empt the right of Germany's foreign minister to announce this historical attack of May 10, 1940, the attack by which Adolf Hitler would avenge Germany's defeat and disgrace of 1918? Von Ribbentrop was furious. He screamed at Schmidt that the entire broadcast section of the ministry was to be fired.¹³

Holland and Belgium were only the anterooms of the west. The inner sanctum was France and its army, as well as the Expeditionary Forces of Great Britain on the continent of Europe. Perhaps now Chips Channon and his friends would no longer feel that Hitler was trying to bore them into making peace.

In his turn, buoyed by Germany, Mussolini was ready to take the plunge. François-Poncet, in Rome, was asked to come to the Italian Foreign Ministry. Ciano greeted him formally and said, "Perhaps you can imagine why I have asked you to call on me." A sarcastic François-Poncet replied, "Though I have never thought of myself as particularly intelligent, I am able to grasp that you wish to declare war on us." Reports of this haughty response set off some anti-Ciano glee in Berlin's Foreign Ministry.¹⁴

Heinrich the train was reactivated for the beginning of the western campaign.¹⁵ It transported the same eminences, Himmler, von Ribbentrop, and Lammers, and their staffs, housed in eight sleeping cars and salon cars and two dining cars that were used as offices. The members of the triumvirate had friendly afternoon teas in the von Ribbentrop salon car. Tea party chatter: Himmler was happy that the Queen of

The duke, who was of Bourbon through his role to perfection. or a thousand promi- diplomatic Corps, the t the future of Great en himself and Buck- dies were unshaken. his sun-tanned, smil-

leños gossiped. The s old Spanish friends his old friend Miguel The duke was sick of vice. The duke was of his wife. The duke ot found him impor- ff with the governor- te grumbings were disloyalty.

German troops paid and Foreign Minis- and prodded by the rlin.³¹ The Germans ism, but the danger rtugal as quickly as Duke of Kent from d youngest brother, Windsor would no three years, but his nt's mission. Again,

ay the Windsors set d the seaside home into e Silva, a great gence circles as the i Salazar, was also el safe in Portugal. dated a rumor that the Windsors could g-distance struggle

The German ambassador to Portugal, Baron Oswald von Hoynigen-Huene, a distinguished and worldly diplomat, sent a most unlikely telegram to von Ribbentrop; perhaps Hoynigen-Huene wanted to ingratiate himself with the foreign minister. He reported that the duke was in Portugal to postpone his undesirable appointment to the Bahamas, that war could have been avoided had he been King, that bombing would make Britain sue for peace, that he was being kept from England because he was on the side of compromise.³² Perhaps Hoynigen-Huene indulged in the old diplomatic ploy of "looking busy" by sending gossip-filled, confidential dispatches to his ministry. This time, the idle gossip raised hell. The cable reached von Ribbentrop at Fuschl, and he swallowed it completely. He immediately telephoned von Stohrer in Madrid: "Persuade Windsor to stay in Spain. Keep him there. Tell him of peace efforts. Ask his help. Tell him he is to be assassinated in the Bahamas."

Von Stohrer saw Serrano Suñer, who was willing to send Primo de Rivera to invite Windsor back to hunt in Spain and to warn him of a Bahamas plot. Serrano Suñer thought the whole thing a bit silly, but he was willing to help von Ribbentrop in this trivial matter to defuse their many other tensions.

The next to get involved was Walter Schellenberg, back from Paris and Chanel, Heydrich's chief of espionage and foreign counter-intelligence. Schellenberg, a former medical and law student, was a crudely handsome thirty-year-old, multilingual protégé of Heydrich's. Schellenberg was a roué and a talented intelligence operative.

In his memoirs, Schellenberg told how one day he heard the "sonorous" voice of von Ribbentrop on the phone: "My dear fellow, would you please come to see me right now? No, I cannot give you details over the phone!"³³

Anxious to avoid jealousy, Schellenberg first cleared the visit with his wolf-faced chief, Heydrich, who called von Ribbentrop an idiot but told Schellenberg to find out the details. A grave von Ribbentrop, after outlining all the usual theories about why the Duke of Windsor had been dropped from British favor, said that the duke now was virtually a prisoner of the Secret Service, eager to be free. He then announced that Hitler thought the duke could be offered a sum of fifty million Swiss francs over twenty years to sustain his friendly relations with Germany. He could live in a neutral country like Switzerland.

The British Secret Service was to be prevented by force from interfering with this plan. Should the duke seem to hesitate, he was to be persuaded to "help things along," if necessary, with some force. When

July '40

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his order is now given
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Ribbentrop, "Schellen-
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ade of firmer stuff.
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the Bahamas gover-
p Sir Samuel Hoare,

The whole sorry affair almost came to a boil when a telegram ordered Schellenberg to "prepare for abduction." Fortunately, Schellenberg seemed to have been spotted by the British Secret Service. Guards were tripled, and his Portuguese contacts refused to help him any further. He reported the setbacks to Berlin and was instructed to "use his own judgment."³⁴

Having wriggled off the hook, he returned to Berlin to face von Ribbentrop, who said, "The Führer was disappointed but approved of your decision to let the matter drop." Later, Heydrich shrugged and said Schellenberg should never have accepted the mission. During his trial at Nürnberg in 1946, Schellenberg found out "that no one in British Intelligence knew of his presence in Portugal," although that is most unlikely.³⁵

Thus ended a silly episode after the many cruel ones of 1940. The last telegram sent by Schellenberg from Portugal was "Willy [code name for Windsor] not willing" (*Willi will nicht*).

On July 19, 1940, von Ribbentrop alerted everyone in the Foreign Ministry that Hitler would deliver a speech in the Reichstag that was to contain an "offer of peace."

It contained nothing but empty verbiage. "I speak as a victor, not as a victim, and I appeal to reason . . ." No concrete proposal, not even the suggestion of a plan. (The speech was soon forgotten, but Paul Schmidt introduced the new radio technique of voiceover translation while the speech itself was heard in the background. It is still a popular form, used for many of today's television speeches.)

In a broad sense, the speech may have contained little of substance, but for Joachim von Ribbentrop and Annelies, it was Nirvana. Hitler said, "I cannot finish this day of honor without thanking the man who made my plans into realities through years of loyal, unceasing, and self-sacrificing work. The name of Party Comrade von Ribbentrop is for all time linked with political rise of the German nation." Was this a job-well-done or the gold watch given before retirement?

The Hungarians and the Romanians were feuding again. So on August 30 von Ribbentrop and Ciano returned to Vienna for another session of "judging" Hungarian-Romanian frontier demands. The urgent matter for Hitler and Mussolini was to make sure that Romania's oilfields were secure for aircraft fuel. "All I need," Hitler had told von Ribbentrop and Ciano at the Berghof, "is two weeks of good flying weather to wreck the British fleet and prepare the invasion."

New borders were drawn in Vienna, and, fatefully, Germany and

Sept 1 Oct '40

anian frontier." This occupied some small area also sent "training" between the unconven-

anco's lack of enthusiasm for Mussolini in would soon enter the lid signal to come out about to rush to the

ing, von Ribbentrop was imminent, and man division would and this exact sentence, a typical Ribbentrop hundreds like it. "I got him seriously." Ob-

ign minister, came to the Spanish question" dly optimistic. From ey was the infuriating against England and Ribbentrop's office in behind the minister's nce's colonies was set Serrano Suñer boiled The visitor was not shy. of Morocco, sizable colony of Rio de Oro. did not own." All he urine support bases in

that was to become a n September 27, 1940, veteenth year of Pas- of Emperor Hirohito's en Germany, Italy, and ould force Germany to

declare war on the United States, certainly not von Ribbentrop's foremost wish in December 1941, following the "date which will live in infamy." Nor did Germany think she would have to send General Erwin Rommel to Africa. So much for the advantages of alliances with Japan and Italy.

Another Brenner Pass, two-train, traffic-jamming meeting took place on October 4.³⁷ In a three-hour monologue, Hitler told Mussolini about his plans for the fate of the British Empire and his quandary. Where to begin? Should he attack them in the islands or in the Mediterranean? Once more, Mussolini was only a listener, not an answerer. He could have asked embarrassing questions about the Luftwaffe. But at least this time he was kept informed.

A four thousand-mile trip lay ahead for Hitler and von Ribbentrop during October. Their purposes: to persuade the reluctant Franco to join the Axis powers, to persuade the reluctant Pétain to join the fight against Britain, to persuade hungry Mussolini to cancel his rumored plans to attack Greece.

The entire trip was a diplomatic shipwreck. On October 23 Hitler awaited Franco at the small railroad station at Hendaye, on the border between Spain and France. Franco was an hour late, but the good weather kept Hitler cheerful, which, in turn, cheered von Ribbentrop. When Franco finally appeared, at 3 P.M., Hitler offered him Gibraltar and even the conquest of its fortress by Germany Army specialists. He also offered some African colonies. The shrunken, somber, terse Franco was not interested. Speaking in a low voice, he catalogued all his own problems, from food to fuel. He pointed out that he would have to defend an immense coastline, would lose the Canary Islands, and, as a Spaniard, could never permit foreign troops to take the fortress of Gibraltar. North Africa would be immensely difficult to attack. As an old North Africa soldier, he knew this. Britain might fall, but she would surely move her government and her fleet to North America and fight on. He said all this in, as Schmidt described it, a "quiet, near-Islamic singsong."

An irritated Hitler stood up and, in a typical display of temper, said there was no use continuing the conversation. Then he sat down, but by then the meeting had virtually ended. With the dictators dead in the water, von Ribbentrop and Serrano Suñer tried to carry on some dialogue in von Ribbentrop's private train, but this time there was no offer of French colonies. Instead, Spain was told it could have them once the French were compensated with captured British colonies. It all fell on deaf Spanish ears. There followed a formal dinner in Hitler's special banquet dining car, with its brilliant indirect lighting and

Nov 1940

was some desultory talk. The Ribbentrop's stayed behind. I am infuriated and short-tempered and remained of any working

bed to Bordeaux and barely
it was foul, and Hitler's own
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he said. "Either France or
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was not in a position to fight
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return to their families."³⁸
any way except fighting.

way except fighting. But, and Pétain would not admit, Schmidt claimed that on Hitler's urgent suggestion, was with Churchill. France would never will to be a former ally. As the two men, the third purpose of Mussolini's foolhardy attack on the Führer was revenge dealt with him. On to Greece to draw back. The good sign for the attack on the other side of the channel was that the "victorious army into Greece," and he heard the news with a smile to himself. He and von Weizsäcker, with three hundred thousand miles. If Hitler

was grim, von Ribbentrop was even more so. The process of diplomacy seemed to crumble.

Von Ribbentrop was not in a victorious mood when the most important meetings of 1940 began. On the morning of November 12, a train bearing Molotov and his staff pulled into Anhalter station in Berlin. Schmidt, there to keep the record of the coming conference, drew a stern glance from von Ribbentrop when he suggested that the Russian national anthem, the Communist Internationale, be sung by many of the Berliners lining the square in front of the station. It was best forgotten how many Nazis were Communists long before Hitler came to power.

Von Ribbentrop need not have worried. The only music was a martial tune played while Molotov inspected the honor guard. The station was decked with hammer-and-sickle emblems and banners, and the ceremony was the usual routine, including the open-car caravan into the city. But there was no cheering, because no one had "instructed" the crowd to show enthusiasm. (The young Foreign Ministry wags called Wilhelmstrasse, often lined with organized "cheerers," the *Via Spontanea*.)

The first conference was in von Ribbentrop's office in the former Presidential Palace. He was forthcoming, but Molotov was laconic, and his associate, the Kremlin's German specialist, Vladimir Dekanozov, was grim.

Von Ribbentrop opened with "England is beaten. It is only a question of time until she admits it. The Axis powers are trying to end the war as quickly as possible."

Next, he suggested friendship with Japan, which was now looking south, not west, and would spend decades colonizing Asia. Germany too was looking south to Africa, not east (toward Russia, as Hitler had said in *Mein Kampf*). Why would Russia not look south toward the open sea? "Which open sea?" asked Molotov. "The Gulf of Persia and the Red Sea," said von Ribbentrop. He next brought up a new agreement about the Dardanelles and then an invitation for the Soviet Union to join the three-nation Axis as a fourth, the treaty perhaps to be signed in Moscow by Germany, Italy, Japan, and Russia. Finally, a suggestion that there be rapprochement between Chiang Kai-shek and Japan, mediated by Germany.

Molotov responded to none of these schemes. However, he asked for the meaning, precisely, of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, which Japan had recently proclaimed.

"It has nothing to do," hurried von Ribbentrop, "with the Russian sphere."

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Nov 1940

The gong rang for a late breakfast.
End of round one.

The afternoon discussion, this time with Adolf Hitler, was a crushing series of questions and answers, a fierce and cold debate about conflicts of interest openly displayed and resented by both disputants. From Finland to Romania, from the Baltic to the Dardanelles, Hitler and Molotov disagreed on every subject and their tone was frigid. Von Ribbentrop was silent.

That night there was a banquet at the lavish old Russian Embassy on Unter den Linden. The meal was cut short by air-raid sirens, and von Ribbentrop, shepherding Molotov to his own shelter, had the embarrassment of explaining why British bombers were overhead while "England had already lost the war." Molotov was unimpressed by von Ribbentrop's explanations.

Von Ribbentrop's greatest achievement, the Nonaggression Pact with Soviet Russia of August 1939, began to unravel, and Adolf Hitler found himself once more on old, familiar ground: hating Bolsheviks. No doubt he felt relieved, and no doubt von Ribbentrop felt devastated.

Besides Greece, where the Italians were now floundering, 1940 brought yet another Mussolini-engineered disaster. Aiming at one of Napoleon's geographic goals, and eager to rival his Austro-Teutonic competitor, the Duce sought Cairo, the Suez Canal, and the Nile. Across the Mediterranean in Libya was Mussolini's army of 200,000 men, commanded by one of Italy's best, the tall Marshal Rodolfo Graziani. "Attack!" said the Duce. "Bring me Cairo." And Graziani had attacked in September, pushing east toward Egypt and Britain's troops. They did not get far. By October they were bogged down only fifty miles inside Egypt near the Mediterranean at Sidi Barrani, with hundreds of miles still to go to Cairo. There they said they would stay until 1941, "waiting for spring." Mussolini turned down Hitler's offer of German troops.

Hitler, still furious about the Greek adventure, took offense. In November he told Keitel, "No help in Greece. No help in Libya."⁹ By Christmas, General Sir Richard O'Connor, the British commander in North Africa, rammed the Italians back to Bardia inside the Libyan border. O'Connor was no great military star, but he was good enough to stop the Italians with ease. Later, General Erwin Rommel seized O'Connor's command vehicle (along with O'Connor). He named it Mammot (Mammoth) and used it all through the African campaign. O'Connor's truck became as famous as Rommel's captured British goggles.

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1941-1942

*Unsung Heroes Doing
the Reich's Dirty Work*

FOR THE PROTAGONISTS, most views of international politics were myopically self-serving. Von Ribbentrop began the new year disgusted with the Italians and furious with the "ungrateful" French. His view of the Pétain meeting at Montoire differed substantially from that of Schmidt, who had portrayed "its abrasiveness." Von Ribbentrop's memoirs reported it as a peaceful German offer of help to Pétain, open and candid. In von Ribbentrop's hindsight, Serrano Suñer lusted for French colonies while he, von Ribbentrop, backed by the Führer, had protected the French against the avaricious Spaniard. How ungrateful the French had been! In his memoirs, he contrasted Germany's "honorable" behavior toward the French leadership with the unchivalrous treatment later accorded the senior Nazis at Nürnberg. He also insisted that it was at his suggestion that the body of Napoleon's beloved son, L'Aiglon, was transferred from Germany to be entombed next to L'Empereur in the Invalides. It was a gesture meant to demonstrate Hitler's gallantry.

The arrival of the SD and the Gestapo at 72 Avenue Foch removed any notions of chivalry as soon as they began their cruel business. To von Ribbentrop's annoyance, Pétain had canceled his promised attendance in early December 1940 at a ceremony at Napoleon's tomb, and Otto Abetz was delighted that Hitler had allowed the ceremony to go on despite the marshal's intransigence. There seemed to be no overt petulance or opposition by most French citizens. Obviously the many French *collaborateurs* had clouded Abetz's vision.¹

The rattled von Ribbentrop then had to face the Duce's undesirable invasion of Greece and the harm it had done to Germany's friendship

1941-1942

with Yugoslavia. So February 1941, Rost Belgrade. When the Alliance on March 2

More trouble: the into the alliance in Germany, now caused. When Matsuo, the (the Berlin crowds lo SU-OH-KAH), all se disappointment to a Indochina, thereby a brows in Berlin. After beaten foes. Von Ribbentrop, George C. Marshall English: "Japan acted, strategic plan." bent on undermining *Aushöhlung der Aut trop*. The French did indulged in disastrous Japanese brought the senior generals of the Polish SS actions, the even the Duke of W friendship. Worst of a of 1939.

The only one of was Abetz in Paris: bureaucrats in the Foreign had prepared retirementing Kordt and von We again Adolf Hitler pre By now, it must h matic efforts were fal scrap his crowning ac of the Army and of the the war; the party r macy still play its part when Stalin bitterly troops had occupied a of the agreed demarc

siastic Nazi and his "heroic death" would have been fairly welcome, but the beetle-browed Max would not oblige. He survived and was still heroic.) Luftwaffe losses were substantial and should have served as a warning for all future parachute operations. A hundred and fifty troop-carrier JU-52 planes were lost, as were the many paratroopers aboard them.¹²

In Hitler's view, Rommel was performing brilliantly in North Africa. Mussolini had turned out to be a bag of hot air and his troops a failure, but then, the Führer had always suspected his black-shirted friend's conceited strutting. Japan? Well, that strange alliance was another one of von Ribbentrop's notions, but Hitler was certain he could handle Stalin without the help of the samurai. He had postponed the invasion of Great Britain. Göring would have to do better at battering the British; he would have to soften them up a lot more. At sea, Germany's U-boats had excellent hunting while trying to quarantine Britain, but so far stubborn Britain was surviving. Admittedly, America was a threat, but he understood from the Washington embassy that there was great isolationist opposition to entering the war, although the Americans were "lending" old destroyers to Britain.

Then came trouble from the most unexpected direction. On May 11, Rudolf Hess flew a fast and dangerous Messerschmitt-110 fighter plane in the direction of Britain on a private peacemaking mission. People who knew him were stunned. Could Hess fly this dicey plane? Indeed he could. He was a trained and skilled pilot. Why did he fly to Britain? Whom did he try to contact in Britain? He was trying to reach the Duke of Hamilton, who had no idea why such an "honor" was being bestowed on him by Hess. (Some people suggest a case of false identity: Hess was trying to reach Sir Ian Hamilton, who had been to Germany with British veterans' groups, rather than the Duke of Hamilton.) Had Hess reached his destination? As yet, no one knew.

Walter Hewel described the scene at the Berghof, as Göring, who had raced to the Führer's side by special train and fast car, rushed in to meet Hitler, a "white-faced" von Ribbentrop, Hewel, and Martin Bormann, who was Hess's chief of staff.¹³ Hitler thrust Hess's letter under Göring's nose. It said, in effect, "Willing to risk my life to make peace . . . and end bloodshed." Hess had long been an intimate part of Hitler's personal and political life. They were jailed together in the twenties. Hess had even done the secretarial work on *Mein Kampf* and had become Hitler's deputy in the Nazi Party.

Von Ribbentrop must have had his own shocked thoughts, because Hess had provided him with his first office (the Büro Ribbentrop was

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Hitler had V aircraft manufacture How dare you?" tant man, and the deputy, "But you

It turned out navigation. Hitler so, But Hess did the Duke of Hamilton contacts he was him. The Goebbels tion" that Hess explain to the Du

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First came another early June we Hitler's plans for was purposely de Antonescu, the F Munich. It was a marshal that he la Antonescu was de bia, which von Ribbentrop's.

A final part of a beautiful day in the Tripartite Alliance breathtaking theatrical addition of a crash of the cyn

been fairly welcome. He survived and was and should have served us. A hundred and fifty the many paratroopers

brilliantly in North Africa and his troops a selected his black-shirted strange alliance was Hitler was certain he Hamurai. He had post would have to do better then them up a lot more. hunting while trying to n was surviving. Admitted from the Washington position to entering the old destroyers to Britain. cted direction. On May Messerschmitt-110 fighter e peacemaking mission. less fly this dicey plane? pilot. Why did he fly to He was trying to reach y such an "honor" was le suggest a case of false Milton, who had been to than the Duke of Hamilton, no one knew.

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locked thoughts, because the Büro Ribbentrop was

technically part of Hess's organization), and Hess's flight to Britain demonstratively repudiated von Ribbentrop's "Britain is the enemy" thesis. Would Hess's arrival in Britain shatter the Tripartite Alliance? Mussolini would be delighted by Hitler's embarrassment, and the Japanese had already proved their lack of trust in German policy. What about the minor players, the Hungarians, the Romanians? And how would it look in France, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, and Norway? Worst of all, this would surely stiffen Churchill's resolve.

Hitler had Willy Messerschmitt brought to him. He yelled at the aircraft manufacturer, "You allowed him to practice at your airfield. How dare you?" Messerschmitt pointed out that Hess was an important man, and that he was not in a position to say no to the Führer's deputy. "But you knew Hess was insane!" yelled Hitler.

It turned out that Hess had practiced with guidance systems and navigation. Hitler hoped Hess would crash; Schmidt heard him say so.¹⁴ But Hess did not crash. He parachuted into Scotland not far from the Duke of Hamilton's estate, was arrested, and never made the contacts he was hoping for, including the duke, who would not see him. The Goebbels machine immediately pumped out the "explanation" that Hess was insane. Von Ribbentrop rushed to Rome to explain to the Duce that Hess was *non compos*.

These were the events that began the drumroll to Barbarossa, the campaign that would lead Hitler into hell. More important, hundreds of thousands of German soldiers were consigned to their frozen death or to years of hopeless misery as prisoners of war in Russia.

First came another meeting on the Brenner Pass, this time in beautiful early June weather. Not a word was mentioned to the Duce about Hitler's plans for the impending attack on Russia. It was clear that he was purposely deceiving the Duce. A few days later, Marshal Ion Antonescu, the Romanian head of state, attended a ceremony in Munich. It was a mark of Hitler's respect and trust for the Romanian marshal that he laid before Antonescu the timetable for Barbarossa. Antonescu was delighted, particularly after he was promised Bessarabia, which von Ribbentrop had let slip to Russia in the 1939 negotiations.¹⁵

A final part of the rising drumroll was a bombastic ceremony. On a beautiful day in the Palace of the Doges in Venice, Croatia joined the Tripartite Alliance during a lavishly choreographed event. It was breathtaking theater in a superb setting, all arranged for the insignificant addition of a minor nation to a crumbling alliance. Then, at last, the crash of the cymbals.

Schmidt, an eyewitness, described the scene:

It is just before four on the morning of Sunday, June 22, 1941, in the office of the foreign minister. He is expecting the Soviet ambassador, Dekanozov, who had been phoning the minister since early Saturday. Dekanozov had an urgent message from Moscow. He had called every two hours but was told the minister was away from the city. At two on Sunday morning, von Ribbentrop finally responded to the calls. Dekanozov was told von Ribbentrop wished to meet with him at once. An appointment was made for 4 A.M.

Von Ribbentrop is nervous, walking up and down from one end of his large office to the other, like a caged animal, while saying over and over, "The Führer is absolutely right. We must attack Russia, or they will surely attack us!" Is he reassuring himself? Is he justifying the ruination of his crowning diplomatic achievement? Now he has to destroy it "because that is the Führer's wish."

Dekanozov was punctual to the minute. He brought his own interpreter, and he began by asking some questions Moscow wanted clarified, but von Ribbentrop stopped him: "That's not what I wish to discuss." He continued, "The hostile attitude of the Soviet government toward Germany and the severe threat we perceive toward the Reich by the massing of Russian troops on our eastern frontier have forced us to take military countermeasures." There was no mention of war or a declaration of war. Schmidt thought perhaps it would have sounded too "plutocratic" to declare war. Also, Hitler had given instructions to avoid the use of the word. Von Ribbentrop continued, "Since this morning such military countermeasures are being taken." The Yugoslav agreement with the new "rebel" government was then trotted out as one of the many sins of the Soviets. Von Ribbentrop said he regretted that he could add nothing to these statements. He had come to the conclusion that "my strenuous efforts for peace between our nations were futile." Finis! The gates were opened; the flood released. Dekanozov quickly got hold of himself. He "regretted exceedingly" the course of events. It was largely due to the "confrontational views" of the German government. "All that remains is for your chief of protocol to assist us with transportation for our embassy staff." He stood up, made a small bow, but did not extend his hand. Then he was gone.

Valentin Berezhkov, Dekanozov's interpreter for this meeting, told the story differently. He believed that von Ribbentrop had taken a few drinks to give himself courage for the unpleasant meeting; his face had red blotches and his hands shook, according to this version.

Dekanozov replied that Germany would not attack without a word and the interpreter from Moscow. These were the first words Dekanozov

Ever since then advanced the re was pre-emptive craft were deployed multiplied her with Barbarossa. The minefields in the air charged British attack Germany Marshal Zhukov Japan. The Navy Russia demanded then caused Hitler 1940. Eleven days first. Supposedly theory was again Weber in the police

The revisionists the Soviets, since the western victory. German tanks and Germany were It is possible in meetings and decided to forest to conclude that Pact would hold. used anything he tary sense) to just followed in Czech Belgium, and France his successful strategy

June 22, 1941, in the Soviet ambassador, since early Saturday. He had called every from the city. At two responded to the calls. to meet with him at

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He brought his own tions Moscow wanted at's not what I wish to the Soviet government ceive toward the Reich ri frontier have forced as no mention of war erhaps it would have lso, Hitler had given Ribbentrop continued, sures are being taken." government was then viets. Von Ribbentrop o these statements. He ous efforts for peace gates were opened; the himself. He "regretted ly due to the "confron 'All that remains is for tation for our embassy d not extend his hand.

er for this meeting, told entrop had taken a few isant meeting; his face ng to this version.

Dekanozov listened to von Ribbentrop's announcement and replied that Germany was guilty of criminal aggression and one day would deeply regret its action. He then strode to the entrance of the office without a word of parting. Ribbentrop rushed after Dekanozov and the interpreter, whispering urgently that he had tried to keep the Führer from making war on Russia. He had tried to dissuade Hitler from this madness . . . "Tell Moscow that I was against this attack." These were the last words Bereshkov said he heard from von Ribbentrop; Dekanozov was already on his way down the stairs.

Ever since the end of World War II certain military historians have advanced the revisionist theory that Hitler's attack on Soviet Russia was pre-emptive. They maintain that Russian troops, tanks, and aircraft were deployed for attack, not for defense, and that Russia had multiplied her western military strength in the six months previous to Barbarossa. They also offer in evidence the clearing of Russian defensive minefields in the Polish buffer zone and the disarming of explosive-charged bridges. The preamble for the supposed Russian plan to attack Germany probably began in 1939, when the Russians, under Marshal Zhukov, had their military victories in Mongolia against Japan. The November 1940 Molotov meetings in Berlin, at which Russia demanded control of Romania (and the oil Hitler needed), then caused Hitler to begin the plan for Barbarossa on December 18, 1940. Eleven days later Moscow was informed and decided to strike first. Supposedly, Hitler's attack anticipated theirs by two weeks. This theory was again expounded in articles by Walter Post and Joachim Weber in the political magazine *Criticon*, May-June 1991.

The revisionists also insist that Germany was ill prepared to attack the Soviets, since German war production had been scaled back after the western victories and partly reconverted to peacetime manufacturing. German tanks, the Mark I and II, were inferior to Russian T-34s, and Germany was short of shells and bullets.

It is possible that, following the contentious November 1940 Berlin meetings and the subsequent Barbarossa plan, the Russians hastily decided to forestall Hitler. However, every other indication leads one to conclude that Moscow believed the August 1939 Nonaggression Pact would hold. Hitler, when informed of Russian troop movements, used anything he deemed "offensive" (in the pejorative, not the military sense) to justify his own military acts. This was the course he had followed in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, and France. It seems unlikely that he would have abandoned his successful strategy in the case of Barbarossa. Valentin Berezkhov,

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ceased with the start of hostilities in Europe. Hitler first whispered about setting up a secret Euthanasia program in wartime just as he was striking a pose of moderation toward the Jews during the drafting of a racial law at the Nuremberg Party Rally of September 1935:²⁵⁹ here already, then, his radicalism toward the Jews was rechanneled into Euthanasia.²⁶⁰ In the spring of 1939, in a prologue to the program proper, Hitler seized on a parental request for an infant that was blind and "seemed idiotic" to be put to death.²⁶¹ That summer he already began instructing his future operatives.²⁶² Late the following October he signed a personal order backdated to 1 September 1939, when his Polish war had started, charging Philipp Bouhler, chief of the Kanzlei des Führers (his private office), and Karl Brandt, his senior attending physician, with administering the selection of "incurables" for "mercy killing."²⁶³ Orally he restricted the order to mental incurables.²⁶⁴ Theirs were lives not worth living, he explained in briefing sessions—and besides, medical resources ought to be economized in wartime.²⁶⁵ He excluded Jews and the mental casualties of World War I—contradictorily, in that by the one exclusion he implied that Euthanasia was a benefit and by the other he implied the opposite.²⁶⁶ The mechanics of the killings were administered by Viktor Brack of the Kanzlei des Führers: a commission from Berlin arrived in Grafeneck on 17 October 1939 to set up a gas chamber there while the chief of Stuttgart's criminal police was devising one independently in Brandenburg.²⁶⁷ Hitler himself ran the program closely at the outset through oral instructions.²⁶⁸ As the means of killing he prescribed gas in early October, with a tentative choice of carbon monoxide in November that he finalized after eighteen or twenty victims died swiftly, painlessly, and unsuspectingly in a first experiment in Brandenburg early in January 1940.²⁶⁹ He required that doctors only should pull the gas levers. Throughout he saw watchfully to the exclusion of the war casualties: early in 1941 he ordered some rumored slip-ups investigated at once (it turned out that the mental condition predated the war service in every instance).²⁷⁰ But Jews were, on the contrary, removed from mental institutions to the gas chambers beginning in the summer of

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* He feels poisoned himself—his body gasses

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selective breeding. He saw nothing wrong in a racial elite having illegitimate children. Indeed he welcomed it. After the French campaign in 1940, for example, Hitler observed that he had seen much better "human material" among the youth in the combat areas of 1914-1918 than he had found there during the First World War. He felt that "German and English soldiers had brought about a Nordicizing process," the results of which are today incontestable."

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In Hitler's eyes, this Nordicizing process was justified not only in enemy territory. On the contrary, he thought that it was desirable within Germany as well. When he bought his mountain retreat near Berchtesgaden, he explained in 1942, he had found such a mongrel population there that he really felt something had to be done quickly to improve it. "Credit has to be given to the SS Bodyguard Regiment for the fact that today there are numbers of strong and healthy children running around the area. It shows that elite troops should really be sent wherever the composition of the population is poor, in order to improve it. . . . Sometime it would also be a good idea to station elite troops in the Masurian Lakes and Bavarian Forest regions." If someone objected that such a procedure could undermine the morality of the German people, Hitler would become furious. With jibes at the Prussian princes' practice of keeping mistresses and at the upper classes' repudiation of their illegitimate children, he categorically dismissed conventional morality as hypocrisy and nothing more. He was prepared to concede only that two people in love might be bound together by their child.

This was one of the many cases in which Hitler's logical train of thought derailed into inconsistency. Had he followed through with his ideas, he would obviously have come to conclusions that were irreconcilable with his other conceptions. Clearly, protection of the family and "Nordicization" by elite troops were completely incompatible. Had he thought the matter through, Hitler would have been constrained to consider whether "Nordicizing" these areas—aside from the painful humiliation and shock of the parents and brothers—would not result in such indignation against the elite troops and

⁶Literally, *Aufnordungswerk*, crude Nazi racial jargon meaning "a job of Nordic upgrading by selective breeding."—ED.

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bodies at all." In this connection he accused professorial scholarship of leading away from instinct, from that "instinct" which Hitler accorded so important a place in his overall view of the world. Beyond this, he probably also had the uncomfortable feeling that his teachings would not stand up to meticulous analysis and evaluation at the hands of the professors.²

It would have been to Hitler's advantage to call in leading professionals, true experts, in order to be kept up to date on scientific research and developments. At best this was done only with medical and natural scientists, never, so far as I know, with scholars of archaeology, history, the fine arts, and so forth. If such men had been called in, however, Hitler would almost certainly have dominated the conversation. Yet it would have been very easy for him to have arranged for recognized experts to be invited from time to time to join him and his circle of mealtime companions, thereby affording a relaxed means of gaining new information. The reason Hitler did not choose to do this was suggested after the war by Dr. Karl Brandt, one of his personal physicians, in the following terms:

²Hitler's distaste for scholars was by no means reciprocated by the German academic community as a whole. A significant segment supported him months and even years before he came to power, undoubtedly lending him and his cause a certain respectability in the eyes of many uncertain observers. The distinguished German historian Friedrich Meinecke, a professor at Berlin, in a letter written early in December 1931, almost fourteen months before Hitler's appointment as chancellor, told a friend how he had vainly attempted to find as few as eight prominent colleagues to support an anti-Nazi public statement. People were already accommodating themselves to the "coming Nazi regime."

Even Meinecke himself, though he never wavered in his abhorrence of Hitler, could write in 1938 that the annexation of Austria had "thrust the whole of German history ahead in one leap and fulfilled old aspirations and ideals." Then, in 1940, the German defeat of France filled him with "profound emotion, pride, and joy," even though he still was unable to identify himself with the Third Reich. But at the same time (as he wrote on August 7, 1940, to the Austrian historian Heinrich von Srbik), he had a terrible sense of apprehension about the very nature of the Third Reich and Adolf Hitler. "It almost seems as if the propelling force behind great and necessary revolutions stems more from the evil than the good side of human nature. This brings us once more to the demonic character of historical life. But we will never be able to penetrate the veil entirely. There is nothing else for us to do but to be modest in our historical interpretations."—ED.

* biography - Friedrich Meinecke, 1940
after the fall of France

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the question of the position taken by senior military leaders regarding his individual decisions. These varied. Unanimous rejection, unanimous agreement, or divided counsel followed each other as in every war and under every regime. But it was always Hitler whose restless spirit would first cast its spotlight into the dark future long before the eyes of his military staff were able to perceive anything tangible or threatening in that darkness—with one single exception: the occupation of Norway. The danger that threatened our war effort if England had been able to secure bases in Norway and thereby block the sole reliable exit from the North Sea to the Atlantic was perceived first by the navy. But—as in the case of all ideas he himself had not conceived—Hitler was initially skeptical and hesitant, until in January 1940 he seized the initiative and ordered the most daring of solutions, once there could no longer be any doubt about the threatening intentions of England.

Let us leaf further, however, in the great memories which at some time in the future will form a book on Hitler's strategy. First we come upon the decision to attack in the West. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army [General Walther von Brauchitsch] did not want to do it. To remain on the defensive on the border and along the *Westwall*, letting the war go to sleep, was his desire, his contribution to peace, which he sought to cloak behind military reasons, particularly the inadequate preparation of the army for so gigantic a task. Not all leading soldiers shared this opinion and belief, but it was the prevailing opinion in the High Command of the Army. Hitler ordered the attack through Belgium and Luxemburg, later also through Holland. One has to use time, he said; it works for no one automatically, but only for him who makes good use of it. And he decided to attack in the course of the very same winter. The generals all objected; there was not a single one who did not warn against it. But it did them no good at all. Only the weather god was harder than Hitler, denying us the needed period of clear freezing weather. It was necessary to wait until the dry spring. May 10, 1940, was correctly chosen. Hitler staged his breakthrough via Maubeuge toward Abbeville. He had overruled the General Staff's thought of a broad encirclement [through Belgium, as in the Schlieffen Plan] by initially careful but then increasingly tenacious and

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unhesitating intervention in the operational leadership. Once more Hitler's will triumphed and his faith proved victorious.

First the [enemy] front collapsed; then Holland, Belgium, and France collapsed. The soldiers were confronted with a miracle. They were still amazed when Hitler gave the order to prepare for the invasion of England. Eight weeks earlier they would have regarded this order as the vagary of a madman. Now they applied themselves with faithful zeal to the work, careful and confident, exploring every dubious improvisation. But by September the British air force had not been subdued. Göring was skeptical; Raeder was cautious; in the Army High Command they were confident; Hitler wavered. He shared the army's belief that England could be beaten in a short time as soon as one was well established on the island. But whether the landing would succeed depended upon nautical imponderables which were strange to him. Perhaps this strategic decision was the only one in the course of the war in which Hitler let himself be counseled. The warnings of the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy together with an evaluation of the situation that I prepared for him decided the issue. The attempt to land in England was abandoned. Hitler turned toward the Mediterranean in order to strike at England there. But before doing so, he took a firm grip on the equipping of the army, which—all too slow, bureaucratic, and backward—had long been a thorn in his side. "The soldier should fight; that is his job. Everything else civilian specialists understand better." He created the Ministry for Weapons and Munitions under [Fritz] Todt, leaving only the building of airplanes and ships with the air force and the navy. From then on Hitler determined the monthly quota as well as the direction and scope of all production of weapons and munitions down to the last detail. All the Operations Staff [of the High Command of the Wehrmacht] had to do was to give him the exact figures: inventory, utilization, and production during the previous month. But beyond this, Hitler's astounding technical and tactical vision led him also to become the creator of modern weaponry for the army. It was due to him personally that the 75-mm anti-tank gun replaced the 37-mm and 50-mm guns in time, and that the short guns mounted on the tanks

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were replaced with the long 75-mm and 88-mm guns. The Panther, the Tiger, and the Königstiger [i.e., Tiger II] were developed as modern tanks at Hitler's own initiative.

But let us return to the chronological sequence of strategic decisions. There was a military breathing pause. Political considerations became paramount during the second half of 1940. Rumania requested German instructional and training troops. Reluctantly and carefully, but step by step, Bulgaria attached itself to the Axis. Only Spain showed a cold shoulder. To what extent the influence of Canaris on the Spanish generalissimo played a role in this is a question I will not go into.⁴ Above all, it was bitter for Hitler to have to give up his plan to take Gibraltar with Spanish help or approval. This military intention of Hitler had the general sympathy of his military advisers, and even today I have no doubt that the attack on the mighty rock fortress, which we had meticulously thought through and prepared in detail, would have been successful.

But instead of being able to carry out this strategically correct plan, Hitler found himself constrained to hatch the cuckoo eggs that Italy had laid in the nest of our joint war effort. On his own initiative and despite the negative attitude of the Army High Command, Hitler had offered his friend Mussolini help in Africa. It was rejected with the explanation that tanks could not operate in the desert. But then in the last days of October 1940—in violation of all agreements not to disturb the peace of the Balkans—Mussolini attacked Greece. Hitler, who wanted to prevent this attack, arrived a few hours too late in Florence. He was enraged, but the god of war even more so. The latter had never been a friend of the Italians. And now he quickly changed sides. English tanks drove Graziani's beaten army back to the border of Cyrenaica, and instead of winning a quick victory over the Greeks, the Italians found themselves threatened with the loss of Albania and of the divisions which were holding on

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⁴Jodl was absolutely correct in implying that Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, who had been head of German military intelligence, played a crucial role in Franco's successful effort to stay out of the Second World War; that is documented in this editor's monograph, *Hitler, Franco und Gibraltar* (Wiesbaden, 1962), pp. 84-87, 169-70.—ED.

Speler mis. 1939, June 1940

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In a businesslike but distinctly aloof manner, he showed us through the rooms. When we were at last getting ready to leave the building, Hitler whispered something to his adjutant, Brückner, who took a fifty-mark note from his wallet and went over to the attendant standing some distance away. Pleasantly, but firmly, the man refused to take the money. Hitler tried a second time, sending Breker over to him; but the man persisted in his refusal. He had only been doing his duty, he told Breker.

Afterward, we drove past the Madeleine, down the Champs Elysées, on to the Trocadéro, and then to the Eiffel Tower, where Hitler ordered another stop. From the Arc de Triomphe with its tomb of the Unknown Soldier we drove on to the Invalides, where Hitler stood for a long time at the tomb of Napoleon. Finally, Hitler inspected the Panthéon, whose proportions greatly impressed him. On the other hand he showed no special interest in some of the most beautiful architectural works in Paris: the Place des Vosges, the Louvre, the Palace of Justice, and Sainte-Chapelle. He became animated again only when he saw the unitary row of houses on the Rue de Rivoli. The end of our tour was the romantic, insipid imitation of early medieval domed churches, the church of Sacré Coeur on Montmartre—a surprising choice, even given Hitler's taste. Here he stood for a long time surrounded by several powerful men of his escort squad, while many churchgoers recognized him but ignored him. After a last look at Paris we drove swiftly back to the airport. By nine o'clock in the morning the sightseeing tour was over. "It was the dream of my life to be permitted to see Paris. I cannot say how happy I am to have that dream fulfilled today." For a moment I felt something like pity for him: three hours in Paris, the one and only time he was to see it, made him happy when he stood at the height of his triumphs.

In the course of the tour Hitler raised the question of a victory parade in Paris. But after discussing the matter with his adjutants and Colonel Speidel, he decided against it after all. His official reason for calling off the parade was the danger of its being harassed by English air raids. But later he said: "I am not in the mood for a victory parade. We aren't at the end yet."

That same evening he received me once more in the small room in the peasant house. He was sitting alone at table. Without more ado he declared: "Draw up a decree in my name ordering full-scale re-

sumption of work? But Berlin must be considered whether it can be continued with great activity in the world. It can only be a shadow. dismissed.

Although I was a marksman, I was never. He had reacted in. At the time he had city to be rebuilt, in ical and cultural ce acts of war. Now I thought of wantonly himself had called less artistic treasure in Hitler's nature he certainly did not pe He contained a mul his responsibilities a hilitist.

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sumption of work on the Berlin buildings. . . . Wasn't Paris beautiful? But Berlin must be made far more beautiful. In the past I often considered whether we would not have to destroy Paris," he continued with great calm, as if he were talking about the most natural thing in the world. "But when we are finished in Berlin, Paris will only be a shadow. So why should we destroy it?" With that, I was dismissed.

Although I was accustomed to hearing Hitler make impulsive remarks, I was nevertheless shocked by this cool display of vandalism. He had reacted in a similar fashion to the devastation of Warsaw. At the time he had announced that he was not going to allow the city to be rebuilt, in order to deprive the Polish people of their political and cultural center. Warsaw, however, had been devastated by acts of war. Now Hitler was showing that he could entertain the thought of wantonly and without cause annihilating the city which he himself had called the most beautiful in Europe, with all its priceless artistic treasures. Within a few days some of the contradictions in Hitler's nature had been revealed to me, although at the time I certainly did not perceive them in anything like their full intensity. He contained a multitude of selves, from a person deeply aware of his responsibilities all the way to a ruthless and mankind-hating nihilist.

The effect of this experience however was quickly obscured for me. I was once again seduced by Hitler's brilliant victories and by the prospect of soon resuming work on my building projects. Now it was up to me to surpass Paris. Nothing more was said of razing her monuments. Instead, Hitler gave orders that our own be erected with maximum urgency. As he himself reworded the decree: "Berlin is to be given the style commensurate with the grandeur of our victory," and he further declared: "I regard the accomplishment of these supremely vital constructive tasks for the Reich as the greatest step in the preservation of our victory." He antedated this decree to June 25, 1940, the day of the armistice and of his greatest triumph.

Hitler was pacing back and forth on the gravel path in front of his house, accompanied by Generals Jodl and Keitel, when an adjutant came to tell him that I wished to take my leave. I was summoned, and as I approached the group I heard a snatch of the conversation: "Now we have shown what we are capable of," Hitler was saying. "Believe me, Keitel, a campaign against Russia would

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be like a child's game in a sandbox by comparison." In radiant good humor, he bade me good-by, sent his warmest regards to my wife, and promised that he would soon be discussing new plans and models with me.

EVEN WHILE HITLER was in the campaign, his mind was on the victory parades of 1950, the triumphal arch had been planned, new wars, new victories and defeats of his career. He outlined more of his con- siderations with my sketch- book, pale and agitated, were I asked if I would I letter from Hess to trans- fer from his room upstairs. (While I began leafing t heard an inarticulate, "Bormann, at once! Wt in touch with Goering, fastest possible means.)

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EVEN WHILE HITLER WAS DEEP IN THE PLANS FOR THE RUSSIAN campaign, his mind was already dwelling on theatrical effects for the victory parades of 1950, once the grand boulevard and the great triumphal arch had been completed.¹ But while he dreamed of new wars, new victories and celebrations, he suffered one of the greatest defeats of his career. Three days after a talk with me in which he had outlined more of his conceptions of the future, I was called to Obersalzberg with my sketches. Waiting in the anteroom at the Berghof, pale and agitated, were Leitgen and Pintsch, two of Hess's adjutants. They asked if I would let them see Hitler first; they had a personal letter from Hess to transmit to him. At this moment Hitler descended from his room upstairs. One of the adjutants was called into the salon. While I began leafing through my sketches once more, I suddenly heard an inarticulate, almost animal outcry. Then Hitler roared: "Bormann, at once! Where is Bormann?" Bormann was told to get in touch with Goering, Ribbentrop, Goebbels, and Himmler by the fastest possible means. All private guests were confined to the upper

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floor. Many hours passed before we learned what had happened: Hitler's deputy had flown to hostile England.

Superficially, Hitler soon appeared to have regained his usual composure. What bothered him was that Churchill might use the incident to pretend to Germany's allies that Hitler was extending a peace feeler. "Who will believe me when I say that Hess did not fly there in my name, that the whole thing is not some sort of intrigue behind the backs of my allies?" Japan might even alter her policy because of this, he fretted. He put through a phone call to Ernst Udet, the famous First World War fighter pilot and now technical chief of the air force, and wanted to know whether the two-motored plane Hess was using could reach its goal in Scotland and what weather conditions it would encounter. After a brief interval Udet called back to say that Hess was bound to fail for navigational reasons alone; because of the prevailing side winds he would probably fly past England and into empty space. For a moment Hitler regained hope: "If only he would drown in the North Sea! Then he would vanish without a trace, and we could work out some harmless explanation at our leisure." But after a few hours his anxieties returned, and in order to anticipate the British in any case he decided to announce over the radio that Hess had gone mad. The two adjutants, however, were arrested—as the harbingers of bad news used to be at the courts of ancient despots.

A rush of activity began at the Berghof. Aside from Goering, Goebbels, and Ribbentrop, Ley, various Gauleiters, and other party leaders arrived. Ley, as organizational chief of the party, made a bid to take over Hess's duties. In organizational terms this was no doubt what should have happened. But Bormann now showed for the first time how much influence he had over Hitler. He made short work of fending off Ley's proposal, and took the post for himself. Churchill commented at the time that this flight showed the presence of a worm in the German apple. He could not possibly have guessed how literally this phrase applied to Hess's successor.

Henceforth, Hess was scarcely ever mentioned in Hitler's entourage. Bormann alone looked into the affairs of his former superior and showed great zeal in visiting the sins of her husband on Frau Hess. Eva Braun tried to intercede with Hitler on her behalf, but unsuccessfully; later she gave her a small allowance behind Hitler's back. A few weeks later I heard from my doctor, Professor

Chaoul, that without disclosure.

At the time Hess to this day see himself be. Thus, for example, conversation with it's like a bad shall has a stir conversation became to me with u England, Hess in the background have the qu of intrigues a tive, too uns in the order responded to of them had their feet.

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* Hess had : eral and found Hitler's early Nazism. His s 20, 1944, con Haushofer co

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Chaoul, that Hess's father was dying. I sent him flowers, though without disclosing myself as the sender.

At the time it appeared to me that Bormann's ambition had driven Hess to this desperate act. Hess, also highly ambitious, could plainly see himself being excluded from access to and influence over Hitler. Thus, for example, Hitler said to me some time in 1940, after a conversation with Hess lasting many hours; "When I talk with Goering, it's like a bath in steel for me; I feel fresh afterward. The Reich Marshal has a stimulating way of presenting things. With Hess every conversation becomes an unbearably tormenting strain. He always comes to me with unpleasant matters and won't leave off." By his flight to England, Hess was probably trying, after so many years of being kept in the background, to win prestige and some success. For he did not have the qualities necessary for survival in the midst of a swamp of intrigues and struggles for power. He was too sensitive, too receptive, too unstable, and often told all factions they were in the right, in the order of their appearance. As a type he undoubtedly corresponded to the majority of the high party leaders; like him, most of them had great difficulty keeping the ground of reality under their feet.

Hitler put the blame for Hess's flight on the corrupting influence of Professor Haushofer.* Twenty-five years later, in Spandau prison, Hess assured me in all seriousness that the idea had been inspired in him in a dream by supernatural forces. He said he had not at all intended to oppose or embarrass Hitler. "We will guarantee England her empire; in return she will give us a free hand in Europe." That was the message he took to England—without managing to deliver it. It had also been one of Hitler's recurrent formulas before and occasionally even during the war.

If I judge correctly, Hitler never got over this "disloyalty" on the part of his deputy. Some while after the assassination attempt of July 20, 1944, he mentioned, in the course of one of his fantastic misreadings of the real situation, that among his conditions for peace

* Hess had first introduced Hitler to Professor Karl Haushofer, a former general and founder of the theories of "geopolitics." His ideas strongly influenced Hitler's early thinking, but Haushofer evidently did not go all the way with Nazism. His son, Albrecht Haushofer, was arrested for participation in the July 20, 1944, conspiracy, and was shot in the closing days of the war. Professor Haushofer committed suicide after his son's death.

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was the extradition of the "traitor." Hess would have to be hanged, he said. When I told Hess about this later, he commented: "He would have made it up with me. I'm certain of it. And don't you believe that in 1945, when everything was going to smash, he sometimes thought: 'Hess was right after all?'"

O.T. Hitler went even further than insisting that the Berlin buildings be pushed forward at full speed in the midst of war. Under the influence of his Gauleiters he also wildly lengthened the list of cities slated for reconstruction. Originally they had been only Berlin, Nuremberg, Munich, and Linz. Now, by personal decrees, he declared another twenty-seven cities, including Hanover, Augsburg, Bremen, and Weimar, to be "reconstruction cities."² Neither I nor anyone else was ever asked about the feasibility of such decisions. Instead, after each such conference I merely received a copy of the decree Hitler had informally issued. According to my estimate at the time the costs for party buildings alone in those reconstruction cities would be, as I wrote to Bormann on November 26, 1940, between 22 and 25 billion marks.

I thought that my own deadlines were being imperiled by these requirements. At first I tried to secure a decree from Hitler placing all building plans throughout the Reich under my authority. But when this effort was blocked by Bormann, I told Hitler on January 17, 1941—after a long illness that had given me time to reflect on many problems—that it would be better if I were to concentrate only upon the buildings in Nuremberg and Berlin which had been assigned to me. Hitler instantly agreed: "You're right. It would be a pity if you threw away your energies on general matters. If necessary you can declare in my name that I, the Fuehrer, do not wish you to become involved in these other matters lest you be led away from your proper artistic tasks."³

I availed myself generously of this exemption, and during the next few days resigned all my party offices. If I can sort out my motives at the time, this step was probably also directed against Bormann, who had been hostile to me from the start. I knew I was in no danger, however, since Hitler had frequently referred to me as irreplaceable.

Occasionally I was caught amiss, at which times Bormann could deliver a sharp reproof to me from headquarters, undoubtedly with

P.T. He would be awake at night wondering how the 23 cities, quoted by him, might

satisfaction. Thus, for and Catholic authorities of Berlin.* Bormann to receive building sites

Hitler's decree of "Jury" was tantamount to buildings in Berlin and it clear to Reich Minister to proceed at once as long as the war was mandated continuance so ran against public order's immediate progress in the middle of April to me. It amounted to ousting the operation code name "War production." On April 1 the completion of the Forces, the Chancellery power centers around have that complex association of seven organized for the purpose

With his characteristic campaign against the a hand in the selective dealers into the operation with the result that ers and Goering's. when Hitler finally and for all restored the

In 1941 large cathedral at Salzburg. They continued Hitler personally

* As yet we had only buildings situated in the

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Goebbels

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tenets. Ordering Fritzsche to continue plugging the Athenia mystery, Goebbels lectured him cynically: 'Never lose sight of the fundamental principle of all propaganda, the constant repetition of the most effective arguments.'¹⁰ A month later he reiterated, 'Propaganda means repetition and still more repetition!'¹¹

Almost equal in importance came accuracy and promptness. Local people had been dismayed by the press's furtive reporting on the Friedrichshafen rail disaster.¹² Moreover, headlines had to match the story. A Berlin evening newspaper headlined the sinking of 'two British warships,' but they were only patrol boats.¹³ As the British air raids began during May 1940 Goebbels ruled that the local press was always to report casualty figures accurately. After those in one Berlin raid were first announced as six dead, then revised to thirty-six, he ordered the press to admit their error. 'The people must not start doubting the credibility of German reporting,' he explained.¹⁴

In overseas broadcasting he allowed greater objectivity than at home. He released the newsreel record of the last moments of the pocket battleship Graf Spee only for foreign consumption.¹⁵ With the increasing setbacks of 1941 Goebbels' policy of total truth became harder to enforce. When the navy in one day lost its three top submarine aces, Günter Prien, Joachim Schepke, and Otto Kretschmer, he ordered the news suppressed.¹⁶ He also began to deceive his own diary more systematically, telling it on November 19, 1941 that Ernst Udet had 'died suddenly,' although it is plain from the rest of the entry that he knew that the disaffected Luftwaffe general had died by his own hand.¹⁷

He saw little point in issuing official denials. 'Denials alone won't work,' he stated when the British started alleging Nazi atrocities in Poland. 'You've got to counter-attack'—but this did not necessarily mean counter-attacking on the same theme.¹⁸ 'Our principle must always be, never hold your tongue. Always say something. If need be, force our enemies to lose themselves in denials instead of spewing out still more lies.'¹⁹ German denials, he ruled, must always be categorical.²⁰ When an official asked in 1944 for formal denials of Soviet allegations about Nazi atrocities in Majdanek concentration camp, his ministry replied that none would be issued, 'as we shall be totally on the defensive in any discussion of this matter.'²¹

As for lying, Dr Goebbels laid down strict rules about when this was permissible: It was to be used only as a defensive tactic, never to fake successes; official organs like news agencies and radio stations were never to be used to spread lies, and their source was to be immediately camouflaged; and Germany's domestic radio and press channels must never be burdened with them—they were to be propagated only by their overseas broadcasters.²²

Perhaps his most enduring method was to pick up the enemy's most lethal propaganda weapon, like a ticking bomb, and fling it back in his face. During the humiliating British retreat to Dunkirk in May 1940, he made devastating use of the British soldiers' ditty about hanging out the

1941

1940

washing on the Siegfried Line.²³ For a while Churchill's famous V-for-victory device caused Goebbels headaches: the B.B.C. hammered it out in Morse code as the opening bar of Beethoven's fifth symphony, and it appeared overnight as graffiti on walls all over occupied Europe. In July 1941 he hit on the solution. 'I'm taking over that letter V for ourselves,' he announced in his diary, delighted at the simplicity of the solution. 'We're going to say it stands for a German victory. Like a dream!'²⁴ Three years later he would reload that 'V' and fire it back at London, this time standing for *Vergeltung, revenge*.

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RIBBENTROP still stood in his way. On February 17, 1940 the British violated Norwegian neutrality to board an unarmed homebound German fleet auxiliary, the Altmark.²⁵ There were rich propaganda pickings for both sides, but Churchill won the race by five hours because the foreign ministry in Berlin sat on the dispatches.²⁶ Livid with rage Goebbels ordered his editors to concentrate on the Altmark incident. 'Even those newspapers normally accustomed to sparing the nerves of their readers are to use italic and bold faces,' he dictated.²⁷

The rivalry between the two ministries created odd situations. Goebbels had a large foreign section, with which he pursued his own foreign policy; he even had his own foreign intelligence agency, based in the stock exchange building in Hamburg and drawing information from its own agents all over neutral and occupied Europe.²⁸ Ribbentrop's foreign ministry had its own sections for press, cultural policies, and propaganda. Since Hitler had his own press chief, Dietrich, three conflicting 'official' viewpoints often appeared in the same editorial office.²⁹ Goebbels was unable to prevail upon Hitler to remedy this anomalous position. He had yet to outlive the harm done by the Lida Baarova episode.

March
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He often saw Hitler however over lunch. On March 1, 1940 Hitler delivered a three-hour monologue to the gauleiters explaining why the weather still precluded any operations in the west. 'The Führer is a genius,' concluded Goebbels afterward. 'He's going to build the first Germanic people's empire.' He went on debating with Hitler until one A.M. that night. Back at Schwanenwerder it took him hours to get to sleep, what with the vivid plans and daydreams.³⁰ By a decree later that month he was confirmed as a permanent member of the Cabinet-like ministerial council for Reich defense along with Himmler, Böhler, Milch, and Prussian finance minister Johannes Popitz.³¹ True, they had no idea what Hitler was planning. But Goebbels' trust in him was complete.

April
2

'Big question,' he wrote on April 2, 1940, referring to Yellow. 'When does it start?'

1940

Like Ribbentrop, Hess, Dietrich, and every other top civilian he was totally in the dark about Hitler's real next operation, against Scandinavia.³² He continued to polemicize about the western powers' 'plans to enlarge the war' through the first week in April, while going about his other humdrum business.³³ He inspected a great new German invention,

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the tape recorder, and he labored at his propaganda mills.³⁴ He had established several 'black' transmitters, to carry his subversive messages directly to millions of French and British radio listeners, eroding their confidence in victory and spreading rumor and confusion.³⁵ His French transmitters were codenamed Concordia and Humanité, the latter being a 'communist' station run by his brilliant broadcasting expert Dr Adolf Raskin.³⁶ His trump card was the Irish broadcaster William Joyce; although his overstated English accent earned him the unfriendly nickname Lord Haw-Haw, the mocking, intellectual content of his broadcasts gained him millions of listeners around the world.³⁷

At Gutterer's suggestion Dr Goebbels rocketed over the French lines millions of pornographic postcards: one, a translucent illustrated postcard entitled *Le Tommy, où est-il resté?* (Where's Tommy?) implied British hanky-panky at the rear while the French soldier was valiantly holding the line. The face of the postcard showed trenches, barbed wire, and a bloodstained French soldier; but held up to the light, the hidden picture revealed a nude man in bed with a woman, with a picture of her husband in French uniform on the wall.³⁸ Other rockets showered the French with familiar glossy black cartons of cigarette paper that bore however the slogan, 'Why die for Danzig?' and with each sheet arguing that Britain had lured the French into this war. Hitler was dubious, reminding Goebbels that leaflet propaganda had not helped the Nazi party into power. But, he conceded, leafletting flights helped to conceal that the Luftwaffe was taking aerial photographs of vital enemy locations.³⁹

Goebbels meanwhile had become a personality of world stature. The American magazine *Life* invited him to contribute four articles: He dictated his own terms.⁴⁰ His propaganda could boast of many triumphs. In Warsaw the Nazis had captured the entire Polish diplomatic archives; with a little creative editing Goebbels published the documents to illustrate Roosevelt's meddling in European affairs. A French newspaper printed a photograph of Roosevelt's emissary Sumner Welles visiting the French prime minister; behind them was a map of Europe on which the French had already divided up Germany, Italy, and Yugoslavia among their neighbors. Goebbels reissued this provocative map, with a few deft embellishments, for the foreign press.⁴¹ But the world soon had an even more stunning Hitler coup to cope with.

NOT until late on April 8, 1940 did Hitler send for Goebbels and inform him, during a stroll in the chancellery gardens, that he would be invading Denmark and Norway at dawn the next day. Guns, troops, and ammunition were at that very moment entering Norwegian waters, concealed inside colliers.⁴² Asked by an astonished Dr Goebbels how he expected the United States to react to this new operation, Hitler responded that he did not really care. 'Material aid from them cannot come into play for about eight months, and manpower about a year and a half.' This did however make it essential to win the war before 1941 ended. To get them out of the way, Hitler had sent off all the foreign military attachés to

1940

April 8

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April
9.

inspect Germany's western defenses. Only one, the Norwegian, had declined to go. Goebbels added to the smoke screen by organizing a mass meeting in Berlin that evening.

That Hitler pulled off this masterstroke on April 9, 1940, only hours before Churchill landed his own expeditionary force in Norway bestowed on him an ill-deserved aura of semi-righteousness. At lunch that day he again began bragging about a new Germanic empire. Goebbels warned editors not to mention their paratroop operations.⁴³ The German naval losses in the operation were severe. In Oslo fiord an ancient Norwegian coastal battery torpedoed the cruiser Blücher with heavy loss of life. Eberhard Taubert, one of Goebbels' best men, gave him an eye-witness account of this naval disaster ('As the Blücher went down there was one last infantryman on deck. He saluted and the survivors stood to attention. A cheer went up for the Führer').⁴⁴

Unexpectedly, the fighting grew stiffer, particularly at Narvik. When Hans Fritzsche warned that the British were fighting with great courage, Goebbels became quite thoughtful. 'We're going to have to take them more seriously,' he decided.⁴⁵

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38: Knocking out Front Teeth

JOSEPH Goebbels' life is already nine-tenths over. Hilde has just had her first day at school; life's little milestones are flashing past in a blur. His pride and joy are his four daughters. 'What a delight it is to see the clever, pretty little lasses slowly getting bigger,' he writes, unconsciously excluding his slow-witted infant son from his sentiments.¹ Once he finds that Magda has dressed Hellmut in a frilly silk blouse. 'That's not right for a boy,' he snaps at her, sending him off to change. 'We're not the Ribbentrops or Görings. People expect different of us!'²

Magda tells him that her father is ill. Goebbels merely sniffs. He lacks any feeling toward old Oskar Ritschel. She goes alone to the hospital in Duisburg.³ Gradually her father wastes away, losing forty pounds. He has evidently imbibed the evil draughts brewed by his son-in-law. 'Of course it isn't really a war against Britain and France at all,' Ritschel writes afterwards to his daughter, 'but a war between the Judaic and Germanic races; that is the essence of this gigantic struggle.'⁴

MANY desks at Goebbels' ministry were empty; half of his staff were away at the wars.⁵ Goebbels encouraged this war service, both for the battlefield experience that men like Gunter d'Alquén would bring back to the ministry and for the ideological stiffening that they brought to the front lines.⁶ He sent out regular hectographed letters disbursing the latest ministry gossip, chocolates, and cigarettes to each of his men in uniform.⁷ All the ministry's soldiers acquitted themselves well. Hanke fought his way through France as General Erwin Rommel's adjutant; Berndt succeeded him in Africa.⁸ Werner Naumann, an officer in Hitler's S.S. Leibstandarte, would return with a wound badge and other decorations from the Balkan campaign.⁹ Herbert Heiduschke, another Goebbels adjutant, would meet a paratrooper's death in Crete.¹⁰ G. W. Müller would be wounded in the advance on Murmansk in North Russia.¹¹ Moritz von Schirmeister, Goebbels' press officer since 1938, would not return from the eastern front to his desk until January 1942.¹²

The Norwegian campaign provided another coup for Goebbels, the capture of British documents proving that Churchill had himself, for all his talk about invasions of neutral countries, intended to invade Norway. 'That is a gift from the gods,' wrote a jubilant Goebbels. 'We missed disaster by hours. Churchill was waiting for reports of the English invasion—and the accursed Germans had got there first.'¹³ The incri-

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minating British documents were rushed into print. He ordered the press to follow up with leader articles, and had the captured British officers interviewed on the newfangled tape recorder lest Churchill deny the story.¹⁴ The British expeditionary force had behaved despicably, Hitler told Goebbels, looting and pillaging everywhere. In contrast to the Polish campaign, however, the Norwegians had not committed one atrocity—'They are after all a Germanic breed'—and he ordered the release of all Norwegian prisoners by way of recognition.¹⁵

Unlike Goebbels, Hitler had no special animus against the British. While Goebbels broadly defined their war aims as 'victory over the western plutocracies,'¹⁶ he often heard Hitler speak, within the four walls of his chancellery, of his fondness for the British and their empire. 'The Führer's intention,' recorded Goebbels, 'is to administer one knockout punch. Even so, he would be ready to make peace today, on condition that Britain stay out of Europe and give us back our colonies. . . . He does not want at all to crush Britain or to destroy her empire.'¹⁷ Hitler described the English leaders as criminals. 'They could have had peace on the most agreeable of terms,' he privately assured Goebbels. 'Instead they are fighting a war and shattering their empire to the core.'¹⁸ 'We are neither able nor willing to take over their empire,' added Hitler, reverting to this bitter theme. 'There are some people whom you can talk sense into only after you've knocked out their front teeth.'¹⁹

May 9

On the evening of May 9 Hitler boarded his train, bound for the western front. Goebbels showed up conspicuously at Göring's side at the premiere of Mussolini's play *Cavour* in Berlin, then returned to his deserted ministry building. At 5:35 A.M. on May 10 Yellow began, with Hitler's tanks and airborne troops invading the Low Countries and France. At eight Goebbels himself broadcast appeals to them not to resist. 'Our entire public must be convinced that Holland and Belgium did violate their neutrality,' he told his staff.²⁰ Learning that Churchill had now replaced Chamberlain, Goebbels penned this jubilant comment in his diary: 'Decks cleared!'²¹ Churchill launched the air war immediately, with raids on the Ruhr. Elsewhere twenty-four people, mostly children, were killed by bombs in Freiburg; in fact a stray Luftwaffe plane was to blame, but the harrowing stories from Freiburg were grist to Goebbels' mill.²²

May 16

He ordered the media to ignore Churchill's new cabinet except for the minister of information Duff Cooper. On Hitler's instructions the popular Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands was also spared.²³ As the powerful transmitter at Luxemburg fell into German hands Goebbels offered a substantial reward for the return of its missing valves; it later became one of his mightiest weapons in the radio propaganda war.²⁴ Initially he laid down the principle of total restraint in their reporting: There was to be no sensationalizing of the Wehrmacht's victories.²⁵ Hitler had briefed him on his real secret strategy, later known as the Manstein Plan, because as it unfolded on May 16 Goebbels noted that their mission now was to dupe the enemy into expecting a rehash of the old Schlieffen Plan.²⁶ He



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spread rumors about fresh airborne landings, and took care not to rebut enemy stories about Nazi secret weapons.²⁷

Already he was preparing a new recording of massed choirs singing the Netherlands Thanksgiving Prayer, ready for victory.²⁸ As Hitler's armies began their historic wheel toward the north-west Goebbels reflected unabashedly: 'Since 1938 we have conquered seven European countries.'²⁹ As the king of Belgium conceded defeat Churchill broadcast his famous warning that Britain would fight on the beaches. 'He's still insolent,' decided Goebbels, 'but you can hear the perspiration trickling out of every frightened pore.'³⁰ He ordered it brought home to the British and the French that it was their governments which had declared this war on Germany, and he commissioned a special England victory fanfare for the German radio.³¹ 'They declared this war,' said Hitler, informing Goebbels of his intention of battering the French into submission. 'Now let them whimper for peace.'³²

GENERAL von Reichenau would tell the ministry's staff, after Hitler had appointed his field marshals, 'The one who really won the French campaign was Goebbels.'³³ There was something in that. As the British expeditionary force fell back in disarray toward the beaches around Dunkirk, Goebbels' black transmitters were softening up the French public and doing all they could to generate among the *poilus* the feeling that they were already done for. He himself wrote many of the scripts for Concordia and Humanité, including a religious service of cunningly pacifist flavor. His purpose was simple: To spread alarm and despondency among the French. This he did by reporting rumors that Paul Reynaud's regime was fleeing Paris; by urging all French patriots to withdraw their bank savings immediately lest the Nazis confiscate the banks; and by broadcasting meaningless code-phrases to a non-existent French underground; Hitler directed him to talk freely about this fictitious 'Fifth Column.'³⁴ His transmitters gave helpful advice to the French on surviving the cholera epidemic (there was none); and how to hoard scarce food supplies. No true Frenchman, they warned, should trust the perfidious English. He spread rumors of peace talks, then claimed a day later that Britain had torpedoed them. Gutterer and Raskin faked the diary of a British soldier describing his sexual exploits among the wives of Paris. Other stations spread word of appalling atrocities, designed to choke the French roads with panic-stricken refugees. He brought to bear the main transmitters of Radio Cologne, Leipzig, and Stuttgart to beam these poisonous messages into enemy territory.³⁵

Learning that the turgid communist jargon of Humanité's scripts was turning off its listeners, Goebbels retrieved Wilhelm Kasper and Karl-Loew Albrecht from concentration camp.³⁶ Together with Ernst Torgler they helped Goebbels to foment communist unrest among the Paris working class. 'Magnificent,' he congratulated himself. 'Keep tipping oil onto the flames.'³⁷ Over the half-megawatt Deutschland-Sender his broadcasters warned that many of the Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany

1940

to France and England were really Hitler agents in disguise.³⁸ Churchill ordered the internment of over twenty thousand Jewish refugees, a spectacular success for Goebbels' evil tongue.³⁹ Settling scores with the exiled Otto Strasser and Hermann Rauschning, he had his ministry issue 'official denials' that they too were members of the Nazi Fifth Column. Then he arranged for an anonymous well-wisher's telegram to reach Strasser tipping him off that the game was up.⁴⁰

As the black propaganda campaign gathered momentum, the roads behind the French lines were choked with terror-stricken refugees. Twice Hitler mentioned to Goebbels how moved he was by the French 'refugee misery' that he had seen.⁴¹ The minister instructed his staff never to tell outsiders of the part their tactics had played—'Even after the war,' he directed, 'it will be necessary to keep our operations secret.'⁴²

He stepped up the pressure on Britain too. William Joyce toured prison camps recruiting English-speakers.⁴³ Goebbels was in no doubt that Churchill would prove a tougher opponent than Reynaud. 'He will be England's gravedigger,' he prophesied. He warned the media not to speculate on Churchill's parentage without cast-iron evidence.⁴⁴ Normal libels would not suffice against this man: Perhaps monster-libels would. He told Joyce to announce that Churchill was planning to torpedo the liner carrying fleeing Americans back to the United States ('I wouldn't put it past the old rogue anyway,' he commented, as though that were justification enough).⁴⁵

In Churchill, Goebbels had met his match. Before his marveling eyes, the 'old rogue' converted the disaster of Dunkirk into a propaganda triumph for England. Churchill's legend of the Little Ships fired the imagination of the world. 'You can't help admiring the brazen effrontery with which they are putting out this monstrous lie,' wrote Goebbels. 'There's no doubt that they've managed to halt the avalanche in public opinion that was developing.'⁴⁶ Goebbels was dismayed to hear from d'Alquen and Hippler that not only were the French troops loyally covering the British retreat, but that whatever the French were saying to the contrary the Tommies were fighting with unexpected bravery. 'The British,' he realized, 'are going to be a tough nut to crack.'⁴⁷

Hitler staged the surrender talks in the forest at Compiègne, the site of Germany's humiliation in 1918. Telephoning Goebbels that evening he described with relish the French delegation's consternation upon finding him there in person.⁴⁸

Broadcasting over the B.B.C., Churchill announced that Britain would fight on alone. 'That idiot is plunging all England into misfortune,' wrote Goebbels. He ordered his black transmitters realigned on England. He did not share his Führer's maudlin affection for the English. He found the early British war movie *The Lion has Wings* so ludicrous that he had it shown to the press corps and public audiences in Berlin for laughs.⁴⁹

Hitler however hesitated. Goebbels could see that he hated the idea of pursuing the defeated British army across the English Channel. In an interview with American journalist Karl von Wiegand the Führer once

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again insisted, for English listeners' consumption, that he did not desire the destruction of their empire. This conciliatory attitude suited neither Goebbels nor Churchill, who sent his bombers to Berlin on the night of the Compiègne armistice ceremony. Goebbels drove over to see the resulting damage at nearby Babelsberg and admitted at the next morning's press conference that there had been fatalities. When Hitler phoned later that day Goebbels pleaded in vain for retaliatory raids.⁵⁰

The big question, he added, was how now to proceed against Britain. 'The Führer does not really want to press on. But he may well have to. If Churchill stays on, assuredly,' Göring set up a plan for a mass air attack on Britain, but Hitler kept postponing it.⁵¹ The British bombers kept poking at Germany. Churchill, turned Goebbels at the end of June, 'is just trying to provoke us. But the Führer doesn't intend to respond, yet.'⁵²

A telegram from Hitler curtailed his tour of the battlefields in France—he was to report to the interim Führer HQ in the Black Forest the next day, July 2, 1940. They decided that Hitler should stage a triumphant homecoming to Berlin that Saturday, July 6, and address the Reichstag two days later.⁵³ Hitler would then offer Britain one last chance. Failing that, he still believed that he could defeat Britain in four weeks. 'The Führer however does not want to destroy the empire,' Goebbels noted, 'because everything it loses will accrue to foreign powers and not to us.'⁵⁴ Goebbels was clearly unhappy with Hitler's procrastination: He recorded that it would be a tough decision to sell to the German people, though no doubt the Führer would bring it off. The tenor of his coming speech, Hitler had said, would be magnanimity. What he did not mention to Goebbels was that he had just begun staff studies on a war with the Soviet Union.⁵⁵

Goebbels hated the idea of offering an easy peace to Britain. Dramatic events came to his rescue. Under the armistice terms Hitler had just allowed the defeated French nation to retain her powerful battle fleet, though disarmed and under German supervision. Concerned that the Nazis might somehow seize the biggest warships, lying at anchor at Oran (Mers el-Kébir), Churchill ordered them sunk on July 3, the day after Hitler and Goebbels met. Over a thousand French sailors died in the ruthless British naval bombardment. This incident dominated a quarter of Goebbels' entire domestic propaganda output for the next four days, while the personal abuse leveled at Churchill equaled the savagery first displayed after the Altmark incident.⁵⁶ Goebbels' private admiration for Churchill rose, as his diary shows. Moreover, the British were still bombing Germany. Hitler however still restrained his own bomber force.⁵⁷ 'The Führer,' the minister marveled, 'has the patience of an angel.' He directed the press to focus their attack on Churchill and his clique alone. This was not easy, as the entire British press was 'chortling with pleasure' about Oran.⁵⁸

BERLIN's reception for Hitler on Saturday July 6, 1940 was the most spectacular that Goebbels ever staged.⁵⁹ He had issued a million swastika

* It would be a great advantage to them if they did not understand that with the coming of such an opportunity

* His dream was to have England and America (eventually) on his side against the Soviet Union.

May 26, 1940

scene
flags to the crowds lining the route, and he himself broadcast the excited running commentary as the train bearing the conquering warlord hauled into the station at three P.M. to an accompanying cacophony of church bells, factory sirens, and steam whistles. Once inside the chancellery Goebbels asked Hitler what he had decided. He now learned that the British fleet's assault on the French at Oran had unhinged all of Hitler's plans. 'He had his speech almost complete,' recorded Goebbels, 'when the attack occurred. It has brought about an entirely new situation. Churchill is a raving lunatic who has burned all his boats behind him.' 'Nevertheless,' Hitler lectured him, 'we must be guided not by hatred but by common sense.'⁶⁰

scene
Postponing the speech, Hitler came out to Lanke that Sunday, and played with the Goebbels children. Several times during the coming week Goebbels lunched with him at the chancellery and heard him daydream about his postwar construction plans. He was going to build an autobahn from Carinthia in southern Austria all the way up to Norway's northernmost cape, with a gigantic new naval base near Trondheim like Britain's Singapore. Darré, another lunch guest, recorded, 'They couldn't decide whether to call it Atalantis (Himmler's suggestion), Atlantis (Frank), Northern Light (Ley), or Stella Polaris (Goebbels).'⁶¹ But these were castles in the air because, Goebbels noted, Hitler was still unwilling to deliver the final blow. Announcing that he was going to retire to the Berghof to think things over he left for Bavaria that evening.⁶²

just as Hitler hankered after his peacetime hobby of architecture, so Dr Goebbels dreamed of retiring to a country estate and firing off magisterial newspaper editorials.⁶³

May 26
With the birth of *Das Reich*, his new national weekly magazine for the intelligentsia, part of this dream came true. He contributed a highly paid, regular leading article which would come to be quoted around the world as a real sensor of Nazi policies. Appearing every Saturday from May 26, 1940, *Das Reich* became the flagship of his journalistic career.⁶⁴ It was well designed, its prose was literate, its photographs superb. It was particularly popular with the officer corps.⁶⁵ Its circulation hovered around a million—a rare publishing success for which I was not entirely blameless,' Goebbels wrote.⁶⁶

The large circulation involved simultaneous printing in several centers, and this in turn meant that his manuscript had to be delivered by the previous Monday. He began drafting it a week ahead, initially with a schoolboy dread, then with growing enthusiasm as it took shape; he devoted inordinate energy to checking dates, facts, and quotations from the Greek and Latin classics, until he was ready to dictate the final draft just before the weekend. Its influence on German morale was unquestionable; it was a weekly shot in the arm—celebrating successes, explaining setbacks, justifying persecutions, promising retaliation, predicting victory. Toward the end, a Goebbels article would present eloquent arguments from antiquity or parables from the party's struggle for

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power which briefly lightened the lowering darkness of defeat. After reading the Goebbels leader in *Das Reich* on the day before Hitler died an army lieutenant-general in British captivity could only say, 'They [the Nazis] must have something up their sleeves!'⁶⁷

While Hitler stayed brooding at the Berghof, his plans upset, Goebbels boosted Berlin's uncertain morale by staging a homecoming parade for one of its infantry divisions. He shrilled words of welcome through loudspeakers, contrasting this scene with those of 1918: 'You soldiers return to find your country just as you left it. At your head stands the same Führer, on your buildings flutters the same flag, your people are still imbued with the same spirit and the same determination.' 'All we need now,' he triumphed in his diary afterward, 'is Britain's capitulation, total victory, and a lasting peace. . . . Who can still harbor any doubt of the outcome of this gigantic struggle?'⁶⁸ The mere statement of the question suggests that, way down in his own unfathomed depths, Goebbels was himself beginning to doubt.

As the infantry marched in Berlin, Gutterer remarked that the same hordes of Jews were to be seen loitering up and down Kurfürstendamm.⁶⁹ Goebbels had to admit it was true. The Jewish problem still ran like a poisonous thread through all his waking thoughts. He had told Gutterer in February 1940 to organize raids on Berlin Jews suspected of hoarding foodstuffs.⁷⁰ He had no qualms about the murderous treatment that the S.S. were meting out to the Jews, the clergy, and the intelligentsia in Poland.⁷¹ More than once over the next five years he reflected that for top Nazis like himself there was now no going back: Winning total victory had become literally a matter of life and death for them. In one cryptic diary entry in January 1940 he reminded himself, 'If there were any going back, then one would too easily become faint-hearted. . . . That goes for our policies in Poland too. We simply must not lose this war.'⁷² Like other top Nazis, he was noticeably careful not to spell out what those policies were. When a well-disposed Polish journalist sent him details of certain 'episodes' in Poland, he noted, 'These could be pretty lethal for us at this moment,' and he had the informant taken into custody for a while.⁷³ A few weeks later he learned that the Russians were disposing of the Jews in their half of Poland 'in their own way.' 'So much the better for us,' was his cryptic comment.⁷⁴

He had no misgivings about euthanasia either. After hearing Philipp Bouhler reporting to Hitler on the ongoing operation to liquidate Germany's hospital population of mental defectives, Goebbels agreed that this was 'so necessary,' but he made a note that the whole thing was secret and running into difficulties.⁷⁵ Over lunch a week later he heard Himmler tell Hitler that in some parts of occupied Poland the Jews had set up their own administration and were imposing a cruel regime on their own race. 'That's how the Jews are,' he commented, 'and that's how they'll be for ever more.'⁷⁶ Hitler reassured him in June that they would deal swiftly with the Jews after the war.⁷⁷ Commenting on the Jews'

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* disrespectful behavior during the infantry parade, Goebbels announced that he had decided, no doubt in his capacity as gauleiter, to pack all Berlin's Jews—he put their number at 62,000—off to Poland within eight weeks of the cessation of hostilities. The city's police had already developed the necessary plans.⁷⁸ Later still, Hitler revealed to him once again his own preferred final solution, to deport all of Europe's Jews after the war to Madagascar, currently a French colony. 'That will become a German protectorate under a German police governor.'⁷⁹

HITLER had now put the finishing touches to his Reichstag speech. He returned to Berlin on July 19, 1940 in high spirits, and outlined its salient points to his lunch guests, including Goebbels. He would issue a short, terse peace offer to Britain without spelling out any precise terms but with the clear implication that this was his last word, and it was now for London to decide.⁸⁰ Goebbels hoped that Churchill might even resign. That evening, he told his staff, Britain's fate would be in the balance.⁸¹ He directed all his English-language radio stations to soften up British public opinion.⁸² He now had no fewer than five black radio stations, among them the New British Broadcasting Station, which beamed William Joyce's messages to England via three shortwave transmitters; an 'amateur' Radio Caledonia, pumping out Scottish nationalist propaganda; another transmitter aimed at Welsh nationalists; a medium-wave transmitter beaming socialist slogans to the British working class; and Concordia Plan P, which had soothing words for British Christian pacifists and regularly broadcast prayer services for peace.⁸³

All of these megawatts failed to deflect Britain from her purpose. A rude answer to Hitler's peace offer was broadcast almost immediately over the B.B.C. by Sefton Delmer ('one of Putzi Hanfstaengl's discoveries,' as Goebbels caustically labeled him).⁸⁴ To Hitler's consternation the British bombing continued that night. 'For the moment,' recorded Goebbels, seeing him the next day, 'the Führer does not want to accept that that is indeed Britain's response. He is still minded to wait awhile. After all, he appealed to the British people and not to Churchill.'⁸⁵ Agreeing that they could afford to wait, Goebbels warned editors not to overstate Britain's rebuff.⁸⁶

So Germany waited. He himself doubted whether Britain really was interested in peace. She would not come to her senses until she had taken the first blows. 'She can't have any idea of what she's in for,' he reflected.

Churchill responded with more bombs, but Lord Halifax broadcast a statement that Goebbels at first mistook for just an unctuous sermon, only to learn the next day that Hitler recognized it as most definitely Britain's final outright rejection of his offer.⁸⁷

Secretly, Goebbels was rather pleased. 'Everybody,' he wrote, meaning himself, 'was afraid that Britain would grasp the hand of peace extended by the Führer.'⁸⁸ Hitler told him that he too would 'very soon' start massive bombing raids. 'The big question,' Goebbels detected, 'is when. . . . Only the Führer can decide that.'⁸⁹ He instructed his black

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transmitters to start generating panic in Britain, for instance broadcasting official-sounding English guidelines on what to do when the Nazi mass air raids began; to add authenticity each bulletin was to start with blistering attacks on the top Nazis. Once again his announcers were to counsel the enemy public to withdraw their life savings and to hoard foodstuffs, and to buy jewelry and valuables against inflation.⁹⁰

It was now late July 1940. Göring was now wearing a new uniform, that of Reichsmarschall. Everyone was ready for the blitz to begin—except Hitler.⁹¹

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39: Breaking Even

THE short campaigning weeks of the English summer flitted past unused. Hitler allowed Reichsmarschall Göring's two thousand bombers to tackle only Britain's war industries, shipping, and ports. Dr Goebbels hungered for the day when they would be unleashed on London.

Britain's intransigence dominated his diaries. 'Feelers from here to Britain without result,' he recorded on the first day of August 1940. 'Via Spain as well. London is looking for a catastrophe.'

He began his own war in the air. There was no limit to his evil inspiration. His mischief-making black transmitters went into stage two of their campaign, advising British listeners on how to defend themselves against Nazi poison-gas attacks, and how to make Molotov cocktails (a few days later the same transmitters warned that some designs had been found spontaneously igniting).² Listeners were lectured on how to detect the 'Fifth Columnists' in Britain.³ The transmitters 'denied' rumors that a hundred thousand British army uniforms had fallen into Nazi hands at Dunkirk, then spread word that thousands of agents wearing these uniforms had already been parachuted into Britain.⁴ Then they began broadcasting strings of meaningless ciphers to these non-existent Fifth Columnists.⁵ Studying photographs in British society magazines Goebbels devised a particularly cruel scheme to alienate the working class: His transmitters announced that Churchill was providing funds for twenty thousand working-class children to be evacuated to Canada like the privileged children of the rich and influential; families were to take their children to a meeting place in the center of London, on the basis of first-come, first-served. 'There's going to be some pushing and shoving there,' cackled the minister heartlessly.⁶ His 'English' transmitters also ordered all gas masks to be handed in for special filters to be installed.⁷ They followed with educational broadcasts for those English listeners who had not yet witnessed German air force *Schrecklichkeit* at first hand.⁸ The effect, if any, of this black propaganda on the British population is not known.

In the air war however the British were now taking the initiative, although Göring's bomber bases were much closer to London than the British were to Berlin. Churchill sent his squadrons to Hamburg and announced it had been 'pulverized.'⁹ The American press seized upon

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that word. Goebbels flew two planeloads of neutral journalists to the port to see for themselves that it was undamaged.¹⁰

Goebbels began to feel ill. He felt overworked and undernourished, his nerves were frayed, his eyes swam from scanning the incoming dispatches for any signs that Britain was collapsing.¹¹ The doctors diagnosed a nervous complaint resulting from overwork and vitamin deficiency.¹² The Gestapo reported gloomily that the German public was keyed up, waiting for Göring's Grand Slam, but that many people secretly feared they were in for a second winter at war.¹³

Hitler returned to Berlin on August 4. He had decided, he explained to Goebbels, to launch sudden and unheralded mass air raids on Britain and he ordered the propaganda barrage to be intensified. Goebbels postponed a trip he had been planning to occupied Norway and turned the barrage up to half-volume.¹⁴ But still Hitler held back his bombers. He explained that the Reichsmarschall was still testing the sinews of Britain's defenses. 'If the losses we sustain are within reason,' wrote Goebbels after seeing Hitler again on the sixth, 'then the operation will proceed. If they are not, then we shall try new ways. Invasion not planned,' he noted almost casually. * 'But we shall hint at it subliminally in our propaganda to confuse the enemy.'

Goebbels briefed only a few of his staff on Hitler's startling disclosure. 'The Führer has still not ordered the air attack on Britain,' he noted after a further visit to him that day. 'He's still rather hesitant.' Anxious to exculpate his vacillating idol in his diary, Goebbels conceded: 'It is a tricky decision.'¹⁵ And it was: Bombing London would finally close the door to peace. Churchill knew this too, and this was one reason why his bombers were trying to provoke Hitler. Goebbels found himself his unwitting ally. 'The people,' he wrote privately, meaning himself, 'are afraid that we're missing the opportune moment.' Over lunch on the eighth Hitler however said that the weather was not good enough.¹⁶

To Goebbels' dismay Churchill's information machine proved slicker than his as the battle of Britain began. He did not mind that Churchill inflated his victories, claiming fifty-three Luftwaffe planes when the real total was ten; but the British announced this victory in a rising crescendo of fourteen bulletins issued during the day, while the German High Command was still ponderously releasing one.¹⁷ Goebbels reminded the world that Churchill had frankly confessed to lying his way out of awkward situations in the earlier war.¹⁸

Hitler still hesitated to bomb London. Goebbels resorted in his diary to his now threadbare palliative: 'The Führer will surely seek out the right moment and then strike accordingly.'¹⁹ Göring decided to launch Eagle Day, the mass attack on southern England, on the thirteenth; but

* Thereby settling one major historical controversy. This author has long maintained, e.g. in *Churchill's War* (London, 1987) and *Hitler's War* (London, 1991), 311ff, that Hitler never intended to invade Britain and that Operation Sea Lion was only strategic deception. Traditional historians have been slow to accept this.

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Aug 19-20, 1940

only half the two thousand planes got airborne in bad weather, and London itself was still off limits.²⁰ Goebbels anticipated that Churchill would soon get to work on the world's tear glands, as he put it, with harrowing photographs of pregnant air-raid victims. He told his ministry to dig out file photographs of, ironically, the Freiburg raid and comparable British atrocities in India.

For several more days bad weather continued to thwart Göring. The Gestapo reported that the German public was getting jittery.²¹ On the twentieth Churchill famously extolled Britain's young fighter pilots, speaking of how so much had never been owed by so many to so few. Goebbels mechanically dismissed the speech as 'insolent, arrogant, and mendacious,' but he had to admit, as one orator invigilating over another, that it was good stuff. 'He has a seductive style,' he wrote.²²

Autumn was drawing in. The nights were getting long enough for Churchill to push his bombers as far as Berlin. On the night of August 19-20 a Blenheim bomber was actually shot down over the city. Goebbels announced the incident only in his overseas services. He was confronted by something of a dilemma—how to profit from the raids on Berlin without affording comfort to the enemy.²³ Late on the twenty-fourth a Luftwaffe plane sent to attack a Thames-side oil refinery strayed over the East End of London; there were no casualties, but Churchill ordered a hundred heavy bombers to Berlin the next night.²⁴ Alone out at Lanke—Magda and the children had left for Schwanenwerder as the new school term began—Goebbels watched Berlin's flak batteries opening up in the distance. Damage was again minimal, but the four-hour alert robbed him of precious sleep and he spent the next night out at Lanke too. Expecting the worst to be over in three weeks, he agreed with Göring that they should close all theaters until then.²⁵

The British raids continued. On August 28-29 their bombs killed ten Berliners. At six A.M. the radio revealed to Germany that their capital had been bombed. Goebbels decided on balance that since he had little to work on, he might as well stay out at Lanke for another night.²⁶ Hitler, made of sterner stuff, hurried back from Bavaria to the capital and assured Goebbels over lunch on the thirtieth that if only the weather would improve Göring would begin his unrestricted air warfare against Britain. Goebbels reflected that Berlin would then be in for a 'pretty hot time' too.²⁷

CHURCHILL, Hitler, and Goebbels were alike in tragically overestimating the strategic capabilities of saturation bombing. Each side believed that its opponents were less brave. At his confidential morning conference on September 3, 1940 Goebbels admitted that opinion on this differed. 'There is no doubt,' he said, 'that a nation really determined to defend its freedom can be wrestled to the ground only in man-to-man combat.' He doubted however that Britain had that determination. Common sense might yet prevail there. 'We'll have to see how things turn out.'

In fact he cynically hoped that Churchill's raids would get heavier. He

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needed what he called an alibi, to justify in advance the *Schrecklichkeit* which the Luftwaffe was about to inflict on London. Hitler had ruled out an invasion of Britain by force as unnecessary. Both men expected a walk-over once the Luftwaffe really got at London. Goebbels began planning ahead with Gutterer for the occupation of London, nominating first his police major Walter Titel, of his war operations staff, and then Dr Friedrich Mahlo, head of his tourism section, as chief of the England task force, and determining which buildings, like the British Broadcasting Corporation, it would need to seize.²⁸

While Berlin now prepared for the worst, removing priceless paintings to safety and digging in flak batteries around the city, Hitler and his propaganda minister debated endlessly the central question: Whether bombing alone would force the British to their knees. Goebbels eschewed any opinion, but wondered privately how much longer London had before the onslaught began. Hitler however was awaiting a response to his further peace feelers, extended through Washington, Stockholm and—via Rudolf Hess's aristocratic contacts—Scotland.

As frustrated as Goebbels at Hitler's forbearance, Churchill intensified his raids on Berlin. Finally his methods worked. Inaugurating the second Winter Relief fund Hitler and Goebbels spoke on September 4 in the Sport Palace; and here Hitler threatened that, if the attacks continued, his Luftwaffe would respond. 'I shall rub out their cities!' he rasped into the microphone. To Goebbels' astonishment, the speech had no apparent impact on Whitehall. In retrospect this was not surprising: Like Goebbels at Lanke, Churchill had a country funk-hole at Dytchley in Oxfordshire where he repaired whenever his Intelligence services alerted him that London was to be the Luftwaffe's target. The prime minister wanted London bombed to bring in the Americans, to take the weight of enemy air attacks off his fighter and radar defenses, and to spite the peace movement that was now seriously threatening his own war leadership. He cheered silently each time his capital was bombed, as indeed did Goebbels each time Berlin was visited by the Royal Air Force.²⁹

Meanwhile Reichsmarschall Göring had set off to the Channel coast to command his pompous air armadas against London. He had prepared a three-day saturation bombing of London. September 5 brought ideal bombing weather but Hitler, clutching at hopes of peace, still procrastinated. That night the British bombed Berlin again, killing fifteen people. Lunching with Hitler on the sixth Goebbels found his patience exhausted. 'The Führer,' he recorded, 'is fed up. He clears London for bombing. It is to begin tonight.' Goebbels certainly did not discourage him, and that night what he would call the blitz began. Mapping out his own tactics in advance he confided to his diary, 'We're expecting the British to launch a major air strike against Berlin tonight [the seventh]. When it comes we'll kick up one hell of a hullabaloo—and then we'll flatten London with day and night raids.' These would go on around the clock for three days. He only hoped that the weather held out.

Sure enough the British bombers returned. Thus Churchill and Hitler

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rose to each other's bait. Göring again sent his bombers over London that afternoon. 'Let's see now how long the nerves of the English can take it,' wrote Goebbels. He directed William Joyce and the black 'English' transmitters to spread panic; and he told the 'straight' media that they were to stick to the official version that the Luftwaffe was only attacking military targets.³⁰ On Sunday the eighth, Reuters agency announced that seven hundred Londoners had died the day before.³¹ As Hitler visited the Goebbels family at Schwanenwerder on Sunday night, Churchill's bombers threw another modest punch at Berlin. The propaganda minister ordered their overseas services to exaggerate the results wildly to generate fresh alibis for what was to come.³² The *New York Times* headlines read '1,500 NAZI PLANES BOMB LONDON' on Sunday, and 'MIGHTY NAZI AIR FLEET AGAIN BOMBS LONDON—DOCKS AND PLANTS HIT, FIRES RAGE' on the following day. London, it seemed to Goebbels, was one huge inferno. How long could its citizens take it?

Over lunch on the tenth Hitler, still undecided, again asked the one question that mattered: Would Britain give in? 'The military share my viewpoint,' recorded Goebbels: 'A city of eight million cannot stand this for long. . . . We have wiped the smirk off their lordships' faces. We shall thrash them until they whimper for mercy.'³³

That night scattered British bombs fell around the Reichstag. Damage was almost non-existent. Annoyed that Churchill's raids were proving so puny, Goebbels ordered his pyrotechnic experts to stage more convincing fires on top of the Brandenburg Gate, Berlin's famous landmark, and then summoned the press photographers—'to supply,' as he unblushingly told his diary, 'an alibi for our own coming massive raid on the London government quarter.'³⁴ When a German bomb shortly after damaged one wing of Buckingham Palace in London, Goebbels directed his agencies to claim that there were 'secret military targets' near by.³⁵ The neutral press duly equated this raid with the British raid on the Reichstag. 'Thus we are not barbarians,' Goebbels congratulated himself. 'We are just two superpowers knocking the living daylight out of each other.'³⁶

Hitler too was taken in. Furious about the raid on the Brandenburg Gate and his Reichstag he told Goebbels that he was now going to blast Churchill's ancient parliament to smithereens. Together they listened to the prime minister broadcast that evening. It was an insipid speech in Goebbels' opinion, riddled with vulgar abuse of his beloved Führer. 'Poor fool,' he commented: 'In his impotent fury he flails at a genius of whose greatness he has not the slightest inkling.'³⁷ Churchill however was every inch a match for him. Although he too knew from codebreaking that no German invasion was planned, he predicted a date for the event: It was an old but effective propaganda trick, raged Goebbels—Churchill could then claim a victory when no invasion came.³⁸ His admiration for Britain's indomitable prime minister grew. 'You can't help respecting him,' he wrote, 'in his bulldog way.'³⁹

Despite all Göring's efforts the British air defenses seemed intact. On September 15 the Luftwaffe dropped two hundred tons of bombs on

London, and let that figure to 'because the losses faced in ten days earlier losses were to 1 was becoming all German raid helping enemy allowed the blazing streets German press black transmit armchairs and Grosvenor House department he throes.'⁴⁵

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London, and lost forty-three planes in the battle. Churchill coolly inflated that figure to 155. 'Churchill has got to cheat,' Goebbels reasoned, 'because the devastation in London is so appalling.'⁴⁰ The Luftwaffe's losses faced him with a problem however. He had virtuously ruled only ten days earlier that even if the Luftwaffe was worsted on some days, its losses were to be faithfully reported.⁴¹ But now the Luftwaffe's impotence was becoming something of a liability to Germany's image. For a start, all German radio stations now had to shut down at ten P.M. to avoid helping enemy bombers.⁴² Unabashed, the obese Reichsmarschall allowed the world's press to report that he had personally flown over the blazing streets of London in a Stuka dive bomber. Goebbels forbade the German press to print the story ('for obvious reasons').⁴³ He told his black transmitters to remark on the luxury air raid shelters, complete with armchairs and dance floors, installed for London's plutocrats beneath the Grosvenor House hotel.⁴⁴ 'Not yet,' was his terse assessment when his department heads asked whether the British capital was entering its death throes.⁴⁵

In mid-September 1940 Hitler still hoped that prolonging this blitz would do the trick. 'If eight million inhabitants go crazy,' he said, 'that can bring about a catastrophe. If we get good weather and can neutralize the enemy air force, then even a small-scale invasion can work wonders.'⁴⁶ Over lunch on the twenty-third however Goebbels heard him admit that they were nowhere near achieving air superiority.⁴⁷ The Luftwaffe was losing its finest crews, as its losses over southern England mounted. Hitler compared it with a boxing match. After slogging on for round after round, one pugilist might suddenly slump to the canvas.⁴⁸ To Goebbels however the London blitz began to reek of uglier examples in history, and Major Rudolf Wodarg, his Luftwaffe liaison officer, put the same fear into words. 'London,' he said, 'is turning into a Verdun of the air.'⁴⁹

GOEBBELS was not really prepared for this situation. He spent October 1940 in the doldrums, becalmed in a silent, unreasoning hatred of Ribbentrop, of Dietrich, of the plutocrats in London, and of the Jews. He was waiting—waiting for the air war to end, waiting for the renovation of No. 20 Hermann-Göring Strasse to be completed, waiting for Magda, yet again, to give birth. 'Mothers in labor are like soldiers on the battlefield,' he decided.⁵⁰ The British bombers remorselessly gnawed away at Germany. Often a single nuisance raider triggered a stampede by four and a half million Berliners into their makeshift shelters.⁵¹ Berlin's flak defenses were strengthened. On October 2 a detonation not far from Lanke marked the end of one British bomber. Goebbels saw the flattened pile of twisted metal the next day and the charred remains of the three aviators, and shuddered.⁵² The air staff now asked Goebbels not to announce when the British missed their targets. Goebbels was baffled. 'First we give them the run of our air waves,' he commented, referring to the ten P.M. radio curfew, 'and now we are voluntarily to abstain from rebutting their propaganda lies.'⁵³

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He traveled to France, at Göring's invitation. He took tea in the Edouard Rothschild palace—the château, replete with pheasants, was now a Luftwaffe command post—and relished the irony of the situation.⁵⁴ Fatter than ever and aglitter with medals, Göring showed him round Paris. They swapped pet-hate stories about Ribbentrop; Goebbels noticed how many German uniforms there were as they strolled along the boulevards and enjoyed the sensation their presence was creating. At the Casino de Paris the crippled gauleiter goggled at the open display of such statuesque nudity. 'We could never put on a show like that in Berlin,' he decided.⁵⁵ Visiting Field Marshal Hugo Sperrle, the bulky, monocled Third Air Fleet commander at Deauville, Goebbels decided that like Göring he too was a real comrade, a devil of a fellow, and his men were just *fabelhaft*.⁵⁶

It is worth emphasizing those contemporary words, because in July 1944 he would recall only the sumptuousness of this peacetime international watering hole—how Sperrle had crammed his face with caviar canapés and roared, 'In fourteen days all life in London will have been extinguished.... I am telling you. They'll suffocate in their own crap.' He plied the propaganda minister with agents' reports, one of which spoke of the fine ladies being forced to pee in Hyde Park as London's water mains ran dry. Goebbels voiced skepticism (or so he claimed in 1944) that that would be sufficient inconvenience to bring down a great world empire.⁵⁷

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WHILE Dr Joseph Goebbels is staring at naked showgirls in October 1940 in Paris, his wife, pregnant in Berlin with their sixth child, has had to return to the clinic with heart problems.⁵⁸ It is mid-November before she is discharged. Her father writes to her: Facing renewed surgery, he is obliged to draw up a will; he is leaving to her the estate at Remagen—he does not mention Joseph at all.⁵⁹

Magda's life is anything but easy, and for all his attempts at camouflage Goebbels' diary cannot conceal it. A candle still glows dimly in her heart for Karl Hanke. Her son Harald is now a troublesome adolescent; perhaps the paratroops will make a man out of him.⁶⁰ Goebbels privately reflects that it could do wonders for his image if Harald should die in action. Of his daughters, his favorite is still Helga.⁶¹ For more mature female company, he invites the Countess Faber-Castell out to Lanke with her husband as soon as Magda has gone; the countess is a captivating twenty-three-year-old whom he has known for many years. She entertains him with chansons and music—'She is bewitching,' writes Goebbels wistfully.⁶²

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Once Magda struggles briefly out of bed to rejoin him. 'When you see eye to eye with her,' writes Goebbels, 'she is a regular guy and a real comrade.'⁶³ It is the kind of praise his diary has lavished only on Göring or Sperrle before. On his forty-third birthday she presents him with a fifth daughter, Heide. His family is now complete.

On Magda's birthday in November 1940 Hitler himself turns up for her little dinner party and they proudly show him over their now finished

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ministerial mansion at No. 20 Hermann-Göring Strasse. No fewer than 117 construction workers have been laboring on it during these historic weeks.⁶⁴ Thick carpets, tapestries, and velvet or silken wall hangings supplied by the exquisite United Workshops of Munich deaden every sound. In the largest salon are seats for 140; the same number can sit at tables in the Blue Gallery, with eighty-two more at the top table. The huge desk in his study has cost 8,417 marks, around two thousand dollars.⁶⁵ The globe of the world is modeled on one he has seen in the radio building but—given his waiflike, five-foot-four stature—it is a more low-slung model. In the garden are marble sculptures by Professor Fritz Klimsch and a bronze nude by Arno Breker. All the telephones are white; on his instructions all have had their 'engaged' indicator-lamps removed. He does not want it to be known when he is telephoning.⁶⁶

He has commissioned no less lavish works in the ministry building itself, on Wilhelms Platz. Work is suspended briefly in November as the interior decorators are called away to work on the special luxurious trains of Hitler and Göring. Goebbels orders that there are to be no flushing toilets in the space next to his personal radio studio, to avoid inappropriate noises during his broadcasts to the Greater German Reich.⁶⁷

At the same time nearly two hundred sub-contractors have labored to complete his mansion at Lanke, the Haus am Bogensee (which stands to this day). He has converted the former guardhouse used by his bodyguard Kaiser into a handsome oblong wood cabin fifty feet long and thirty feet wide, as a guesthouse for two families. The architect's file contains his instructions dated August 6, 1940 for incubators and bird-tables to be erected in the surrounding woods.⁶⁸ The new gatehouse will cost thirty thousand marks; alterations to the cinema, drawing room, and Magda's private bedroom one hundred thousand; a twenty-five foot by sixty-five foot swimming pool, twenty-four thousand; and a children's wing, 140,000. By the end of October 1940 the grand total cost of work in hand is 2,663,052.58 marks. Mosquito control, road building, and radio equipment will bring the total to three million. Understandably his diary betrays a certain nervousness as the bills mount.⁶⁹ The diary cannot conceal his eighteenth-century tapestries purchased from France and the Low Countries, nor the paintings by Van Dyck, nor the Goya obtained from 'French private property,' but all these are no doubt paid for by the ministry.⁷⁰

Ministers it seems are endemically blind to their own corruption. Through his friend Max Winkler, Dr Goebbels controls the film industry. Early in November he notes that Winkler has seen Göring and has taken care of the Lanke problem.⁷¹ At about the same time Winkler gives him a 'belated' birthday present of two magnificent black Trakehn geldings, with a matching carriage. No doubt coincidentally Goebbels 'in conjunction with the film industry' donates to Winkler a garden cottage worth fifty thousand marks upon his birthday.⁷² By November 30 checks totaling 2.3 million marks have been paid toward the cost of Lanke. Thus he settled his debts over Lanke and his tax liabilities at one stroke. 'It

Aug
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July 2, 1940

was high time,' he wrote. 'If I were to die now, I'd just about break even. A fine reward for twenty years' service to the fatherland. My family would be in for quite a shock.'⁷³

RETURNING from France, Goebbels had dictated to his staff his belief that London was bluffing.⁷⁴ But each side was wallowing in self-deception. Ward Price announced that the British raids had now killed 1,700 Berliners; Goebbels told his overseas services to make plain that the real death roll in Berlin so far was seventy-seven.⁷⁵ Göring's bombers had killed seven thousand Londoners during September alone. But as Goebbels privately realized, the British were tough: 'They're still holding out.'⁷⁶ Touring public shelters in Berlin on the first night of November he found signs that nerves were getting more frayed.⁷⁷ Once again he could only hope that Hitler knew what he was up to.

July 2

Hitler did know, but again he had not initiated Dr Goebbels. He had decided as early as July 1940 to attack Russia. Even in December Goebbels still regarded Britain as 'our last remaining enemy.'⁷⁸ After their Black Forest conference on July 2, when Hitler had evidently voiced to him his annoyance that Stalin had annexed parts of Romania, Goebbels mused in his diary: 'The Slavs are spreading out right across the Balkans. . . . Perhaps we shall have to go to war again later, against the Soviets.'⁷⁹ At the end of that month he had warned the gauleiters to squelch any such rumors.⁸⁰ He and Hitler were both intrigued by the newsreel images of the Soviet-Finnish winter war just ended: The Red Army seemed temptingly primitive.⁸¹ 'Bolshevism is World Enemy No. 1,' Goebbels told Hitler. 'We are bound to collide sooner or later.'⁸² Hitler agreed, but still he lied to Goebbels, saying that he was transferring army divisions to the east only on a better-safe-than-sorry basis.⁸³ 'He says quite spontaneously,' recorded Goebbels after Hitler had revealed his contempt for Moscow, 'that he trusts blindly and implicitly in our future.' The time was coming, Goebbels gathered, when old scores with Moscow were to be settled.⁸⁴

Nov 13

To forestall Stalin Hitler packed German troops into Romania and Finland in September. 'The Führer is determined,' observed Goebbels, 'not to relinquish any more of Europe to Russia.'⁸⁵ During October 1940 his diary revealed no hint of the intensive military preparations already afoot. Learning, to his surprise, that Hitler had invited the Soviet foreign minister Vyacheslav M. Molotov to Berlin, Goebbels saw it only in terms of a slap in the face to Britain.⁸⁶ He did not approve of Molotov. He instructed Berlin's S.A. not to provide guards of honor, and he did nothing to mobilize the cheering crowds that Ribbentrop had requested.⁸⁷ Hitler invited him to lunch with their Soviet guests on November 13. The Russian foreign minister seemed clever, even artful; his skin was of a waxy, yellow pallor. He listened politely to Goebbels through an interpreter for two hours, but scarcely even grunted in reply. After lunch Goebbels let fly to his private staff his scorn of Molotov, with his 'school

janitor's face;
his own fruit!
'The Soviet
prove fateful:
the-peg.'⁸⁸

1940

janitor's face;' he paced angrily up and down behind his desk, mimicking his own fruitless attempt at making conversation.

'The Soviets,' he snapped, in a dismissive generalization that was to prove fateful for Germany, 'are like their suits. They are cheap, and off-the-peg.'⁶⁸

10: A Few Choice Drops of Poison

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40: A Few Choice Drops of Poison

HE no longer spoke to Ribbentrop. A state of armed truce existed between them. The two ministers insulted each other by proxy and wounded by petty, bureaucratic devices when they could.¹ 'Everybody has their own daydream for when this war is over,' Goebbels would write. 'Mine is: To loaf around and sleep and make music and read fine books; to lie in the sun; not to pick up a newspaper; and to hear nothing whatever about the foreign ministry.'² Ribbentrop fired off a ten-page missive at him in February 1940, but Goebbels disdained even to reply, marveling that his old enemy had time for such things, and calling him a megalomaniac.³ ('A sick man,' he assessed later, 'childishly stuck-up and pompous, with little behind the façade.')4 Ribbentrop then wrote a twelve-page letter demanding that Goebbels turn over all foreign-language broadcasting to his ministry.⁵ After Holland surrendered he tried to snatch the powerful Hilversum transmitter from under Goebbels' nose.⁶ When Goebbels sent out one of his best propagandists, Werner Wächter—destroyer of the Berlin synagogues—to organize in Paris, open warfare with Ribbentrop was the result.⁷ As a direct snub to him, Goebbels set up a Reichspropaganda-Amt 'Ausland' (Abroad) to match those attached to each gau, under Felix Schmidt-Decker.⁸ Learning that the *Börsenzeitung* had feted Ribbentrop as a second Bismarck, Goebbels ordered Fritzsche to ensure ('in Ribbentrop's own interest') that it did not happen again.⁹

In November 1940 there was a ludicrous show-down, and almost a shoot-out, between the two ministries. Pursuant to Hitler's decree of September 8, 1939 Ribbentrop had emplaced liaison units in various propaganda agencies like the Berlin shortwave radio station at No. 77 Kaiserdamm. Goebbels refused to tolerate these 'spies' and ordered them out early in December 1940.¹⁰ Ribbentrop sent them back in, backed by his own fifteen-man S.S. bodyguard, with orders to use force if necessary, and he then sent Goebbels a telegram from his château at Fuschl telling him what he had done. In a paroxysm of rage Goebbels appealed to Himmler.¹¹ Over the next week he whipped up the entire Reich chancellery into a froth of indignation and Timmler's unit was again evicted, this time for good.¹² Ribbentrop retired to lick his wounds and cast about for revenge.

HITLER had lost the strategic initiative that November of 1940. Göring

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had given up hope of defeating Britain in the air and taken six weeks' leave. With Milch in command the Luftwaffe bombers battered away at London, Coventry, and Birmingham. 'When will that *Kreatur* Churchill finally capitulate?' wondered Goebbels. 'Britain can't take this for ever!'¹³ Reading up on that country's national character, however, he came across the ominous words phlegm and bovine dullness (*Stumpfsinn*). 'In their shoes,' he cursed, 'any other nation would have collapsed long ago.'¹⁴ In Hitler's private cinema they watched newsreels of London in flames. 'The British empire is self-destructing,' Hitler said. He now suggested that Britain was banking on Moscow.¹⁵ The war would continue all winter, he added. He would abstain from bombing over Christmas, in the hope of wrongfooting Churchill who would surely display no such restraint.¹⁶ 'After which,' wrote Goebbels, 'the British shall see reprisal raids until the tears run down their cheeks.'¹⁷

Italy's entry into the war—in mid-June, after France's defeat was assured—presented Goebbels with special problems.¹⁸ She had done so little even then that Goebbels had had to inspire rumors that this was at the Führer's specific request.¹⁹ In Greece, Albania, and Africa the Italians let down the Axis badly. Fearing ugly demonstrations from the ordinary Berliners, he had to discourage the Italians from participating in the next street collections for the Red Cross.²⁰ 'These are fine allies we've got into bed with,' he wrote.²¹ As Italy's rapid retreats degenerated into routs, he advised German radio to stop broadcasting Italian 'quick marches.'

Standing beside Hitler in the Borsig munitions works on December 10 he was relieved to hear him say, to loud cheers, that he was not going in for costly prestige victories—a veiled reference to his resolve not to risk an expedition across the English Channel.²² Hitler repeated this in a secret speech to all his gauleiters, including Goebbels, the next day. Putting a brave face on things he called the war as good as won. 'Not that he had wanted this war at all'—so Goebbels summarized his remarks—'and he would still agree to peace on an acceptable basis. Invasion not planned for the time being. Air supremacy necessary first. Hydrophobia. And he is not one for taking risks if things are possible without them. He wants to avoid heavy casualties.' Goebbels also heard Hitler refer briefly on this occasion to the Soviet Union—she was lurking in the wings, but he was undaunted. He was sending more troops to Romania, his only source of oil. 'We're not letting anybody in there,' he promised.²³

One week later Hitler signed the Barbarossa decree, instructing his generals to prepare a short sharp war against the Soviet Union. He dropped not a hint of this to Goebbels for four more months. Lunching at the chancellery the minister was puzzled to hear Hitler say that he 'hoped' the war would be over in 1941; Hitler again revealed the irrational dread that restrained him from a cross-Channel invasion. 'He's frightened of the water,' Goebbels realized again. 'He says he would undertake it only if he was in the direst straits.'²⁴

* * *

1940 → 1941

ON December 30, 1940 Goebbels pre-recorded his New Year's Eve broadcast, to avoid having to leave the comfort (and safety) of Lanke on the night.²⁵ His original script had read:

People would probably have called me a fool or a dreamer, or anything but a politician worthy of serious consideration, if I had prophesied on New Year's Eve 1939, when I spoke from this very spot to the German people, that at the end of the New Year then just dawning, 1940, the German front line would extend from Kirkenes to the Bay of Biscay . . . that Norway would have been taken under our wing as far as the Arctic Circle, that France would have suffered a total military defeat, and that Britain would be so stricken by the German counter-blockade and by our Luftwaffe's day-and-night reprisal raids on her vitals that, reeling under the hammer blows of the German armed forces, she would be struggling for naked survival and pleading with the rest of the world to help her out—even if only for a few more weeks.

Hitler, censoring his script, scratched out the last word of this lengthy sentence and wrote *months*; he also pedantically corrected Goebbels' errors of grammar and style. When, moreover, Goebbels had written that only one thought inspired them, of victory—'For that we shall work and we shall fight, *until our last enemy lies shattered on the ground*'—Hitler changed it to read '*until the onslaught of our last enemy has been repulsed*.' Goebbels' boast, 'Never shall we capitulate—never,' was scratched out altogether.²⁶

THE new year opened on a low key. Goebbels found himself further than ever from his old intimate relationship with Hitler. Italy lost both Bardia and Tobruk. His diary makes no mention of Rommel's expedition to Libya until the end of January 1941 or of Rommel himself until three weeks after that; so Hitler had not told him of that diversion either.²⁷

A new trade pact was signed with Moscow; unaware of the sinister strategic purpose with which Hitler had vested it, Goebbels saw it only as another slap in the face for Churchill.²⁸ His admiration for the British prime minister remained undiminished, particularly after another belligerent speech by him to parliament in December 1940. He wrote a flaming attack on Churchill for *Das Reich* but ordered the rest of the press to lay off him for fear of creating a dangerous legend around the man.²⁹ 'Our press is publishing things which absolutely speak for the old swine, for instance scurrilous things about his lifestyle which are not at all ludicrous or even contemptible. He has some attractive features,' admitted Goebbels privately, 'which we don't want to underscore in the press. You've either got to hate your enemy or expose him to ridicule.'³⁰

When Hitler returned to Berlin on January 28, 1941 he did not at once

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The Life of the Bee

after-taste, as it were, of her one marriage-flight, from the union of the male and female principle that thus comes to pass in her being. Here again nature, never so ingenious, so cunningly prudent and diverse, as when contriving her snares of love, will not have failed to provide a certain pleasure as a bait in the interest of the species. And yet let us pause for a moment, and not become the dupes of our own explanation. For indeed, to attribute an idea of this kind to nature, and regard that as sufficient, is like flinging a stone into an unfathomable gulf we may find in the depths of a grotto, and imagining that the sounds it creates as it falls shall answer our every question, or reveal to us aught beside the immensity of the abyss.

When we say to ourselves, "This thing is of nature's devising; it is she has ordained this marvel; those are her desires

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The Life of the Bee

solitary bees of the Gastrilegidæ family, that not only does the *Osmia* know in advance the sex of the egg she will lay, but that this sex is "optional for the mother, who decides it in accordance with the space of which she disposes; this space being often governed by chance and not to be modified; and she will deposit a male egg here and a female there." I shall not enter into the details of the great French entomologist's experiments, for they are exceedingly minute, and would take us too far. But whichever be the hypothesis we prefer to accept, either will serve to explain the queen's inclination to lay her eggs in workers' cells, without it being necessary to credit her with the least concern for the future.

It is not impossible that this slave-mother, whom we are inclined to pity, may be indeed a great amorist, a great voluptuary, deriving a certain enjoyment, an

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The Young Queens

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About a week has passed since the departure of the old queen. The royal nymphs asleep in the capsules are not all of the same age, for it is to the interest of the bees that the births should be nicely gradationed, and take place at regular intervals, in accordance with their possible desire for a second swarm, a third, or even a fourth. The workers have for some hours now been actively thinning the walls of the ripest cell, while the young queen, from within, has been simultaneously gnawing the rounded lid of her prison. And at last her head appears; she thrusts herself forward;

that a special gland in the nurses' head secretes. But after a few days the worker larvæ are weaned, and put on a coarser diet of honey and pollen; whereas the future queen, until she be fully developed, is copiously fed on the precious milk known as "royal jelly."

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The Progress of the Race

has time to erect solid and well-stored dwellings before the arrival of autumn. If left to themselves, it is clear that these hives and their offshoots would have been the only ones to survive the rigours of winter, which would almost invariably have destroyed colonies animated by different instincts; and the law of restricted swarming would therefore by slow degrees have established itself in our northern races. But it is precisely these prudent, opulent, acclimatised hives that man has always destroyed in order to possess himself of their treasure. He has permitted only — he does so to this day in ordinary practice — the feeblest colonies to survive; degenerate stock, secondary or tertiary swarms, which have just barely sufficient food to subsist through the winter, or whose miserable store he will supplement perhaps with a few droppings of honey. The result is,

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H in '41

parent colony time to recover before cold weather sets in. People logic and bee logic are often at odds.

Bees occasionally violate the rules by swarming in late summer when there is not time enough to collect sufficient honey to see them through the coming winter. This is no more easily explained than those individuals, considered so steady and responsible, who suddenly take off, leaving behind all that once meant so much to them, and who knows what was really in their hearts and minds all the while they were taken for granted?

Such perverse behavior cannot be explained in man or bee. Is it as irrational as it appears, or is there a logic unknown to us, as observers? Are bees, like people, also subject to whim? Is there some flaw in the original programming, or are there circumstances about which we have neither knowledge nor control?

Bees, whatever their idiosyncrasies, never swarm without giving notice. One, two, up to a dozen swarm cells suddenly appear. Once a colony commits itself to swarming, it is difficult to get the bees to change their minds. But the decision is not irrevocable, and chance may play a role. If the weather turns chilly, or rain and cold persist for several days, the swarm may delay its departure; in such cases, the parent hive keeps the virgin princesses captive in their sealed prisons and the rest of the colony bides its time.

On the first sunny day after the weather clears, the swarm will take off. However, for no apparent reason, the colony may tear down the swarm cells, killing the princesses within, and go about its business as usual. But this is rare. Most colonies, having decided to swarm, are determined to go; the voice they hear is not easily resisted.

We assume that the decision to swarm is made in the hive councils. In the final minutes before departure there is a sense of expectancy. The buzzing in the hive becomes louder, almost ominous. Large numbers cluster on the front of the hive. Others gather on the landing board, facing the entrance, among

H in '41

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them drones making a raucous sound; the noisy drones are believed to stimulate the swarming impulse, like drummers charging up patriotic sentiment. The old queen has ceased laying eggs several days earlier to lose weight so she can fly. All of the bees appear larger than usual, abdomens extended with honey to get the new city under way.

As if at a signal, the great moment is at hand. . . .

FORTY-SEVEN



I am working in the garden when I notice unusual agitation and excitement in the adjacent beeyard. I am still new to beekeeping, so I attach no importance to it and continue weeding. The noise becomes louder, more insistent. I go to the fence to see what is going on. Bees are flying all over. At first I think one of the hives is being robbed. But the problem is more serious.

The buzzing gains in volume. It becomes a roar. More bees are now swirling about in wild, swinging patterns. Suddenly there is a mass exodus from the hive. I have never seen so many bees at one time. They make an alarming sound, flying wilder patterns, as if gone berserk. And yet, they do not appear angry or menacing.

I am not alone witnessing this drama. On the adjoining lot a new house is under construction and today the well is being dug. The carpenters and well-diggers have heard the bees and stop work to watch. Mouths hang open. The carpenters stand far back, ready to take flight if the bees attack. But the well-digger joins me in the midst of the tumult, leaving his crew. He and I went to bee school together and he also keeps a hive of bees.

approximately nine pounds, or three times the usual bought package. Most swarms are smaller, usually no more than one-third of the parent colony. They tend to be smaller in cool weather, larger when it is hot. I read about one that consisted of an estimated 110,000 bees, but that could have been an entire colony that took off in desperation because its hive was honey-bound, leaving no room for the bees or new stores.

Swarming leaves unanswered many questions: Who decides to swarm and when? Who goes and who stays? How is the selection made? Are the emigrants like volunteers for the military, caught up in patriotic fervor or slogans? Who is in charge of logistics? Is there a formula or mechanism of selection to assure a suitable proportion of young to old, a blending of skills necessary to forge a new city?

Can we believe that the answers to the questions posed represent a consensus arrived at without any central authority? That the entire colony is so attuned to the silent voice of the distant past that each member acts spontaneously, each knowing instinctively her individual role, whether to go or stay without consultation or directive?

Efforts to resolve some of the mystery surrounding swarming have brought more questions than answers. In one experiment members of a departing swarm were dabbed with paint and then prevented from leaving. A few days later they were permitted to depart, but many bees from the original group dropped out the second time; and some that were not going initially went the next time.

Were the recruits, if such they are, first seduced by whim or fervor and then had sobering second thoughts? Was it a cooling of patriotic ardor, and some who lagged the first time were aflame with such fervor the second time? Was the selection process revised by the leaders, making it more or less attractive or enticing to different candidates? Did the time lag itself have an effect because of the aging of the members? Or did unknown and unsuspected factors change the swarm's makeup?

The only thing known for sure is that those departing risk all by sacrificing everything they hold dear, taking with them only enough provender to get started again, exchanging security and wealth for uncertainty and perhaps disaster. Such is the power of the swarming impulse.

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bees relative to German soldiers
FORTY-NINE
in Poland & the Ukraine.*



While instinct is the primary cause of swarming, it is believed to have several triggering causes, among them crowding, lack of ventilation, a failing queen (colonies with old queens are more likely to swarm), weather conditions, the supply of nectar, and the predisposition of the bees themselves; some races tend to swarm more than others, black bees being more prone to swarm than the yellows. Some colonies are also more inclined to swarm, suggesting a genetic influence that may be altered by changing queens.

Ironically, for a beekeeper, success can be its own worst enemy. The stronger a colony is, the more likely it is to swarm. If it has overwintered well, with minimal losses, and there are large stores of provender, the nursery full of brood, the odds of swarming are increased. They are increased further if the colony is fed sugar water in the spring to encourage it to raise more brood. The beekeeper is caught in a dilemma largely of his own making: prodding the bees to multiply their number, thus encouraging swarming, and at the same time trying to dissuade them from taking off. Ultimately he may help bring about the result he wants to avoid.

Beekeepers, understandably, do not see swarming from the bees' point of view and continually try to outmaneuver them, devising countless techniques and equipment in an effort to thwart swarming; these range from ingenious mechanical con-

THIRTY-SIX



In the hive's division of labor, no member is as specialized or vital as the queen. She alone is indispensable, her fate tied to that of the colony. A corps of workers attends her, caring for her every need, but we do not know whether this is a position of honor, or merely another job assumed or assigned by the unconscious hive logic called instinct or local authority. It is likely that no task performed by young bees is considered more important than caring for the queen.

Nonetheless, we are aware of no special privileges or prerogatives accorded members of her retinue. Indeed they function more as servants than as ladies in waiting, cleaning up her wastes, feeding, grooming, caressing and bathing her, licking her with their tongues, as she works almost without pause in her mechanical egg laying.

Much has been made of the circle of a dozen or so attendants surrounding the queen as she lays eggs. New beekeepers are told that the way to find the elusive queen is by first locating her circle of attendants. The attendants, it is claimed, never turn their backs on the queen, as befits a royal presence, ever encouraging her to greater efforts as she moves from cell to cell, comb to comb, endlessly laying eggs around the clock during the busy season, even as she "sleeps," or does what passes for sleep.

Later I learned that the circle, as usually described, is more romantic myth than fact. Less fanciful accounts point out that the attendants gather around the queen only when she is being fed. This makes sense; the colony always controls how often and how much the queen is fed, as this regulates her egg laying. Too, if the attendants never broke ranks, it would repre-

sent many lost bee hours of work, contrary to hive principles.

Because of the enormous physical drain of laying so many eggs, the queen must eat frequently. The circle forms. An attendant opens her mouth, exuding a tidbit of honey. The queen flicks in her tongue for a snack, hardly breaking stride in her unremitting egg laying, a hive version of eating on the job. Another attendant also thrusts in her tongue for a quick pickup. There seems to be no objection to this sharing of the royal repast, so it must be fair game, a part of the job. Drones often take their food in the same manner, too lazy to go to the honey stores to feed themselves, a practice tolerated by their sisters, who may mark it up as another score to be settled in the fall.

The queen progresses from cell to cell, comb to comb, pausing only to inspect each crib to make sure that it meets her standards before depositing an egg, or perhaps to make sure she isn't confusing a drone cell for a worker crib so she will lay the proper egg. Royalty is notoriously absent-minded and it does take a bit of concentration to avoid mistakes. Occasionally a crib does not measure up, and the queen moves along to the next cell without leaving an egg behind. Her entourage follows, the committee members apparently satisfied with the queen's decision, and she continues to lay eggs, driven by the invisible and indefinable force that gives her no rest.

THIRTY-SEVEN



People unfamiliar with bees often think the queen rules the hive. Long ago it was believed that she was actually the king, with all of a sovereign's authority. This misconception was probably due to her being the largest mem-

of the colony

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traptions to the barbaric practice of clipping the queen's wings. I have never been convinced that clipping is painless, as claimed; at least I have heard no testimony from a clipped queen to that effect, and nerve endings in the wings suggest that the operation may be painful. Even if painless, the bees themselves must find it displeasing to have their queen mutilated; a bee born with a deformity is immediately done away with.

The most common method of trying to prevent swarming is to cut out queen cells and even to destroy drone cells before the bees take off, but this is an almost hopeless task. Swarm cells must be eliminated every few days, and as soon as they are removed the bees build new ones. This is a bludgeoning approach to force nature into submission.

Some beekeepers try to outmaneuver the bees by various other stratagems, attempting to deal with the primary urge rather than its symptoms. One involves a device with little gates that must be opened and closed on various schedules to change the hive dynamics and thus thwart the swarm impulse; it was invented by a British beekeeper name Snelgrove, who wrote a book titled *The Control and Prevention of Swarming*. I built one of Snelgrove's contraptions but it was so complicated that I never installed it, fearing that the bees might become unbalanced trying to figure out which gate to use, and I was never quite sure of what Snelgrove had in mind.

Other stratagems are intended to deceive the bees into thinking they have swarmed when they have never really left home, or keep them so preoccupied that they forget or neglect what they had in mind. A bee must keep her wits about her every minute if she is not to be taken in by her wily keeper.

Modern technology is now asserting itself in beekeeping, as it is changing most facets of life. In Great Britain, according to my bee newsletter, beekeepers have taken to installing microphones in hives. When about to swarm, bees make a distinctive sound, alerting the keeper so he can stop them. Somehow this seems a bit sneaky, spying on the bees in this way, bugging

them, as it were, unworthy of the British sense of fair play. I can't imagine bees giving into this sort of thing without making a fight of it.

Beekeeping, like most human endeavors affecting nature, has a primary law: tampering begets tampering. Nature, as we now recognize, is delicately balanced. When one change is made, others must follow to accommodate the first disruption. This often sets in motion a chain of unexpected events which ultimately bring about the very result the original tampering was intended to prevent, or worse.

My own feelings about swarm prevention are mixed. I see it from both points of view. It is not easy to reconcile "Stop them at any cost" and "Live and let live." I used to cut out swarm cells, divide colonies, manipulate frames, rearrange hive bodies, and engage in other skulduggeries in an effort to outwit the bees. Now I do nothing. They can take off if that is their desire.

This, I realize, is an attitude of luxury, an indulgence. Bees are a hobby and not my living. If I am fortunate enough to be around when they issue forth with that splendid roar and wild tumult, I merely sit under a tree and enjoy the show. Doing nothing may be my role in the grand design.

FIFTY



Generally, only one swarm issues from a hive, accompanied by the old queen, and this is known as the primary swarm. There should be only this one swarm. That is the rule. However, there may be a second swarm, and that is a perversion of the rule. In some colonies the swarming instinct is so powerful that a colony may develop "swarm fever," throwing off swarm after swarm, a kind of biological anarchy

1941
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7
MBF

purposely contrived a special plan to make bees completely and inextricably interdependent.

THIRTY



Cooperation is programmed into a bee's genes. Each colony functions less like a group of integrated individuals than a multitude of cells making up a single organism. This interlocking structure is the most distinguishing characteristic of social bees, just as competitiveness dominates most other forms of life. Almost from the moment she emerges from her crib, a bee plays a community role.

Because life is so brief, with so much to do, little time can be wasted becoming acclimated. After spending the first day gaining strength and learning her way around the hive, she goes immediately to work. Her life is divided roughly into two phases, first as house bee, and then, in maturity, at about the halfway mark, as forager. She will continue to work the fields into her dotage and until early death.

On the second day of life, now stronger and her orientation completed, she dips eagerly into the stored honey for her first meal and begins her first job, as if trained for it. For a couple of days she performs menial tasks, cleaning and polishing empty brood cells, "sweeping the floor," and so on. She then becomes a nurse, making the numerous trips to feed newly hatched larvae, alert to provide the proper formulas to embryo workers, drones, and queens. The frequent feedings in tiny amounts are necessary to keep the food from drying out so it can be absorbed through the grubs' transparent skins.

After about a week as a nurse, our young worker makes way for new nurse bees and starts performing more demanding hive

chores, among them receiving and storing nectar brought in by field bees, fanning honey, attending to the queen, capping cells, or anything else that needs doing. During the second week of life she is able to produce tiny wax flakes on her abdomen, providing the material of which honeycomb is made, functioning as architect, builder, and artist. As the glands that produced royal jelly dry up, the wax glands become active.

By the end of the second week she has matured and lost that soft, downy appearance. She is now an adult bee approaching her prime, ready to assume greater responsibilities. She begins taking her turn as a guard at the hive entrance, charged with repelling invaders or sounding the alarm in case of attack, ready to give up her life in defense of the hive. At this time she also prepares for the second phase of her life, as a fielder, joining in the "play flights" in front of the hive, making short excursions to get acquainted with the area and developing those powerful wings for the demanding and hazardous job ahead; she is a journeyman in every sense of the word.

The transition from house bee to forager marks a time to begin her life's work. Now those valiant wings come into use, so quickly to wear out. The job of a fielder is the most strenuous and dangerous in the hive; she must travel long distances for provender, up to nine miles if necessary but rarely more than two or three. She and her kind are prey for birds and other predators; they may be ambushed by enemies lurking in flowers, or killed or injured by storms, mishaps, or insecticides.

Most field bees die outside the hive, with their boots on, as it were. The worker must fly low to avoid winds, burdened by her heavy load of nectar or pollen. The powerful but fragile wings are torn while dodging through shrubs and brambles and worn by constant friction entering and backing out of the flowers she raids and the constant beating in flight and fanning at the hive entrance at night to evaporate moisture from honey.

There we have the chronology of the bee. I have seen her

1916
* Remember her father's
description

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1941 Speer

14 • WILLIAM LONGGOOD

certain circumstances even she is eliminated in a dark bee plot euphemistically known as "supersedure," which usually involves the queen's murder by her own daughters, but more about that later. The most ordinary colony is better organized than the most efficient man-made factory. And yet, even these models of nature's organizational efficiency and industry are sometimes less than perfect, beset by such human failings as sloppy workmanship, useless endeavor, and what appears to be poor management or faulty judgment. Bee colonies, like human societies, vary in the standards they set for themselves and in the life-styles they adopt. Some prosper while others barely manage to struggle along, existing on the bee equivalent of welfare provided by their keeper, and some fail altogether, often victims of their own shortcomings.

Worker bees make up almost the entire population of the hive. These are females that lack the ability to produce a fertilized egg necessary to generate a female worker bee like themselves. There is only one queen to a hive, although there have been cases in which a second or even a third have been tolerated, but this is so rare that it suggests some kind of perversion of nature's intentions.

* The queen's only function is to lay eggs, as many as two thousand a day. Indeed, she is known as an "egg-laying machine." Completing the makeup of the hive are those comic-tragic, but vital, lusting clowns, the drones. There are relatively few of them in each hive and the number may represent less a necessity than a bee equivalent of conspicuous consumption. Drones are males conceived from unfertilized eggs laid by the queen. Their sole function is to mate with virgin queens, and most live and die without ever fulfilling this mission. The drone lives a life of bullying, nonproductive ease, like the worst free-loading relative, unless summoned to duty, in which case he may sacrifice his life, probably to his own surprise and dismay. For their intemperate ways, the surviving males eventually get their comeuppance in a bloody fall rite known as the

* without any struggles
about 3 per

1892

THE QUEEN MUST DIE • 15

"massacre of the drones," a drama that will unfold here in its place.

A worker bee's existence is regulated by a biological timetable, which is one of the profound mysteries that govern a hive. During her brief life, she performs many diverse chores: scavenger, nurse, producer of wax, molder of honeycomb, housekeeper, forager, fanner, water carrier, undertaker, guard, warrior, and, finally, martyr. She passes from one of these roles to another, depending on age and experience. A bee is like a worker in industry who is rewarded for her experience and length of service with successive raises and promotions, until the employee is considered more liability than asset and the employer seeks to unload her and bring in a successor who is young, inexperienced, and inexpensive; success often bears a price tag of diminishing returns.

For the bee, indignity rarely accompanies old age. As noted previously, she either resolves the problem by working herself to death or is dispatched by her younger sisters. The climax role for a worker is that of forager, or field bee, gathering pollen and the nectar that will be converted into honey; but at the same time she is expected to perform other, often menial, hive duties. Efficiency and hive demands and not personal status or job assignment determine her roles throughout life and into death. We know of no prima donnas or egotists in the hive. The function of a bee is always contingent on community need.

Scientists believe that bees, next to humans, have the most elaborate social structure and specialization of labor in the animal kingdom, one far more complex and sophisticated than formerly thought. Only ants and termites approach bees in the intricacy of their societies.

For the multiple, specialized tasks a worker bee performs, she has no training or prior knowledge that we are aware of, but takes to each succeeding role naturally. How does this extraordinary progression come about? Is it genetic transference? Some unidentified dietary substance or secretion that is

Queen to social bees

1940? CK on euthenaria

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also 1945

responsible? Is it due to an abiding animus that dwells secretly in the hive, invisible and indecipherable, and provides this ability, this profound intelligence, that we observe without comprehending?

The mystery is compounded because each phase of a bee's development occurs on a fairly predictable timetable. One thing we know, as observers, is that from the moment of a bee's "birth" she is destined to work until she no longer can do so, but no one has the least notion what dictates this pattern of behavior. The queen and drones are equally condemned by the same invisible forces, although their roles differ. We watch the miracle that unfolds from their various labors with wonder but with little or no understanding of the origins or imperatives.

The colony, as noted, is ruled by one fixed law: those who do not or cannot work cannot remain in the hive and be a drain on its resources. There is no charity, no exception, no compassion. If a bee is born deformed, too weak, or not willing to work, it is ruthlessly killed or thrown out of the hive. The same fate awaits those who become too old or infirm to work. It also applies to victims of mishaps and heroines maimed in combat while guarding the hive against invaders.

There is, for the worker bee, no honorable retirement, no pension, no welfare program or reward for service to the community, no compromising of hive values. The individual bee means nothing. Only the continuing life of the colony counts. This is the first commandment of the hive—a manifestation of that mysterious and dispassionate force that guides all bee life. It is called, with little understanding of what it means, "the spirit of the hive."

The primary rule is inflexible: work or die.

1945 When the sting is taken out of Alois! skin Klam is full of love because Alf's palace guard & Eva are always near him when he wants

TWO



I have, at this writing, been keeping bees for more than ten years, and in that time have observed and read about them extensively. Like most beekeepers, I understand bees only superficially, and then on the terms they set. Any deeper understanding eludes me. Bees are complex creatures and over the centuries they have worked out many successful strategies that are unique in nature. Much has been learned through observation about what they do but little about why they do it. Like most species, bees tend to protect their secrets from those who would invade their privacy. Only slowly and grudgingly have bees let us learn anything about their private lives, but they reveal nothing about their inner councils; theirs is one of nature's most effective conspiracies of silence and secrecy.

I am not sure how most people get into beekeeping. Interest is kindled in one way or another: possibly they had a friend or relative who kept bees, read an article that interested them, or saw something on television. Bees and men are closely enough related, as fellow members of a life community, that there should be an atavistic interest in some degree, unless this mechanistic human society has smothered such human inclinations as remain to us. Most of us have been trained to ignore or distrust our instincts and feelings unless they can be scientifically substantiated.

My own introduction to beekeeping was accidental. My son, who grew up in the sixties, had left home and was raising his consciousness in a commune-like house in New Jersey. As part of the great experiment in natural living and self-sufficiency, my son and his friends decided to keep bees and bought a

GOD: ADOLF HITLER

²⁰ The main reason for that the ego of a border-f reconciling violent ex-protect itself from the epting both images. But roblem, for it serves to iffusion.

fering "tormenting self-oughout his life. A con-ity, coupled with doubts tions about self-control him to insist, over and at he was always com-ertions about his "iron ry cool under pressure. thers. Indeed, his whole ominating other people. ly reinforce splitting d is introjected by the introjected and claimed good: Aryan toughness, all the bad onto others, oftness. Projection pro-line patients—a terrify-veen good and bad, while the good. He felt com-iquitous enemy before it in his own image was served as an important enabled him to extern-ould have led to mental

onality helps to explain otic episodes, he never is. He was able to pro-lize them, and proclaim al policy.

rave suffered neurologi-res does not invalidate ality with a deeply split hat diagnosis. At some e physiological basis for ecific behavior of such ysician, trained in both lit-brain research: "We neralization about the s." Certainly a person's

From Private Neurosis to Public Policy

1940

entire personality and life history cannot be "explained" by neurol-ogy.³⁰

The theory that Adolf Hitler had a hyperactive right cerebral hemisphere does not explain why he hated the Jews with such incandescent fury; why he wanted to kill them all; why he needed aggressive war; why he was so fond of wolves, ravens, and lobsters or so infatuated with decapitation; why he was frightened by horses and terrified by the thought of sexual intercourse. Split-brain research cannot explain why the splitting of his ego took the specific forms and patterns which it did. Neurological findings, in short, may deepen and complement psychohistorical understanding; they cannot replace it.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ROOTS OF HITLER'S IDEOLOGY

My beliefs are my Movement
My faith is my Weapon

—Hitler, notes for a speech, (c. 1928)

Hitler's fantastic view of the world, it has often been pointed out, bore very little relationship to external reality. But it did correspond very closely to his own psychic needs. In this respect his fantasies were not unlike those of thousands of other mentally disturbed people. What was different about Hitler was that he was not given psychological treatment; he was granted the political power which enabled him to transform his private fantasies into objective reality.

Hitler's distinctive political ideas cast him as the heroic leader called by destiny to save the Motherland from the Jewish menace. His political theory institutionalized distrust and hatred; it preached aggressive warfare as the rule of life; it exalted brutality and demanded total obedience to a racist dictator.

There were many reasons why Hitler adopted such an ideology. But a primary reason was that it helped him meet personal psychological needs deeply rooted in infantile and childhood experience: bitter memories of conflict with parents; a primal scene trauma; resentment over childhood beatings and desertion; inadequacy felt as a monorchid; the suspicion that his father might have been "tainted" with Jewish blood and had thus corrupted his children; and the searing memory of his beloved mother's last illness and death while under the care of a Jewish doctor.

Mother and Motherland

Basic to Hitler's ideology was the idea that Germany was a living organism. Of course, the concept of social *Organismus* was not new — it was at least as old as the Romantics. But Hitler's unusual meta-

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march," she said hoarsely. "They knew he was not well. But they said he had to march. It took days to get down to the Leuchtenburg by Kahla, in Thuringia, where they were going to promote him to *Jungvolk*. His father is a Storm Trooper. He said the boy had to go. He did not want a weakling for a son. And now—"

From the cot came words—shrill, penetrating. "Let me die for Hitler. I must die for Hitler!" Over and over, pleading, accusing, beseeching, fighting against life, fighting the doctor, fighting to die.

"They told him at the ceremony that he had to die for Hitler," the mother continued. "And he's so young. . . ."

She broke then, sobbing. I looked again at the boy. His pinched face wore the expression of a Christian martyr dying for the Savior. His right hand was straight up now, stiff and unyielding. His lips kept forming the words his burning soul prompted him to utter:

"I must die for Hitler!" *Ich muss vor Hitler sterben!*

Dr. Schroeder bent low and gave his patient another injection. The cries became moans, and subsided.

"His father says if he dies, then he dies for Hitler," the mother said tonelessly.

"Now do you see what I mean?" asked Doktor Schroeder when we were again in the car. "He wants to die. What is this strange ideology that can even pervert instincts?"⁸⁴

During the war, a captured and badly wounded German prisoner was told by a French doctor that he was about to get a blood transfusion. The wounded prisoner replied: "I will not have my German blood polluted with French blood. I would rather die." And so he did.

Another mortally wounded young Nazi soldier was approached by a priest who was immediately rebuffed: "The Führer is my faith. I don't want anything from your church. But if you want to be good to me, get my Führer's picture out of my breast pocket." When the priest complied, the boy kissed the picture with the beatific expression usually attributed to saints and martyrs, and murmured, "My Führer, I am happy to die for you."⁸⁵

Such, in the main, were Hitler's political ideas: exaltation of the Führer and the degradation of democracy; militarism and war; conquest of *Lebensraum* and the enslavement of other people; anti-Semitism and racism; propaganda and terror to force a nation to do the will of one man.

In a later chapter we shall discuss how it was possible for such a person to attract millions of followers in a cultured country and to establish a society dedicated to such ideas. But first, let us seek further insight into the intellectual world of Adolf Hitler by noting the kinds of minds that attracted him and shaped his thinking.

1940
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this trinity was the

faith . . . concentrated strength . . . iron energy . . . bold determination."

In 1939 it was announced that "Adolf Hitler is the greatest German of all times." But that was not enough. Adulation waited until 1941 before it reached its apogee: "The Führer is the highest synthesis of his race. . . . He embodies the universalism of Goethe, the depth of Kant, the dynamism of Hegel, the patriotism of Fichte, the genius of Frederick II, the realism of Bismarck as well as the tumultuous inspiration of Wagner, the perspicacity of Spengler. He embodies the inspiration of Tannenberg . . . and the dash of *Sturm und Drang*." 72

All this raises questions that are as obvious as they are psychologically complex: What was the insatiable need within this person that required such total approval? Why all this craving for personal power? Why did Hitler condemn himself to infallibility?

Racial Theory and *Volkgemeinschaft*

Hitler's idea of race was the bedrock upon which all else depended. Struggle and conflict were important to him, but the crucial struggle of all history was racial; the *Führerprinzip* was important, but the mission of this leader was to establish a racially pure "New Order." He felt himself to be the very embodiment of that racial idea. He was not the representative of the German people; he was—somehow—the *Volk*, as he himself proclaimed: "*Ich bin das deutsche Volk!*"

Hitler was so preposterous and irrational when he spoke about race that he was never fully believed by eminently sensible critics. Yet he meant precisely what he said. In dozens of impassioned and sincere statements he promised the German people that he intended to establish a society based upon racial discrimination. He fulfilled that promise.

It is a simple matter to set forth his racial theory; it is not so easy to convey its importance to him as a person or to his government, where it took on the dimension of a historic force. We must listen to Hitler on this issue and take him very seriously. "The race question," he said, "not only furnishes the key to world history, but also to human culture as a whole." Mixture of the blood was to him the original sin and the cause for the decline of civilization, or the expulsion from Paradise, in Hitler's version of the Garden of Eden story: "The Aryan gave up the purity of his blood and therefore he also lost his place in the Paradise which he had created for himself. He became submerged in the race-mixture. . . . In this way culture and empires collapsed in order to make room for new formations. . . . People do not perish by lost wars, but by the loss of that force of resistance which is contained only in the pure blood. All that is not race in this world is trash." 73

Unlike other German political theorists who joined Hegel in exalting the power of the State as "the institutionalization of God on earth," Hitler considered political forms of secondary importance: "The State is a means to an end. Its end is the preservation and the promotion

D: ADOLF HITLER

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a publisher's list of "the
ly as belles-lettres, it easily
copies. (*Die Zeit*, Nr. 26.

The Intellectual World of Adolf Hitler

A few more examples will suggest the difficulty of following his meaning:

This is a proposal which is meant well by just as many people as it is usually ill understood by most, in order to cause the greatest conceivable harm one can possibly imagine.

Protestantism in itself represents the considerations of Germanism better, as far as this lies based in its birth and later tradition altogether, but it fails at the moment when this defense of national interests must take place in territory which in general lines is either lacking in its conceptual world or is simply rejected for one reason or another.

Metaphors become rather mixed:

For it is the remarkable thing of the battle of language altogether that its waves perhaps wash hardest around the school in particular, the planting ground of the coming generation. Every path that leads to this is expedient and its non-fulfillment must be characterized as a crime unmindful of duty.

Hitler had the habit of feminizing various forces that attacked him or rendered him impotent. He also had recurrent nightmares about suffocation. In the following passages he gets into stylistic trouble with "Dame Poverty," who is trying to strangle him:

Whoever has not himself been on the tentacles of this throttling viper will never know its fangs.

An uncharitable critic has pointed out that a viper has no tentacles, that a snake which kills with its coils has no venom, that a man being throttled by a snake would not feel its fangs.⁴⁴

Although *Mein Kampf* was a smashing success, Hitler planned a still more important literary work which would preserve his thinking for posterity. This plan seems to have been one of the reasons he approved having his thoughts taken down during the table conversations and staff conferences. "When the war's over," he mused, "I shall retire. Then I would like to devote five or ten years to clarifying my thought and setting it down on paper. Wars pass by. The only things that exist are the works of human genius."⁴⁵

This scheme was abandoned, one suspects, because he was not really interested in putting his ideas on paper. "All enormous world revolutionary events," he said, "have not been brought about by the written, but by the spoken word."⁴⁶ His forte was indeed the spoken word, and few men in history have approached his power as a demagogue.

1940

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GOD: ADOLF HITLER

The Image and the Man

1940?

He immediately conclude that too was the work of a mistake was the been too kind or too tolerant politics with a woman; he had underestimated the "Englishmen"; he had statesman into jail; too for people were to blame rejected by the Viennese he cursed the old-fashion where there was no the trip-wires which were for the sole purpose of

blamed his military failures constantly of betrayal," an Party leadership and in the he would add "the betrayal for his defeat.¹²⁸ own mistakes; nor could he any way. Thus he ridiculed intellectuals," or suddenly when anyone else was authority expanded to include for in all human endeavors to dog training, poetry to that Germany would win could not comprehend the Americans. When shown that Germany must build there would not be as long time and then said brightly, the widest avenue in the new capital, "Germania," set in the world.¹²⁹

to whom he could feel they were either men of with physical or emotional adjutants, Brückner and endowment, as were the most daily: Fegelein, Gündates who applied for the Hitler selected the short-personal driver for the rest

of his life, even though it was necessary to put special blocks under the seat so that he could see over the steering wheel. Rudolf Hess, for many years the deputy Führer, was mentally disturbed; Joseph Goebbels, the brilliant minister of enlightenment and propaganda, had a club foot; Heinrich Hoffmann, the court photographer, was an alcoholic with a deformed back; both his first treasurer, a man named Meier, and Max Amann, his press business manager, were one-armed, and Amann was dwarflike in stature; Dietrich Eckart, Hitler's closest intellectual collaborator, was addicted to drugs and died of alcoholism; an assistant press chief was stone deaf; his adjutant Julius Schaub had a bad limp; the leader of his Brown Shirts, the homosexual Ernst Röhm, was replaced by the one-eyed Victor Lutze; Heinrich Himmler, dread Reichsführer of the SS, was a neurotic hypochondriac; Julius Streicher, Gauleiter and editor of Der Stürmer, was a sexual pervert; Robert Ley, head of the Labor Front, was a garrulous dullard and drunkard who had a speech defect; Martin Bormann, the immensely influential Party secretary, was an alcoholic. Hermann Göring, head of the Luftwaffe, was a man of high intelligence who was addicted to morphine. During most of World War II he was "in a near-comatose state of narcotic stupor." But to Hitler, he was "the greatest genius in aviation history." Joachim von Ribbentrop, a stupid, shallow, servile, and vindictive man, remained one of Hitler's favorites and was hailed by him as "the greatest foreign minister since Bismarck."¹³⁰

He constantly pleaded with his subordinates to reassure him of his own ability. A minor official of the German Embassy in Paris, for example, recalled that on the eve of the Nazi invasion of the Rhineland in 1936 he was summoned to a conference attended by the political and military power structure of the Third Reich. The young and inexperienced official was amazed when his Führer kept asking him for assurance that the invasion of the Rhineland would be successful and that the French would not resist: "Repeatedly he asked me the curious question whether I could 'guarantee' him success."¹³¹

His valet recalled that before an important speech Hitler was nervous and unsure of himself. He would rehearse important passages in front of a mirror and interrupt himself by turning to ask his servant apprehensively, "Does that sound all right? . . . Do you think I am ready to go before the audience? . . . Do I look like the Führer? Do I really look like the Führer?"

A servant of many years recalled, "It was surprising how often Hitler drew parallels between himself and Napoleon," and noted that Hitler liked to "outdo" Napoleon in many different things. It bothered him, for example, when he learned that the French emperor could keep more secretaries busy than he. To compensate, Hitler started to dictate in a much louder voice. He also found solace in being able to excel Napoleon in something else: "Napoleon could dictate to several secretaries at the same time. To make up for that, I can read with one glance an entire page of a book."¹³²

* D. T. I could barely endure him at such times. His need of me was so great. He would act in this manner when news actually w/o me

* a little machine whose tank looks like a

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

think of his political organization as a party. He called it his movement (*meine Bewegung*) and insisted on that usage.

1941
He was vicious and vindictive, capriciously and unpredictably cruel. He was also kindly and considerate. Sometimes he liked to think of himself as a very humane person, but on other occasions he saw himself as barbarous. "Yes," he said, "we are barbarians! We want to be barbarians! It is an honorable title." Indeed, his self-image kept oscillating between the two extremes of kindness and barbarity. Late in the night of 28-29 September 1941 he mused, "Thank God I always avoided persecuting my enemies." But any inclination to "softness" and charity was immediately countered by assertions of hardness and brutality. One day at lunch, for example, he reflected, "When I think about it, I realize that I'm extraordinarily humane." But a few moments later, he announced: "I see no other solution but the extermination [of the Jews]."

He sometimes expressed conflict over his self-image in adjacent sentences. On the night of 25-26 September 1941, for example, he said, "I would prefer not to see anyone suffer, not to do harm to anyone. But then I realize that the species is in danger and . . . sentiment gives way to the coldest reason." And on the night of 1-2 February 1942: "I was pitiless. . . . But in a general way I can say that I am full of moderation. I am certainly not a brutal man by nature."¹¹³

He not only talked about being kind and considerate, but many of his actions really did show genuine concern for other people. He sent flowers to his secretaries on their birthdays; on long motor trips he insisted that his chauffeurs be fed before he himself ate; he sent at least two hand-painted thank-you postcards to the kindly Jewish doctor who had treated his mother and himself; he remembered his family and servants in his will; he remembered the 40th anniversary of a general's military service. He once reminisced about an old woman who had been kind to him many years before he came to power when she had rented him a room in Munich. He told an aide to find out if she were still alive and to arrange an allowance for her. When another of his former landladies became senile and deranged, Hitler was invariably gentle and considerate, spending hours in quiet talk to soothe her. He had also lived in rooms belonging to a tailor in Munich named Josef Popp. When Popp died in 1935 his family received from Hitler a monthly stipend of 150 marks with the understanding that they would not divulge the source of the income. Nor did he forget his boyhood friend's mother. In 1944 he sent Frau Kubizek a food package on her 80th birthday. His friend commented, "I never discovered how he came to know about it."

He was particularly kind to children, and showed his thoughtfulness on many occasions. One day in 1928 he stood with several bereaved children at the grave of their mother, holding their hands and praying with them. Men who knew him well have said that their chil-

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dren "simply adored him," and relaxed and genuinely friendly little children. "It was one of recalls, "when a warm human fee

He also had tender feeling days he always saved a bit of dri in the Schönbrunn where he wei was very fond of birds and felt which in German literature ofte and death. He gave special order

During the first months at three separate laws on the protec official *Reichsgesetzblatt* dutiful and penalties for cruel treatment regulation, dated 14 January 191 the suffering of lobsters and cral lations for their preparation in all

Crabs, lobsters, and other c them in rapidly boiling wat individually.

High officials in Hitler's govern tion of the most humane dead passed, and two officials of the M arly disquisition on whether it them in cold water which was s them headfirst into boiling water abrupt immersion in rapidly bo: jurists noted in the official intro Protection of Animals, the purp Hitler, was "to awaken and stre of the highest moral values of th

Hitler's kindness to crustac beings. During the same period ported to have said to an asso races? . . . Of course I do. . . brutal strength. . . . The masses to make them shudderingly sul camps to become old age pensio way of politics."¹¹⁶

The man who was constar charisma appealed to millions c capacity for friendship. He abu only friend of his youth. He orc friend of the early battle years.

OLF HITLER

smoking. He long porcelain it up at an early smoking until d to him that d. But he also because he was ce.¹⁰⁰ adding Karl May never read a

usly he forgot acts of his per- patent inaccur- ple, as a "postal inspector. Years at to be a local

far as we can rian or Austro- tried to give a ary 1933 in For- my descent, my ce the founding e of a Bavarian rman diplomats g, he attempted ho-Saxon, saying Saxony [Nieder aps "claim com-

ut his family

arkable capacity was also a per- boy he dreamed for him. As his "Hitler lived so d his 'day-to-day of Fame,' the " As a teen- ough she never fantasy—and ed about the

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placement of the piano in the music room and the shape of the vases in the halls.

Years later, he had other building fantasies, even beyond those described by Speer. Another admirer recalled that shortly after the invasion of Norway in 1940 he made plans to convert the fjords into a colossal resort with mile upon mile of public baths and playgrounds. The swimming pools of the fjords, he said, must be "the high point in the bath life of the future of Europe." There the most beautiful women on the continent would swim, sunbathe, dance, and play. Power coming from hydroelectric sources in Norway would light the huge resort area during the short Northern days and warm the glass-enclosed swimming pools. Although his architect, Dr. Fritz Todt, was then in the midst of important war plans, Hitler insisted that he stop to draw up detailed plans for the entire area. He was also told to build huge bridges to connect the resort with the *Reichsautobahn*.¹⁰³

Hitler's extraordinary capacity for self-deception is illustrated in his fantasy about one of the greatest turning points of his political career. In his memoirs, and in a dozen midnight reveries, he lingered lovingly over what he believed to be the triumphant reception of his first important political speech in the Munich Hofbräuhaus on 24 February 1920. He recalled vividly his anxiety before that important event, asserting that he personally planned the whole affair with great care and that he converted and captivated a hostile audience. It was this night that proved him an orator and mover of men. A great personal victory, it was also the most important meeting in the history of the struggling little German Workers' Party. Hitler chose this event as a fitting close for the first volume of his memoirs: "I was confronted by . . . people united by a new conviction, a new faith, a new will. . . . A fire had been lighted, and out of its flames there was bound to come some day the sword which was to regain the freedom of the Germanic Siegfried and the life of the German nation. And side by side with the coming rise, I sensed that there walked the Goddess of Inexorable Revenge. . . . Thus the hall became slowly empty. The movement took its course."¹⁰⁴

That Hitler's fantasy does not at all jibe with historical fact has been carefully documented. The main speaker that night was not Hitler at all, but a Dr. Dingfelder; Hitler's name was not even mentioned in Party advertisements announcing the meeting. The *Völkischer Beobachter* was less than enthusiastic about the future Führer's efforts: only one sentence on an inside page was given to his speech. Moreover, it was the hated Marxists who prevailed that night. As the jubilant, singing crowd left the meeting, the Platzl reverberated to the sound of the *Internationale*.¹⁰⁵

Such is the "historical truth" of the matter—yet it might be noted that a more important historical truth is the reality of Hitler's fantasies about himself. He believed in them, and his beliefs altered the course of history.

1940

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Thoughts of death and destruction kept intruding on plans for creation. In setting forth grandiose plans for magnificent stone buildings greater than the pyramids, and while proclaiming that he was "building for all eternity," he felt compelled to add a note of finality and death: "We are the last Germany. If we should ever go down, then there will no longer be a Germany." In planning the colossal Assembly Hall in Nuremberg, he included in his sketches one showing what the building would look like as a ruin.⁹³

1945
The life-long interplay between destruction and creativity is seen vividly during the last days. He spent his 56th and last birthday, 20 April 1945, working until 3 o'clock in the morning on plans for the "greater Linz" which he had fussed over for many years. But during this same period he also called forth an orgy of destruction. Farms and woodlands were to be burned, cattle slaughtered. Works of art, monuments, palaces, castles, churches, theatres—all were to be obliterated. The idea is conveyed clearly in an editorial which, at Hitler's express command, appeared in the Party organ *Völkischer Beobachter* on 7 September 1944: "Not a German stock of wheat is to feed the enemy, not a German mouth to give him information, not a German hand to offer him help. He is to find . . . nothing but death, annihilation and hatred."⁹⁴

Psychologists have noted that fire is an expressive symbol of destruction, "admirably suited to the venting of aggressive, destructive tendencies." Hitler was fascinated by fire. He said that he would like to have a fireplace in every room of his house. The nightly conversations at the Berghof were held, summer and winter, in front of a gigantic fire which Hitler tended himself. He "delighted in throwing fresh logs on the roaring flames."

1940
He worked himself into a frenzy of delight over the pictures of great capitals of Europe in flames. In 1939 he reveled in a newsreel of the bombing and burning of Warsaw, crying ecstatically to an intimate, "That is how we will annihilate them!" In 1940 he was delighted with pictures of the burning of London and the prospects of destroying it totally. "Have you ever looked at a map of London?" he gloated. "It's so closely built up that one source of fire alone would suffice to destroy the whole city, as happened once before, 200 years ago. Göring wants to use innumerable incendiary bombs of an altogether new type to create sources of fire in all parts of London. Fires everywhere. Thousands of them. Then they'll unite in one gigantic area of conflagration. Explosive bombs don't work, but it can be done with incendiary bombs—total destruction of London. What use will their fire department be once that really starts!" He was, it will be recalled, furious with the commandant of Paris for not setting that city afire; he kept sending the famous interrogatory telegram, "Is Paris burning?" Hitler also associated death with fire, once remarking that the best way to die would be to be burned in one's own home, which would make, he said, "a magnificent funeral pyre." As we shall see, however,

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his efforts to have his own be than magnificent.⁹⁵

Honesty and Duplicity

Hitler had a double image of himself as an honest and straightforward man who abided by treaties "blindly and a clever dissimulator who could and who was, he said, "the greatest he confided that "Treaties will be useful. . . . Treaties exist for the most convenient moment."⁹⁶

In August 1939, when it was necessary that the British, after word, might not believe his promises, he was horrified at the thought. He surprised and cried, "Idiots! Have I

The question must be answered. The Purge of June 1934, he had or he suspected of opposing him. He said:

I must make here the statement that movement there lies not murdered!

Repeatedly he gave his "sacred" had "no intention of threatening to make in Europe"; referring in the internal affairs he swore that "peace will never guarantee "the inviolability" of a phrase," he said, "that is our

One reason he felt obliged to honest man may have been to to prevaricate. He admitted at beginning of a speech he gave broke a long silence after the c

Freed from the heavy burden of long time, I now consider address myself to the German people, either to myself or to

He lied for tactical reasons matters of little apparent importance

PHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

ogue which was virtually pro-
described the paralyzing repeti-
time company, among the same
also say, in the same state of
nally the same speeches and

April 1945 contains not one new
for word, his last official state-
had set forth in *Mein Kampf*
And at the end, with his Reich
he suggested that perhaps some
differently, Adolf Hitler cried out
can not change!"³¹

ere was beset by feelings of guilt
ken words reveal a preoccupation
vey at the same time that he was
concern. He sought, for example, to
as the chosen one of God or of
worthy. In a speech in Munich
His blessing because we *deserved*
September 1935: "God continues to
nues to merit it." And years later
January 1944: "The great Judge
tory to those who are the most
the next year: "I carry my heavy
vidence which has deemed me

of conscience and sought to dull
ind internal peace," he said, was
his own guilt." He concluded on
ewish "invention. It is a blem-
being men from . . . the dirty and
and morality." He insisted that
intelligence and the conscience."
not limited to human beings, he
a "bad conscience."³³

hard and utterly ruthless man.
found that "the feeling of being
a firm decision." He fretted over
In this respect, his memory of
orive attempt to seize power in
of 1923 is revealing. This politi-
overthrow the Weimar Republic

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did not, as might be expected, recall castigating the government and
his enemies or summoning his countrymen to a new social and politi-
cal order. His mind was on something else: "History, as the Goddess of
a higher truth and better law, will nevertheless some day laughingly
tear up this verdict and *acquit us all of guilt and sin.*"³⁴

Personal worries about unworthiness, guilt, and punishment were
projected onto the nation. Thus, Hitler concluded that the real reason
for Germany's defeat in 1918 was neither political nor military: "Ger-
many was defeated because of her *unworthiness.*" And again, "The
military defeat of the German people is not an *undeserved* catastrophe
but rather a *deserved punishment* by eternal retribution. We more than
deserved this defeat."³⁵

The concerns that bothered him at the beginning of his political
career were with him at the end. In his last New Year's proclamation
to the German soldiers, on 1 January 1945, he said: "I bear this my lot with
humble thanks to Providence which has considered me *worthy enough* to take
on . . . this decisive work in the history of the German people."³⁶

FEARS AND OBSESSIONS

Time As an Enemy

Hitler distrusted time and tried to avoid its demands. Because he
did not want to know about its passage, he sought to confuse night and
day. With lights ablaze, he would stay up all night; and in the daytime,
even on lovely days of brilliant sunshine, while traveling far behind
the lines in his special train during the war, he insisted on drawing the
curtains and turning on the lights.³⁷

There was one clock in his office, an antique musical timepiece
which had apparently belonged to his family; but he would never allow
it to be wound up. Hitler never wore a wristwatch. Sometimes he put an
old-fashioned gold watch in his jacket pocket. It had a spring-cover
which concealed the face. He always seemed to forget to wind it, so
that when he needed to know the time he asked others to tell him what it
was.³⁸

Time was an enemy he often sought to conquer by saying that an
idea of his or a building he designed or anything else he approved of
was the greatest "of all time." While he did not personally invent the
famous sobriquet "The Greatest Field Commander of all time" [Der
größte Feldherr aller Zeiten], he loved the sound of the phrase and
grinned like a schoolboy when he heard it applied to himself. As the

1941
?

*Camouflaged that the force was
of all time(s)
Adolf himself. Be certain that I
did not disabuse him.* 17

*My young personal
treasured in him
I come along, he was*

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

meticulous and indefatigable German editor of his speeches and proclamations has noted, the phrase "of all time" is repeated in speech after speech.

The compulsive and deadly serious games that he played about time—such as how fast he could dress—involved "defeating" time. Yet Hitler never really won these games. Time was constantly coming back to taunt him. Thus he would tell his intimates over and over, "I have no time." He had "no time to be ill"; he had no time to tie his own tie, so he wore pretied cravats or had one tied for him by his valet.⁴⁰

At the end of his career, he blamed time for his defeat. "The war came too soon," he said in one of his last soliloquies. "I did not have the time to form people according to my politics. . . . we never have enough time. Always conditions press down upon us and we . . . lack time. Time always . . . works against us."⁴⁰

Hitler never had enough time. Yet no ruler in all history wasted more of it in pointless little trips and excursions, in being driven about in his cars, in hours of interminable talk and twaddle. Perhaps he felt that if he was filling up the hours with words, he was in some way dominating or "killing" time. Certainly he was destroying it for other people.

Constantly he tried to deceive time. Had there been any important way that time had deceived him? We should try to find out.

Death and Decapitation Motifs

Throughout his life, Hitler was infatuated with death. Even in moments of victory, death was on his mind. At the close of the tremendous Nuremberg Party Rally of 1934, which he had billed as "The Triumph of the Will," his thoughts turned less to triumph than to his own death: "When my eyes are closed in death, I do not know, but the Party will live on." And in the midst of World War II, he kept talking to his entourage about the imminence of his own death.⁴¹

Hitler was captivated by the depiction of putrefaction and death in Makart's huge canvas *Plague in Florence*, which he wanted desperately for the museum he was planning for his hometown of Linz. When he finally acquired the painting in 1940, a secretary reports that he was as overjoyed as a schoolboy and clapped his hands as he exulted over the piles of greenish yellow corpses. He had filmstrips made of the execution of criminals and enjoyed watching them die. He also tried to quiet fears of his own death by asserting that he had the power to determine the death of others, saying, "I do not play at war, I command in war. . . . I insist that *I have the right* to send the youth to their death."⁴²

Hitler hated the moon because he considered it to be dead. On a lovely, star-filled autumnal night in 1924 while he was a prisoner at Landsberg am Lech, he turned to his fellow inmate Rudolf Hess and

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remarked: "You know, Rudi, it's only *it* thing dead, and terrible, and inhuman. *it*. . . . It is as if in the moon a part of moon once sent down over the earth. *ghostly fellow.*"⁴³

During the 1920s, Hitler was very woman named Mimi Reiter—of whom with her, he took her to the graveyard stood staring down at the grave for some thing that Miss Reiter never quite unde [*Ich bin noch nicht so weit*]. Once, in a her favorite food, *Wienerschnitzel*. When asked if she had done something wrong and have it, but I don't understand why wanted to devour a corpse . . . the fles Many years later, Hitler still made fun of their meat broth "corpse tea," and he told story about crayfish: A deceased g threw her body into a brook to lure the body, and the relatives then caught and cation, while a guest was dining on sm were best fattened when fed with dead c

All his life, Hitler showed unusual n crabs, partly because *Krebs* (crabs) is t was particularly concerned about dyi which had killed his mother. He talked t was morbidly preoccupied with the dis deathly afraid of water. During a boat example, he panicked and "seemed abs would capsize." Typically, he insisted i were so badly frightened they ought to re

Hitler's concern about death was i Third Reich. The Nazis were much m celebrations than they were in feting H staged at the tombs of Prussian kings, Tannenburg, at memorial services for H November commemoration of the marty leitmotif of death sounded impressively a

Major political and military decis Führer's fear of imminent death and co He expressed his sense of urgency when for president in 1932: "I don't have time year. I've got to get to power shortly to s ing the time remaining for me. I have another occasion: "I need ten years of l have not long enough to live. . . ."⁴⁴

Hitler's decision to go to war in S

41-44

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7 He liked laughing, but it was always laughter at the expense of others." He never told off-color stories nor permitted them to be told in his presence. Moreover, he had a horror of being laughed at. Before wearing a new suit or hat in public he would have himself photographed privately and consult with his photographer over the suitability of his new wardrobe.

He is said to have laughed uproariously at one joke which he liked to have repeated: "Question: 'Why is a swan's neck so long?' Answer: 'So that the swan doesn't get drowned [sic].'"²⁵

Hitler was as inflexible as he was humorless. Time and time again he spoke of flexibility as weakness and of obstinacy as strength. He was proud of his rigidity and thought of it as the key to his success. "I have attained success," he remarked, "because I would never allow myself to be deterred through weakness from a perception once it was given me."²⁶

During his nightly wartime monologues, he looked back longingly—and interminably—on his youth to emphasize the same point he had made in his memoirs: how little he had changed. He insisted, for example, that his early years in Vienna were absolutely crucial to his career because "at that time I formed an image of the world and a view of life which became the foundation for my actions . . . I have had to change nothing." Even the thought of changing his ideas was "very embarrassing" to him. He reminisced by the hour about past political decisions and victories which he attributed to inflexible stubbornness. He was fond, for example, of reminding his entourage of the successful gamble he had taken in marching into the Rhineland in 1936, and concluded, "What saved us was my *unshakable obstinacy* and my amazing aplomb."²⁷

Four thoughtful people who observed four different periods of his life all stressed the same characteristic. His boyhood friend wrote that Hitler's single most evident trait was "the unparalleled constancy in everything that he said and did. There was in his nature something firm, inflexible, immovable, obstinately rigid. . . . Adolf simply could not change his mind or nature. . . . How often did I experience this!" Forty years later a physician who knew Hitler well agreed: "It was impossible for anyone to induce Hitler to change his views. . . . Anyone who [tried to do so] produced only a stronger fixation of his prejudices." A Swiss diplomat also affirmed that it was counterproductive to try to dissuade Hitler from a line of action. While serving as the League of Nations' high commissioner in Danzig, Professor Carl Burckhardt, a distinguished relative of the great historian, was incensed by the persecution of Polish Jews and tried to intercede on their behalf. He discovered that his efforts only led to further persecution, noting sadly, "Every protest only had the result of goading Hitler on to the most brutal attack." Finally, Albert Speer, who knew Hitler best during World War II, was convinced that the Führer's intellectual development stopped with the world as he had known it in Vienna in 1910. The

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Ringstrasse remained for him absolute the rifle he had used in World War I with soldiers three decades later.²⁸

Inability or refusal to change was a life-style and personal habits. The tained the same grammatical mistakes: cards sent from Vienna and from the vocabulary in private conversation s words he had learned as a boy in rural *gespräche* we find him speaking of *Dirndl*, *Lackln*; he also uses such expressions as *kre* mal writings and speeches he had a pench phrases. Thus, in his memoirs dictated in 1928), and in conversations recorded in 19 "The Holy Grail of the German Blood" i ment of Decomposition."²⁹

As a youth in Vienna, he promise write a great political work and design with a swastika, with the author's ne often in the future: "A. Hitler." The went through many editions, but Hi change it. A careful analysis of all the shows that Hitler permitted his publi: to correct grammatical mistakes.³⁰

Intimates all agreed that Hitler's smallest detail. As chancellor, when t went through the same field every tim of wood from exactly the same spot i attempt to persuade him to deviate i considerable agitation and anger on hi remembers similar behavior. Adolf ha the same lonely spot outside town i familiar to him."

His personal hygiene was highly many times every day; he brushed his He kept the same suits, raincoats, sh wore a necktie until it disintegrated. I often that he knew the serial numbers

At Berchtesgaden and in the Cl meals had a fixed seating order mad structions. The slightest deviation fr his fury. The topics discussed at me subjects coming up over and over ar evening before the war there were o repeated many times. At midnight around the blazing fire, where Hitler

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fellows!" [Zum Henker, Kerle!], "Well, I shall be bounced," and "Pshaw and damnation, sir!"—was an incredible marksman who knocked out the eyes of Indians or broke a hangman's rope at 50 yards with his 48-shot rifle. Always victorious in the face of staggering odds, he defeated his enemies through the power of his will, bravery, and treachery.

Hitler of course was not alone in his admiration for May's intrepid hero. The books sold by the thousands, and a generation of German boys were enthralled by Old Shatterhand's exploits. Few, however, could match Hitler in the intensity of his loyalty or the longevity of his infatuation. As chancellor, he had a special shelf built in his library to hold, in a place of honor, the results of May's prolific pen, specially bound in vellum. He read and reread the stories and commended them highly in his *Tischgespräche*. They served—along with the movie version of *Grapes of Wrath*—as a main source of his knowledge about America. He also had the idea that Karl May knew best how to fight the Soviet Army, telling his valet, "I have ordered every officer to carry with him . . . Karl May's books about fighting Indians. That's the way the Russians fight—hidden like Indians behind trees and bridges, they jump out for the kill!"²⁰

Hitler's passion for building and rebuilding on an enormous scale will be discussed later. But here, too, one notes a childlike quality: the master of Germany playing with building blocks. A former minister of finance recalled with amazement the scene he encountered when he was summoned to Hitler's office to discuss a loan from the Reichsbank to finance one of the Führer's building projects:

When the door was opened, there was Hitler lying on the floor with a number of toy buildings carefully arranged in front of him. . . . Hitler did not arise when his guest was announced, but invited his guest to join him on the floor. His first remark was "Isn't this beautiful? We must make Berlin the most beautiful city in the world." The official agreed that it was, but maintained that its realization at the moment was impossible. . . .

But Hitler was not defeated. He lay flat on his stomach staring at the models for a considerable period of time in silence. Suddenly he turned to his visitor and said like a little child with tears in his voice, "But you can't take this away from me. I will be so unhappy. You must let me have it!" . . .²¹

The Führer liked to build things; he also liked to knock them down. In the basement of the Reichschancellery there was a miniature cannon with a barrel about 30 inches long and a special silencer built into the chamber. Hitler delighted in loading, aiming, and firing the little piece himself. His targets were wooden buildings and figures of "enemy" soldiers: Polish, English, French, and Russian—the Russians were painted with ugly, leering faces. As a very special favor to his

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friend Mussolini, Hitler let him play with it himself.²²

Ever since he was a little boy, Adolf at night. As an adult he insisted that with him and talk—or rather hear him. Eva Braun, quite frankly, "I really shuddered at night." After his guests had left, his adjutant, Schaub, and had him sit with

Hitler's personal immaturity found he established for Germany. The Third Reich's historic actualization of a perverse child, *Lord of the Flies* further brutalized and created by both adolescents (Adolf and the weak, mindless destruction, murder, cruelty, forced happiness decreed by primitive symbols, and incessant march song was much the same; only the worst, "The blood of the Jew will squirt: children's chant of "Kill the pig! Spill his

The solutions Hitler found to problems were often childishly and crudely diplomatic by saying that the best way in India was to kill the leaders of the rebellion, he said, "and if that does not suffice to a dozen leading members of Congress; a hundred more and so on until order is

Humorlessness and Rigidity

Neither the boy nor the man had a friend of his youth said that Hitler was self-irony and that "one thing he could do with a smile." Many years later, the Office recalled: "I never experienced a smile at his table . . . Concerning people, Hitler was humorless and derogatory. Qualities such as for were completely foreign to him." A private friend at the end of his life noted that Hitler himself sometimes gave a "sort of barking" *Schadenfreude* . . . [but] I must say that heartily." And a valet who had served Hitler never laughed out loud. At least I never heard hearty laughter." Speer disagrees about humor or the source of his merriment though he could laugh loudly . . . so laughter. Often he would wipe tears from

* Whenever he has
distress (for all
to say) he possesses the
wisest the most kind

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lands, and Luxembourg were inhabited by German-speaking people, even though "they are now detached almost entirely from the old German Reich to which they once belonged." The acquisition of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871 and the prospects of adding Belgium and the Netherlands to the new Reich were defended on the grounds that they had all been a part of the "Old German Empire."⁵

The most memorable Holy Roman Emperors were not lawgivers and statesmen like their contemporaries, William I, Henry II, and Edward I of England or Louis IX and Philip Augustus of France. The greatest German hero of the period was the emperor, crusader, knight errant, and warrior with that splendid sobriquet, Friedrich Barbarossa. The legend of Barbarossa, alive in generation after generation of memories, was that of the heroic leader who never died. Even now, it was said, he still sits at a huge oaken—or is it marble?—table in a secret cave, deep in enchanted slumber. While Germany is troubled, disunited, despised, his red beard keeps growing. But one day, when the beard has encircled the entire table—and when Germany needs him most—the great leader will shake off the sleep of the centuries, arise in glory, and establish a magnificent, all-powerful Reich. Some said the cavern was located in the Kyffhäuser at the edge of the Harz Mountains. Others said that it was in the Bavarian Alps near Berchtesgaden. Hitler preferred the second alternative.

The Führer was so taken with both the successes and failures of the medieval hero that he would call his most important military campaign, the invasion of Russia, "Operation Barbarossa."

A Legacy of Luther

The outstanding event of our history is still Martin Luther.

—Friedrich Nietzsche

Side by side with Frederick the Great stands Martin Luther as well as Richard Wagner.

—Adolf Hitler

The towering figure of Martin Luther dominates the period known as the German Reformation and casts a shadow across the following centuries. Popular German history tends to neglect his theological achievements and remembers him as the national hero who broke the universality of the Western church, almost single-handedly established the German language, insisted on obedience to the state, and demanded that the Jews be harried from the land.

Heinrich Heine called Luther "the most German man of our history." He was typical of his countrymen, Heine thought, in being a man of striking contrasts:

He was at the same time a visionary mystic and a practical man of action. His thoughts not only had wings; they had hands. . . . The

The Past As Prologue: Hitler

man who could curse virgin. After spending tinctions, he took up and reflection among that uproots oaks, tl violets. He could becc his was the motto, "W fool his whole life lon most magnificent way

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OD: ADOLF HITLER

people for the war effort. That two Western democratic controls over the recently felt that he could of personal sacrifices across England. Indeed, the Nazi flow of consumer and production of consumer for a time in 1942, Speer could manage was a 12 months of relative austerity, a reduction of production "for even after Stalingrad and Hitler dare cut luxury cosmetics, hair-set lotions, and more." ⁹⁹ Indeed in his foreign policy, a commitment which turned his eye to invade Poland on 1 standards of suspicion. He simply could not with the Poles. A general's scornful dismissal of it precipitate a European war for an ally." ¹⁰⁰ Soviet Union in June 1941 ally Stalin was about to fight, he said, "was a nightmare," he said, "was us and go over to the day or other [he] would a was also prompted, in t to declare war on him.

SSIVE WAR

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—Adolf Hitler

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From Private Neurosis to Public Policy

destruction. Human capacity for both intense hatred and intense love is also given an outlet in war, when citizens are urged to show complete devotion to their country and to project total hatred against the enemy. Sadistic and masochistic impulses are also generally stimulated by war. ¹⁰²

Such emotions may be awakened in all people, but two things made them especially important to Adolf Hitler. First, his personal psychological need for aggression and war was particularly acute; second, he held a position of totalitarian power in a modern mechanized state. When he wanted war, a world became involved in his need. Moreover, as a deeply split borderline personality, he externalized his own inner conflict by projecting a view of the world that was dangerous and threatening: the Jews in particular had organized an international conspiracy against him; England and America, goaded by the Jews who controlled both societies, were about to attack; Stalin was plotting invasion. Like the borderline patients of Dr. Kernberg, Hitler felt "severe aggressive stirrings" because it was imperative that he "destroy potential enemies" before they destroyed him. ¹⁰³ And it was not only he personally who was being attacked; the Jews and their allies in Russia and the West were attempting to destroy the Motherland. He must defend her.

Aggression was also made necessary by his private fears of personal inadequacy, weakness, and impotence. War against his foes could prove his strength. He would utterly crush anyone who opposed him or doubted his power. This need welling up within him prompted him to remark after unleashing World War II: "The resolve to strike has always been a part of me." ¹⁰⁴ How closely he identified himself with war and found it a challenge to his personal masculinity and toughness was revealed in a speech of 1940:

I know that this [war] must be the hardest challenge ever laid before the German people. I not only flatter myself that I am the hardest man that Germany has had for many decades, perhaps for centuries, but I also possess the greatest authority.

But above all I believe in my success. Indeed I believe in it unconditionally!

I am totally convinced that this struggle does not differ one hair's breath from the battle which I once fought out within myself! [den ich einst im Inneren ausfochte!]

I am convinced that Providence has preserved me from all dangers in order to have me lead this battle of the German people. . . ¹⁰⁵

To fulfill his personal need, he militarized a nation and led it into battle. The war was not, as A. J. P. Taylor prefers to think, somehow forced upon a reluctant Hitler. It was in his bones and viscera; it was the very *raison d'être* of his Reich. Hitler's Germany meant war; it had

by declaring war. The inner strength it gives me is paramount. I dictate orders to go to war, not Roosevelt.

1940
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1940

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Borderline patients characteristically show paranoid tendencies. They distrust and are highly suspicious of other people; they consider themselves "especially privileged persons"; they fantasize about their "magical omnipotence"; they believe that they have a right to exploit others for their own gratification.²⁶ All borderlines have unreconciled Oedipal problems—which, in Hitler's case, were intensified by monorchism and the "primal scene trauma." * An impulse to self-destruction—a problem we must deal with later—and some forms of mutilation have also been reported.

Patients tend to be infantile. They show "childlike, oral-aggressive demandingness." Selfish and narcissistic, they often display "a contradiction between an inflated concept of themselves and an inordinate need for tribute from others." Typically, while they express fantasies of omnipotence, their behavior may also reveal deep-seated uncertainty, self-doubt, and insecurity. Borderline patients also tend to have phobias about dirt, feces, and contamination. Significantly, they are prone to gross forms of sexual perversion involving filth: "Primitive replacement of genital aims by eliminatory ones (urination, defecation) are . . . indicative of an underlying borderline personality."²⁷ We are reminded of Hitler's reported perversion involving urine and feces.

Typical of borderline patients is a confused sense of self-identity. Since they are not able fully to integrate their ego, they have what Erikson calls "identity diffusion." One of their defenses against anxiety generated by such uncertainty is to act as if they were someone else, to "reenact partial identification." (The political consequences of Hitler's propensity for acting out various roles will be discussed below.)

The most basic characteristic of borderline personalities is a "splitting of the ego." Patients exhibit dramatically opposing personality traits: they are cruel and kind, sentimental and hard, creative and destructive; they swing violently between excessive protestations of love and wild outbursts of hate. It often appears, Dr. Kernberg has noted, as if there were in each patient "two distinct selves . . . equally strong, completely separated from each other." His description corresponds closely with Albert Speer's picture of Hitler as a person who was "cruel, unjust, cold, capricious, self-pitying and vulgar," but who was also "the exact opposite of almost all those things . . . a generous superior, amiable, self-controlled, capable of enthusiasm for beauty and greatness."²⁸

When a therapist comments on contradictions in a borderline patient's behavior, his first reaction is to deny any contradiction or inconsistency. If the doctor persists, the patient becomes extremely anxious. Apparently, borderline personalities do not want to reconcile their two "equally strong" selves. Kernberg concluded in italics: "*Splitting, then, appears to be not only a defect of the ego, but also an*

* The symptoms associated with these experiences are consistent with those of the borderline and would serve to intensify them (see Chapter 3, pp. 150-168).

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

distraught Himmler summoned him to his office one day in 1942. After demanding absolute secrecy, he asked Kersten to interpret a "blue manuscript of 26 pages" which Himmler had taken from a secret Gestapo file. Purportedly, it contained Adolf Hitler's medical record dating from his hospitalization at Pasewalk during World War I. The records convinced Kersten "beyond any shadow of doubt" that Hitler was suffering from progressive paralysis associated with neurosyphilis.¹⁹ Support for the theory that Hitler had once contracted syphilis may be found in the rather curious fact that he chose as his personal physician a specialist in venereal disease, "Professor" Theodor Morell. Hitler's fascination with syphilis, manifested in page after page of his memoirs, is also pertinent. Then, too, rumors were rife in German medical circles that Hitler had been treated during 1932 in a Jena clinic by a Dr. Bodo Spiethoff for mental disorders associated with syphilis. Certainly the symptoms of advanced neurosyphilis correspond to some of the descriptions we have of Hitler in the last months of his life. Syphilis can produce tremors, insomnia, difficulties in walking, and personality changes. Patients may become irritable, their conscience dulled, memory weakened. They may be alternately depressed and exuberant with grandiose fantasies; paranoid tendencies are not uncommon.²⁰

It is conceivable that Hitler, at one time or another, may have contracted syphilis. But it is unlikely. The mysterious blue pages which Kersten insists prove the case have never appeared, and Kersten was neither a medical doctor nor an unimpeachable witness. It is also possible that Hitler was treated for syphilis in a Jena clinic in 1932. But in correspondence, Jena medical authorities state emphatically that they can find no evidence that Hitler was ever treated there. Further, the fact that Hitler's medical records show a negative Wassermann test for 15 January 1940 does not argue in support of syphilis.²¹

Recent studies of the human brain have suggested yet another approach to Hitler's physical and emotional problems. Neurologists have now reached conclusions that raise disturbing questions about the personality of Hitler—and of everyone else. Until the last few years, we have taken it for granted that each individual has one brain, one consciousness, one personality. But the ancient and comforting assumption may be an illusion. We may all be two people. For split-brain research with patients who have had the connections severed between their cerebral hemispheres has demonstrated unequivocally that the two spheres of the human brain (unlike the brains of other animals) operate separately. Further, it has been shown that "each of the two halves is *independently conscious*. That is, there exist *two separate, conscious minds* in every individual." People can live quite effectively with either one or the other or both of these minds operating.

The two independent cerebral hemispheres exhibit two quite different modes of mental activity. The left half specializes in the specific. It is adept at manipulating separate, isolated elements and

From Private Neurosis

has little or no capacity with a badly impaired rational and intelligent. Most notably, the for and language. By co dealing with disparation. It sees the wh emphasizes intuition While the specialists "do not yet know get along with each o

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1941
decision to kill the Jews of Europe was made at the Wannsee Conference, 20 January 1942. By thus "defeating" the Jews, Hitler may have been attempting to demonstrate his own victorious strength and to quiet his growing feelings that he was a weakling and a failure.

All his life he had been plagued by self-doubts about his masculinity and physical powers—doubts that were manifested every time he insisted that he really was not a weak and pitiful person at all. But after 1941 it was increasingly evident that the soft-muscled, slightly paunchy man with the trembling, effeminate hands and the shuffling gait did not at all fit his own picture of the indomitable, brutal, all-conquering, masculine Führer. Indeed, each military defeat unnerved him further and required more and more proof that he was the ice-cold, steel-hard, and ruthless victor of his fantasies. He could not play that role by conquering Russia or the Western allies; he therefore manufactured ruthless and brutal "victories" over the Jews and conquered his helpless enemy in the gas ovens of the greater Reich. Walter C. Langer recognized this sphere of weakness in Hitler's personality and foresaw the consequences. In 1943, long before he and his colleagues had knowledge of Hitler's death camps and massacre of the Jews, Dr. Langer predicted that Hitler would compensate for self-doubt and defeat by increasingly ruthless acts of destruction and brutality:

Each defeat will shake his confidence still further and limit his opportunities for proving his own greatness to himself. . . . He will probably try to compensate for his vulnerability . . . by continually stressing his brutality and ruthlessness . . . for only in this way [can] he prove to himself that he is not a weakling . . . but made of the stuff becoming his conception of what a Victor should be.⁵⁷

Finally, Hitler massacred the Jews because of one of his fantasies. He really did believe that Jews were the archenemy of all mankind and that in destroying them, as he had promised 20 years earlier, he was "doing the work of the Lord."

Thus did private fantasy become public policy.

Military Consequences of Genocide

Hitler's personal phobia about Jews contributed to Germany's military defeat. As Albert Speer has reported, a key reason why Germany never attempted to develop the atomic bomb was that the Führer distrusted what he called "Jewish physics." And his personal orders to kill all the Jews of Europe resulted in serious disruptions of the national war effort. The sheer logistics of collecting, transporting, and disposing of so many "units"—as Eichmann called human beings—were immense. And the project required other sacrifices. By 1944 the shortage of labor created by removing Jews from the work force ran to some

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THE BENEFITS

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when plagued by uncertainty and self-doubt, he turned to Wagner for inspiration and direction. Now, on 23 July 1940, he journeyed to the shrine at Bayreuth to attend a performance of *Die Götterdämmerung*. Once again Wagner worked his magic upon him. His portrayal of heroic catastrophe, the destruction of gods and men, somehow reassured Hitler and confirmed his conviction of heroic destiny. In the darkness of the loge he passionately kissed the hand of Frau Winifred Wagner. He left Bayreuth composed, his mind made up. Within the week he issued the orders that would lead to his own *Götterdämmerung*.¹⁴⁹

Thus, in the spring of 1941, with the European continent in his grip, instead of consolidating his vast New Order, instead of concentrating his forces against his only remaining foe, an isolated and desperately wounded England, Hitler turned to court his nemesis: he sent his armies marching into Russia. He did so at a time when the Soviet Union was his most valued ally, shipping him thousands upon thousands of tons of vital war supplies, including huge stocks of oil which the Russians were purchasing from the United States and sending on to Germany through Vladivostok and across Siberia. One of the more memorable pictures in the annals of warfare shows Hitler's soldiers, as they marched eastward into Russia, looking at Soviet freight trains traveling westward loaded with supplies for Hitler's Wehrmacht.¹⁵⁰

Both rational and irrational factors seem to have been at work in Hitler's momentous decision. He wanted the wheat of the Ukraine and oil of the Caucasus; * he had long planned to find *Lebensraum* for his Reich in Eastern Europe; he was getting old and wanted to win his race with death; he mistrusted the Russians and—against all evidence to the contrary—was convinced that they were about to attack him at any moment; and his racial theory demanded that the Slavs be enslaved. Furthermore, since no one else had conquered Russia, this was his chance to prove that he was "the greatest military commander of all time"—far greater than Charles XII or Napoleon. There was also Hitler's fascination with space. "In my youth I dreamed constantly of vast spaces," he mused one night in his "Wolf's Lair" headquarters, "now life has enabled me to give the dream reality. . . . Space lends wings to my imagination. . . ." ¹⁵¹

All these reasons were probably operative. But in addition, he may, unconsciously, have gone to war with the Soviet Union because of a compulsion to punish himself and to fail. The reason Hitler himself gave was that he invaded Russia in order to defeat England—not, one would think, the most direct way to achieve that objective. The result was the opposite of the stated intent. England was greatly relieved and

* But the argument that Hitler invaded Russia because he needed war supplies is blunted by two facts: Stalin was already shipping him hundreds of thousands of tons of phosphates, iron ore, scrap iron, and chrome ore, as well as oil, platinum, rubber, and timber. Further, Hitler already had at his disposal great quantities of oil and wheat after his army had moved into Rumania in September 1940 to "protect" Rumanian oil and wheat fields. See Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, 1:207, 190.

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It is a remarkable fact that Hitler did not ask Japan, in any way. Indeed, he gave *Operation* must be given foreign policy believes the spring of 1941, might well at the time of Hitler's in even to consult his ally and forth cited the incident as Rich has concluded that i while the Wehrmacht was conquered Russia. The same count for Hitler's "extraordinary secure Japanese cooperation invasion."¹⁵⁴

Hitler's attitude continued of 1941–1942, when it was get if he were to defeat Russia aid from Japan, he refused hinder American shipments Vladivostok as a modest request United States. His conduct bility that unconsciously, c

The struggle against the undertaking requiring enlargement of the entire economic never gave the order for such the invasion, he actually gave production!¹⁵⁵

This was no act of confidence of an easy victory worthy how often he repeated of misfortune. At three told his press secretary, "I unseen room—without knowing his private secretaries he alienated room, and concluded: hidden there." He said the Ribbentrop. And again in a which he attempted to explain Union, he said, "At every such mystery [*Geheimnis*] is hidden

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1941

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strengthened when Hitler abandoned "Operation Sea Lion" and involved himself in a two-front war.

It is a remarkable fact that in launching the invasion of Russia, Hitler did not ask Japan, his ally in the Tripartite Pact, to help him in any way. Indeed, he gave explicit orders that "no hint of the *Barbarossa Operation* must be given the Japanese."¹⁵² A close student of Japanese foreign policy believes that Japan, whose options were still open in the spring of 1941, might well have been persuaded to attack the Russians at the time of Hitler's invasion. But Hitler's refusal to ask for aid or even to consult his ally needlessly offended the Japanese, who henceforth cited the incident as an example of Hitler's "perfidy."¹⁵³ Norman Rich has concluded that if Japan had attacked Russia in the Far East while the Wehrmacht was invading from the West, Hitler could have conquered Russia. The same writer can find no adequate reason to account for Hitler's "extraordinary attitude" in failing "to do anything to secure Japanese cooperation of any kind" before launching the invasion.¹⁵⁴

Hitler's attitude continued to be extraordinary. As late as the winter of 1941–1942, when it was clear that he would need all the help he could get if he were to defeat Russia, when all reason demanded that he seek aid from Japan, he refused to do so. He did not even ask his ally to hinder American shipments of supplies to the Soviet Union via Vladivostok as a modest return for his own declaration of war on the United States. His conduct was indeed irrational. It suggests the possibility that unconsciously, once again, he was asking for punishment.

The struggle against the Soviet Union, everyone knew, was a vast undertaking requiring enormous amounts of supplies—the mobilization of the entire economic power of a great industrial nation. But Hitler never gave the order for such mobilization. In fact, on the very eve of the invasion, he actually gave orders to *reduce* the level of armaments production!¹⁵⁵

This was no act of mere bravado. Hitler was not nearly so confident of an easy victory over Russia as has been alleged. It is noteworthy how often he repeated a metaphor which bespeaks a premonition of misfortune. At three o'clock on the morning after the invasion he told his press secretary, "I feel as if I've opened a door into a dark, unseen room—without knowing what's lurking behind the door." To his private secretaries he also talked about opening a door into a darkened room, and concluded apprehensively, "One never knows what is hidden there." He said the same thing to Bormann and repeated it to Ribbentrop. And again in a speech of October 1941 to his generals, in which he attempted to explain why it was necessary to attack the Soviet Union, he said, "At every such step a door opens behind which only a mystery [*Geheimnis*] is hidden, and lies in wait. . . ." ¹⁵⁶

When Hitler was a little boy, had he ever opened a door into a darkened room to be confronted by some terrifying secret?

There were other premonitions of disaster. A full month in advance

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of the event, Hitler set the date of invasion for 22 June, the precise anniversary, according to tradition, of Napoleon's ill-fated campaign. And why, of all the thousands upon thousands of alternatives, did he choose the code name of "Barbarossa" for the Russian campaign? His military planners had called the operational scheme "Fritz," after the victorious Prussian king. But on Hitler's direct personal order the name was changed to Barbarossa.¹⁵⁷

Why that particular name? It may be true that Hitler saw himself, like Friedrich Barbarossa, as a crusader with a mission to destroy an infidel enemy to the East. But Barbarossa had failed. In fact, he was the most celebrated failure of medieval German history: he had failed in five campaigns against the Italian city-states; he had failed to unify the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation; and he had failed during the Third Crusade, and had drowned while bathing in the Seleph River in 1190. Adolf Hitler knew these things about Barbarossa. Among the books he borrowed from a private library there was a biography of the Hohenstaufen ruler recording these facts which, indeed, were common knowledge to any patriotic schoolboy interested in German medieval history.¹⁵⁸

Hitler was pathologically afraid of water and had nightmares about loss of breath, strangulation, and drowning. The words he used in announcing the invasion of Russia are therefore worth remembering. "The world," he had said, "*will hold its breath.*" When Adolf Hitler held his breath and counted anxiously to ten while his valet tied his tie, he was, on one level, symbolically enacting suicide and self-destruction.¹⁵⁹

At first the invasion went so well that Hitler's Ministry of Propaganda announced in triumph, "In seven short days, the Führer's offensive has smashed the Red Army to splinters . . . the eastern continent lies, like a limp virgin, in the mighty arms of the German Mars." It did indeed look as if the Soviet Union would have to capitulate, as Hitler's troops battled into the very suburbs of Moscow and as his soldiers, like Napoleon's, saw through their field glasses the gilded towers of the Kremlin against the darkening sky.

That Moscow never fell is to be credited to the heroism of Soviet defenders, but also to Hitler's self-defeating mistakes. Instead of concentrating his forces for the drive on the capital, Hitler suddenly insisted on weakening that drive disastrously by splitting his armies. Against the advice of his generals, he insisted upon swinging south with half his forces into the Ukraine. Then, when the Ukrainians, with their long history of independence and hatred of Stalin's police state, welcomed Hitler's troops with shouts of joy and offered alliance, Hitler ordered their leaders shot and their people enslaved. It was, one historian of the war has written, "one of the most colossal errors" of Hitler's career. Moscow was also saved by Russia's most historic field commander—General Winter. When the temperatures during the first week of December dropped below zero, German soldiers froze by the thousands because, thanks to Hitler's personal orders, no winter clothing

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had been issued. The boots of his soldiers were fitted so precisely that they permitted the wearing of only one pair of light socks.¹⁰⁰

Throughout Operation Barbarossa, Hitler continued to make strange decisions. Incredibly, for example, he left an entire German army behind in the Crimea, saying that it could not possibly be with-drawn, for to do so might adversely affect the overall political situation in Turkey. Later in the war, an army group was left in the Baltic area because, Hitler explained, he wanted to show the Swedes that he was still a power in the Baltic.¹⁰¹ Looking at these and other self-defeating decisions of the Russian campaign, a German authority on Hitler's military leadership asked, "What was going on in the head of this man. . . ?" ¹⁰²

The question must be broadened beyond Hitler's separate tactical and strategic blunders, for the entire enterprise was basically irrational. Consider the awful and unnecessary gamble he took in attacking so cooperative and powerful an ally. If he lost the military campaign, the whole war was lost; even if he "won" and defeated some of the Red armies in Western Russia, the war was far from over. For he would have been sucked ever further eastward, while England, aided by Amer-ica, still pounded him from the air. The two-front war he had created would continue. Why take these risks at all? Was it not more rational to remain at peace with his ally and co-conspirator? Why did he not simply consolidate the vast land areas he had attained through the secret protocols of the Nazi-Soviet Pact and his own conquests, the European continent stretching from the English Channel to central Poland which he already held in thrall?

Reason, it seems, did not dictate Hitler's Eastern policy.

WAR ON THE UNITED STATES

In the midst of catastrophic failures on the Russian front, Hitler on 11 December 1941 took the initiative to declare war on the United States, the greatest industrial power on earth.

Immediately after the war, the State Department sent a delegation of specialists to Germany to interrogate Nazi leaders about Hitler and his conduct of the war. Neither members of the commission themselves nor top German officials of the army and Foreign Office could give an adequate explanation for Hitler's decision. The leader of the mission reported: "We found the most baffling question in the whole Nazi story to be the prompt German declaration of war on the United States."¹⁰³ Years later, an American historian writing an account of Nazi-Amer-ican relations recognized the same problem and acknowledged that he too could give no satisfactory answer:

This declaration [of war on the United States] . . . has never been satisfactorily explained. It was indeed contrary to everything which Hitler had practiced and preached about German foreign policy in general and the United States in particular from the early days in

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Munich to the final hours in Berlin. . . . His reasons for declaring war are not entirely clear.¹⁰⁴

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Another diplomatic historian agrees: "The underlying logic of the Führer's policy towards the United States defies analysis . . . it was an irrational act. . . . By the declaration of war, Germany lost finally and irrevocably all hope of winning the war against the Soviet Union."¹⁰⁵

Since the rational mind recoils from mysteries, rational explanations have been provided. First, Hitler declared war on America, it is said, because he held the country in contempt and was convinced that it presented him with no military problem. There is some evidence to support this view. Hitler told Mussolini that American armament statistics were "lies pure and simple." To General Halder he said that American military power was "one big bluff," and concluded roundly that the United States was "incapable of conducting war." Hitler's racial theory also led him to the conclusion that America was "half-Judaized, half-Negrified . . . Americans have the brains of a hen."¹⁰⁶

But Hitler also flatly contradicted his own denigration of America. His split way of viewing things permitted him to argue that because of its Nordic stock Americans were a superior people—they were "unbelievably clever." He concluded that "compared to the old Europe . . . America emerges as a young, racially select people." He told Hanfstaengl that the key reason Germany lost World War I was because of the entry of the United States, and "that must never happen again."¹⁰⁷

Whatever else Hitler said about America's decadence and incapacity to wage war, his orders to commanders of the German Navy and Luftwaffe showed respect and fear of U.S. power. The orders were clear: America was not to be antagonized. All naval and air incidents in the Atlantic must be avoided to keep America out of the war. When naval leaders protested that lend-lease supplies were hurting Germany, Hitler was adamant. As late as November 1941 he said that "under no circumstances should Germany risk American entry into the war." His orders were not to be changed even if the Neutrality Acts were repealed. He was particularly concerned lest Germany become involved in fighting the United States and the Soviet Union simultaneously. Again and again he repeated that there should be no war with America until the Soviet Union had surrendered. These were the standing orders until the very day of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.¹⁰⁸ Hitler also gave the German press repeated instructions not to offend Americans. In particular, the press was to stop attacking its favorite targets, the American president and his wife. One such order reads, "Even statements of Mrs. Roosevelt are not to be mentioned."¹⁰⁹

Second, it has been suggested that Hitler declared war on America out of loyalty to his Japanese ally and in fulfillment of his treaty obligations. But Hitler's concept of honor was not one of his more conspicuous virtues. Further, the Tripartite Pact with Japan and Italy of 1940 was purely defensive; there was no obligation whatever for Ger-

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many to go to war unless America attacked Japan. That is not what happened at Pearl Harbor. The Tripartite Pact remained, as one historian has described it, a "Hollow Alliance" torn by suspicion and mutual distrust. After Hitler had caused his ally to lose face by refusing to inform the Japanese about Barbarossa, Japan had attacked America without Hitler's knowledge and independent of his support. Hitler was completely surprised and unprepared for Pearl Harbor. He did not declare war on the United States because he felt bound by a treaty.¹⁷⁰

It is true that during the first week of December (at precisely the time when his attack on Russia was in serious trouble) he made verbal promises to join Japan in war against the United States, and he drew up a draft treaty to that effect. It is said that he did so because he desperately wanted Japan to attack the Soviet Union from the rear. But this draft treaty of 5 December makes no mention whatever of Japanese help in fighting Russia.¹⁷¹ Nor did the Japanese give any verbal promises of such help. As Rich has noted, "Once Japan had committed itself to war with the United States . . . Hitler might surely have found excuses to procrastinate about fulfilling his pledge to join Japan in that war. At the very least he might have demanded Japanese support against Russia in return for German support against America, if only a promise to stop American shipments to Russia via Vladivostok."¹⁷² But Hitler did nothing of the kind. With absolutely no assurance of help from his ally, and fully aware that no treaty required him to do so, he personally decided to declare war on America.¹⁷³

A third explanation has been given. It is said that Hitler declared war in December 1941 because he believed that sooner or later America would attack, and he wanted to fight at the most propitious time. It is true that he harbored suspicions of a Jewish plot, and believed that "Roosevelt, urged on by Jewry, [had] already quite resolved to go to war and annihilate National Socialism."¹⁷⁴ But the timing of Hitler's declaration of war on America was very peculiar indeed. The Russian problem was not only unsolved, it was becoming downright menacing. During the first week of December, a member of the German Operational Staff noted that "the Red Army almost overnight snatched the initiative all along the Front and thus administered to German Supreme Headquarters a series of shocks such as it had never known before." On 6 December 1941 the Red Army under Marshal Georgi Zhukov started a counteroffensive west of Moscow with 100 fresh divisions which Hitler had insisted did not exist. The Germans were hurled back amid enormous losses in men and material. "In Hitler's headquarters," Domarus reported, "there spread a feeling that the end of the world [Weltuntergangsstimmung] had come." An adjutant recorded, "Everything indicates that the goals of the campaign cannot be reached . . ."; Field Marshal Keitel, chief of the High Command, wanted to commit suicide; Hitler sat gloomily staring off into space.¹⁷⁵

The news was not much better in North Africa, where the British were pushing Rommel back to his original starting point. During this

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THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

first fortnight in December, headquarters was additionally depressed by a cold wave that swept the Eastern Front: "Temperatures of -30 [to] -35 degrees centigrade were paralyzing the troops and making weapons unusable and reports kept coming in that the danger of severe defeat was . . . limitless." ¹⁷⁶

The timing of the declaration thus took place amid clear and ominous signs of Hitler's military failure. After insisting for months that he would never provoke America, he suddenly declared war at a time when he could least afford so powerful an enemy. *Why had he done it?* It was a personal decision about which he had informed neither the Foreign Office, nor the Wehrmacht. "As a result," Deputy Operations Chief Warlimont wrote, "we were now faced with a war on two fronts in the most serious conceivable form."

It is now clear from the testimony of German Army and Navy and the chief of the Wehrmacht Operations Staff (General Jodl) that there were no plans whatever for war against the United States.

General Warlimont quotes a conversation with his superior which must be considered among the most remarkable in the annals of the Prussian-German Army on the eve of war:

Jodl: The Staff must now examine where the United States is most likely to employ the bulk of her forces initially, the Far East or Europe. We cannot take further decisions until that has been clarified.

Warlimont: Agreed. This examination is obviously necessary, but so far, we have never considered a war against the United States and so have no data on which to base this examination; we can therefore hardly undertake this job just like that.

Jodl: See what you can do. When we get back tomorrow we will talk about this in more detail.

As Warlimont commented laconically, "This and no more was the beginning for our headquarters of German strategy against America. . . ." ¹⁷⁷ In an interview after the war, Field Marshal Göring, commander of the Luftwaffe, also confessed his ignorance of Hitler's declaration and concluded, quite rightly, that his Führer must have acted "impulsively." ¹⁷⁸

Certainly the Nazis welcomed the Japanese attack on America and were very pleased indeed to see the Arsenal of Democracy attacked from the rear. But that had already been achieved by Pearl Harbor, without any commitment on Hitler's part. As General Jodl commented after the war, "We should have preferred a new and powerful ally without a new and powerful enemy." ¹⁷⁹

Hitler's declaration of war was of very considerable political help to President Roosevelt. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt was afraid that the American people would demand a concentra-

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GOD: ADOLF HITLER

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tion of military forces in the Pacific and thus force a complete revamping of the priority that Roosevelt was giving to the European theater. James MacGregor Burns has emphasized Roosevelt's problem: "Was it possible, after all Washington's elaborate efforts to fight first in Europe, with only a holding action in the Pacific, that the United States would be left with only a war in the Far East? . . ." ¹⁸⁰

A formal German declaration of war on America would solve President Roosevelt's dilemma and clear the political air. Hitler, who had never declared war formally on any other country, obliged Roosevelt now. In doing so, he cut the ground from under the president's political opponents. For after Hitler had declared war on America even the most vociferous "noninterventionist" could hardly object to sending all-out aid to our European comrades in arms. Proof of how much Hitler had helped Roosevelt came on the very day of Hitler's declaration. When, on 11 December, the president asked Congress to recognize that a state of war existed between the United States and Germany, not one member of Congress voted against a resolution which, had it been taken a few days earlier, almost surely would have failed. It is, of course, quite possible that the United States could have been drawn into war against Hitler at some future time anyway. We shall never know. We do know that "the Führer's initiative gave immeasurable aid and comfort to his opponents and victims." ¹⁸¹

These, then, are the "rational" explanations that have been given for Hitler's self-defeating decision to declare war on America: he had a confused conception of the United States; he wanted to help his Japanese ally; he preferred to attack America before being attacked. But the reasons, somehow, do not add up. Both in retrospect and at the time, judged in either military or political terms, it was an unnecessary and irrational act which benefited his enemies far more than it helped him. "Hitler had not only blundered," one authority has concluded, "he had ruined his own cause." The Führer himself ruefully admitted that there was no logic for what he had done. "War with the United States," he said, "was a tragedy and illogical." ¹⁸²

We must agree with him. Why, then, had he done it?

It would be gratifying, at the end of this discussion, if we could now show how easily psychohistory can solve a problem that has baffled conventional historians. But it is not at all clear that it can. For again we encounter problems of human motivation which no historian can feel confident about solving. Psychology can help us here, but that is all it can do. For psychohistory cannot supplant traditional history; it can only supplement it by adding depth to our understanding of historical personalities. And even with its help, we may doubt that we shall ever be able to "explain satisfactorily," fully, and finally *why* it was that Hitler did what he did.

The question, ultimately, is unanswerable. But let us not despair.

Wagner

Dec 1941

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

We can respond to it the way all historians—and psychoanalysts—must respond when asked to explain the motivations of man: we can venture some cautious guesses.

Let us guess first that both Hitler and the historians are correct: his declaration of war on America (like many of his acts) cannot be understood by logic and common sense. It was indeed "an irrational act." But that assertion scarcely concludes the matter. Rather than terminating discussion, it leaves us with the problem of trying to find reasons for his irrational behaviour. It is my guess that Hitler's fateful decision was influenced by three things: his lifelong difficulty with personal identification; his unconscious desire for defeat; and his irrational belief that ultimate triumph lay in total destruction.

Personal pride and prestige, it has often been asserted, were reasons why Hitler declared war on America. Among all the Nazi leaders interviewed after the war, "the answer uniformly obtained was that Hitler had acted from motives of prestige." He wanted to declare war on Roosevelt before Roosevelt could get America to declare war on him.¹⁸³

"Prestige" certainly was involved. But it went far deeper than a mere desire to upstage FDR. This decision cut to the very core of Hitler's being, for his identity as a person was being threatened on the Eastern Front by the "subhuman Slavs" and "Bolshevized Jews" who led the Red Army. This scum was actually defeating him! His self-image as an invincible, masculine, all-conquering Führer was dissolving before his eyes. That must never be allowed to happen. He would show *them*—that is, he would show himself. He would prove to himself that he still existed as the invincible myth-person he had created. Since he had condemned himself to military infallibility as the "Greatest Field Commander of All Time," he must strike a new and even more commanding image; he must conquer an even more unconquerable foe than Russia. He would destroy America.

This interpretation of Hitler's motivation, based partly on Erikson's formulation of identity crises, would stress that throughout his life Adolf Hitler was plagued by problems of identity diffusion. He worried continually about "finding" himself as a person (see Chapter 3, p. 173, Chapter 5, p. 357). Such people, Erikson has shown, have recurrent and intense feelings of anxiety about their very existence. When they act in ways which seem totally irrational, even dangerous to themselves, they do so because they are trying to resolve the question of who they really are; they are reaffirming that they really do exist as the person they want to be. Hence, when they are confronted by a crisis situation in which they feel their psychological existence threatened, they may provoke encounters that bring an even more acute crisis in order to reassure themselves. These self-imposed crises may actually be more self-destructive than self-affirming, but they are covertly intended to test and reaffirm precariously held feelings of personal identity which seem to be slipping away.

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Thus, when Hitler's existence as a person was threatened on the Eastern Front during the first weeks of December 1941, it was psychologically imperative for him at that time to take a prompt and even greater risk. "It would be exactly then," an Eriksonian psychiatrist has suggested, "that a character such as Hitler would be most stirred to provoke a crisis in order to reassert his very existence. He would try to do so by making *direct* contact with a very powerful counterforce, such as the United States. In fact, the stronger the counterforce the better, in order to heighten his sense of contact, of being in touch, and thus to counteract the terrifying feeling that his 'self' was being dissolved."¹⁸⁴

Another psychological interpretation of Hitler's irrational action also seems possible: he declared war on America not so much to test and confirm his own identity as to respond to an unconscious urge for self-destruction. Hitler—like other borderlines—thought in totalities. He simply could not conceive, he often said, of any alternative between complete victory and absolute catastrophe. He would either be a conquering lion or a sacrificial lamb; if he could not be creator, he would be destroyer.

The moment that Hitler decided he could no longer be a conqueror for Germany and must therefore become its destroyer was a decisive moment in history. It was also a moment that is difficult to pinpoint. Certainly Hitler kept talking about "inevitable victory" long after his reason told him it was not possible. But it seems most likely that he realized, after the first major defeats in Russia in early December 1941, that he could not gain the kind of victory he required. He articulated that conclusion to others sometime later. General Jodl's war diary records that by the turn of the year 1941-1942, Hitler had made it clear to him that "victory could no longer be attained." An authority on Hitler's military strategy puts the date even earlier, saying that by mid-November Hitler realized that victory was "no longer attainable." Certainly he knew it by the time of the Red Army's sweeping winter offensive of 6-7 December 1941.¹⁸⁵ It was an ominous conclusion. For it was at this time that he decided to defeat a different kind of enemy and ordered the massacre of the Jews; it was at this time also, during the first defeats in Russia, that he declared war on America.

He did so, we are speculating, because his deeply split mind saw total defeat as the only alternative left to him. The question now became how to achieve a catastrophic defeat worthy of his historic greatness. This seems to have been the problem on his mind when he confided to an intimate, "I have to attain immortality even if the whole German nation perishes in the process."¹⁸⁶

Hitler's thinking often went back to World War I, an experience that had burned deeply into his mind. As a front-line soldier and racist demagogue after the war, he believed that German defeat had been caused by two things: Jewish traitors and American intervention. Over and over again he told Hanfstaengl: "The only thing that brought our

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There was, we have also been suggesting, another pattern in his life: the unconscious impulse to punish himself and to fail. Very often he had tried to direct that impulse away from himself by punishing others. The juxtaposition of two decisions he made within two days in December 1941 suggests a link connecting punishment of self with punishment of others. On 11 December he had assured himself of defeat by declaring war on the United States while Russia was attacking him; on the next day, 12 December, he set forth a decree designed to inflict upon others the most terrifying punishment he could imagine. He called it the *Nacht und Nebel* decree. Literally it meant "Night and Fog." And that meant that any person who was deemed guilty of less than total loyalty to him could be arrested without charge, that no relative would be informed of the prisoner's disappearance, that his whereabouts would never be learned—the person was to disappear into perpetual night and fog. But even that was not enough. He had to project in a different way: he would destroy all Germans. For all Germany was guilty and unworthy. Thus he cried out: "Germany is not worthy of me [*meiner nicht würdig*], let her perish."¹⁵⁰

But what did these words really mean? In destroying Germany he was, in a sense, destroying himself, for as he had so often said, "*Ich bin das deutsche Volk!*" But all his life he had also identified Germany with his mother. Is it possible that he was destroying the Motherland now because she was deserting him, just as his mother, Klara, had abandoned him when he was little and allowed his father to punish him? "Let her perish." Was this punishment for his mother? Or was it something else?

He had tried to blame the German people for his own failure and guilt. He had repeated over and over again that "they" were not worthy of him; he had killed them by the millions. But the haunting fear could not be exorcised. Perhaps, after all, he was not worthy of them—*let him perish.* Perhaps. At any rate, that is what he was about to do, thus fulfilling the promise he had made in a dozen moments of despair: he would kill himself.

TRIUMPH THROUGH SELF-DESTRUCTION

Our Führer, Adolf Hitler, fighting to the last breath against Bolshevism, fell for Germany this afternoon. . . .

—German radio announcement.
1 May 1945

During his last days, members of Hitler's entourage were shocked to discover that their once indomitable Führer had become a trembling, broken old man, his once immaculate uniform now flecked with sputum

(1940) ~~at sea (this)~~
THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

Something even stranger took place a few weeks later at Dunkirk, when Hitler refused the opportunity of smashing the entire British expeditionary force in Europe. Instead, on 15 May, he suddenly gave orders to halt all tank movements on the Dunkirk salient. The significance of this order has been well summarized by a British military historian:

His action preserved the British forces when nothing else could have saved them. By making it possible for them to escape he enabled them to rally in England, continue the war, and man the coasts to defy the threat of invasion. Thereby he produced his own ultimate downfall, and Germany's five years later. Acutely aware of the narrowness of the escape, but ignorant of its cause, the British people spoke of "the miracle of Dunkirk." . . . It will never be possible to learn for certain why he came to his decision and what his motives were.¹⁴²

Some explanations, of course, have been given. Robert Payne, for example, believes that Hitler took pity on the English because he had come to admire them as a youth during a visit to Liverpool and wanted to "spare Churchill a bitter humiliation."¹⁴³ The difficulty with that explanation is that Hitler had never visited England as a youth and had despised Churchill all his life. (See Appendix, "A Note on Spurious Sources.") It has also been suggested that Hitler stopped his armor before Dunkirk because the terrain was too soft; or that he believed the Luftwaffe alone could smash the British without risking the tanks he needed in the south. Hitler himself tried to explain his odd behavior by saying that on a mere whim he had decided to let the British go "in a sporting spirit," after the English manner.

But none of these explanations convinced German generals at the time; nor have they satisfied military historians. At headquarters, Generals Warlimont and Halder were simply "flabbergasted by Hitler's order," which they found "incomprehensible." Field commanders were equally appalled. General Guderian wrote incredulously, "We were stopped within sight of Dunkirk!" Baffled members of General Rundstedt's staff concluded that the only possible solution to "the riddle of Dunkirk" was that Hitler for some inexplicable reason "wished to help the British." Certainly that is what he accomplished.¹⁴⁴

It may well be true that no rational explanation can be given for Hitler's decision at Dunkirk. We therefore suggest that he was acting irrationally: unconsciously he did not really want a victory.

"HITLER'S GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY"

In an important study of World War II, two American historians argued convincingly that Hitler's "golden opportunity" came a year after his self-induced failure at Dunkirk. By the spring of 1941 his submarines were creating havoc with British shipping, his armies had

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crushed Norway, France, year and had just won there was a realistic cha Mediterranean basin by tatar, thus forcing Spain to in the Mediterranean or t of Nazi triumph. These hi record that in May and J than at any time in the Second World War."¹⁴⁵ A Naval High Command fu implored Hitler to attack Again, one must ask why,

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And it was he alone prove his downfall.

OPERATION BARBAROS

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ATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

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crushed Norway, France, and the Low Countries during the preceding year and had just won decisive victories in the Balkans and Libya; there was a realistic chance that he could win control of the entire Mediterranean basin by taking Egypt, Suez, all North Africa, and Gibralt- tar, thus forcing Spain to align itself with the Axis. There was no force in the Mediterranean or the Middle East capable of stemming the tide of Nazi triumph. These historians therefore conclude: "History may well record that in May and June 1941, Adolf Hitler was closer to victory than at any time in the course of the epic struggle known as the Second World War."¹⁴⁵ And that is not mere hindsight. The German Naval High Command fully recognized the marvelous opportunity and implored Hitler to attack in the Mediterranean. He refused to do so. Again, one must ask why, and again the question invites speculation.

Göring suggested one possible explanation: he noted that the Führer was never comfortable about naval matters and could think only in "continental terms." It is true that Hitler had always been uneasy about the water, from pleasure-boat rides to major naval operations. That fact may help explain his halfhearted preparations for a cross-channel invasion of England, its final cancellation, and his neglect of the Mediterranean theater. He once confessed to an aide, "On land I am a hero; but at sea, I am a coward."¹⁴⁶

Or was Hitler's failure to attack in the spring of 1941 a conse- quence of his infantilism? He might have been unable to decide among so many appealing strategic alternatives because, "like a child, he could not bear to disregard any attractive objectives; no more could he bring himself to give up ground once gained. . . ." And like a child he wanted everything quickly and cheaply: he wanted to defeat England without an amphibious invasion; he wanted to win the Mediterranean with the Luftwaffe and a few army corps; he wanted to conquer all of Russia right away.¹⁴⁷

There was, of course, a totally different alternative for Hitler in the spring of 1941. He did not need to attack anyone, anyplace. He was already the master of Europe. He had smashed Poland and conquered France, and he controlled the western coastline from Norway to Spain. Secure from western attack and at peace with the Soviet Union, how could his Greater German Reich have been challenged? It is unlikely that beleaguered Britain, herself vulnerable to attack and still without allies in Russia or America, could have found either the material re- sources or the will to do anything but accept the fait accompli. It was Hitler who opened up alternatives for his enemies. It was he who de- cided that "enough was not enough," that the war must continue.¹⁴⁸

And it was he alone who would make the decision which was to prove his downfall.

OPERATION BARBAROSSA: THE INVASION OF RUSSIA

For several weeks during the summer of 1940, after the fall of France, Hitler was unsure of what to do next. As so often in his life.

May 58
1940

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(3)

Haffner

Reactionary and/or Revolutionary?

1940

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1938

1940

1933-39

1937

had changed his own radical
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 was not a dictator. Dictators
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 leader not of a determined
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 ing the years 1933-1935.† He
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 democracy and of the demo-
 and the United States during
 1941 he said that "the National
 ty through democracy!"

1918 by witnessing and liv-
 man empire, Hitler was not a
 18 we have no evidence of
 contrasted with his consistent
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 1934 hoped that Hitler would
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 in May 1938. He was repelled
 mals of the Italian royal house,
 e corruptions of the Roman
 of the Italian king. By having

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statements: p. 369, note 189. See
 eg. 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 Zitelmann.

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Lincoln

Statesman and Strategist 129

1940
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1947
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This tendency is not unreasonable; their emphasis is on Hitler's career leading to a war that he could not but lose, dragging millions to death and destruction before the end. This widely and generally held view still remains acceptable, except for two things. One is that in 1940 and 1941 Hitler came close to winning his war. The other is that his ultimate defeat may have been foreordained (even though "foreordained" suggests a determinism that historians ought to avoid) because of his hubris; but then hubris is a fault of character rather than of vision; and Hitler was not blind.* As Pascal said, love is not really blind; and neither are other kinds of passion. They are, more than often, a compound of a startling clarity of vision with a startling blindness (a compound that, like "half-truth," is not fixable within the categories of mathematics). And since vision involves purposes rather than motives, we ought to direct some attention to what Adolf Hitler's purposes were before and perhaps especially during the war.

They are not easy to ascertain.† (Or perhaps I should write

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the "to this day widely prevalent representation of [Hitler] the man of instincts . . . ignoring the rationality and the boldness of planning that were basic to his behavior and which governed his rise not less than all his other apparent abilities"—very true, but then Fest does *not* apply the same judgment to the war years and to Hitler's foreign policies (about which we may find the few mistakes in his otherwise excellent book). Steinert, who is very good on the German people during the war (in *ST/HKK/D*) in *ST*, is weak on Hitler's statesmanship and strategy, with a share of minor errors; also unduly dependent on Goebbels. The most extreme disproportion between the space and treatment devoted to the war and the prewar years is in Davidson. (See chapter 1, p. 22n.)

*Kershaw in *KER*, for instance, p. 121: "... a deepening hubris of power, the early stages of what was to develop into catastrophic *folie de grandeur* and detachment from reality." (Not entirely untrue, but the last three words are debatable.) *KER* also tends to exaggerate Ribbentrop's influence on Hitler (pp. 144, 146); and he does not treat Hitler's aim and wish to split his enemies after 1941. Yet Kershaw is correct when he states (p. 177): "Hitler's decisions in the military arena were by no means all as absurd as they were sometimes retroactively painted."

†Schramm, in *sch*, p. 31: "Hitler hardly ever lost control of himself completely, even though in time his nerves were taxed to such an extent that most men, operating under a similar burden, would not have been physically equal to it. Consequently, it is very difficult to come to grips with what Hitler really thought and perceived, difficult to clarify the extent to which he was motivated by logic or impelled by instinct."

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nt of Hitler the statesman
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e tendency of many of his
last six years of his life.*

(No. 9: "Der Feldherr und
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about Hitler's domestic than
s decision to attack Russia he
ough Goebbels was *not*, at that
IT/A, p. 103, Zitellmann denies
it he then says nothing about
36, Fest rightly warns against

1940

His statement to the generals

time when he began to realize that the British were not giving in. As he said to the close group of generals at the Berghof on 31 July 1940, the British had two hopes left: Russia and America. Against America he could do nothing. But if Russia were knocked out, Churchill's—and Roosevelt's—hopes would be eliminated. The continental power of Germany would then be untrammelled and unconquerable, and sooner or later Churchill and Roosevelt would be forced to accommodate him. Their own people would be forced to realize the futility of an unwinnable war, and many among them would take at least some satisfaction from the liquidation of Communist power in the world.

This calculation was not entirely unreasonable. "Russia: England's last hope"—he repeated this among his generals and to his staff (including his secretaries), again and again; many records of that exist in 1940 and 1941, and even later,* and probably not only for

answer was weak: "In reality Hitler's decision for a war in the East [it was not yet a decision] came in July 1940, at a time when he was convinced of the possibility of reaching an arrangement with Britain." He was *not* so convinced then. The often superficial, but in this case insightful, Gisevius (G1, p. 516) wrote: "He took the detour to Moscow [in order to] defeat England." Bullock is not clear about this (BU, p. 598): On 31 July 1940, "Hitler still put the invasion of Britain in the front of his argument but he was already looking ahead to an attack on Russia in 1941, whether the British capitulated first or not." Jäckel sees a duality; but he is undecided. JHH, p. 86: "Since the 1930s Hitler wanted to conquer Lebensraum in Russia. That was always his main motive. Yet he did not emphasize this when he attempted to convince his circle about his plan." More clearly, p. 86: "Everything indicates that he had always kept [the *Lebensraum* plans] in sight. Whether he really believed the new strategic justification that he presented in July 1940 or whether he introduced it to win over his supporters for a new campaign of conquest is of course hard to determine. Probably both were the case."

"There are many such statements of Hitler's, among which is the one on 27 December 1940 to Admiral Raeder, who insisted on concentrating all German resources against England. Hitler: "This cannot be done until England's last continental hope is eliminated." To Hewel, 29 May 1941: When Russia is defeated, "this will force England to make peace. Hope this year." Halder's war diary, 14 June 1941: "After the attack on Russia and the evolution of his calculation that the collapse of Russia would induce England to give up the struggle." That same day: "The main enemy is still Britain." (From "an unpublished source taken by a Luftwaffe general"—no other reference or source, however—in Irving, 1/H, p. 266.)

purposes of self-justification cronies that he kept speculating on the invasion of Russia "table" (i.e., Bormann-recognition which I had to make do than to attack Russia."

For Time—and it's always been increasingly against her of her hope of being Continent itself, with an own. We had no choice Russian element out of it another reason, equally threat that a Russia in. For it was absolutely certain would attack us."

"We had no choice"? "Ab: is significant: In Hitler's explanation word about Lebensraum.

It is of course possible that meant to impress his generals none of his leading generals

Hewel diary, 20 June 1941: "A long from the Russian campaign . . . he is that Hewel was *not* a general.) To Ke "The ultimate objective of the Reich 1941, with his armies at Leningrad, Moscow, Halder war diary: Hitler's allied power on the continent and in her fortunes with the help of the Fricke (КТВ/СКЛ, 28 October 1941) gland to make peace at once."

*AH/B, p. 15, February 1945.

1940-41, 1938, 1942

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 (*HfAN*, 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, *GO*, 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 re must be looked at and was his refusal to ad accused of not being people close to him—into camps in the eas 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 then left over. Roughly speaking, in 1944, Hitler asks. Speer confirmed to Hitler wanted Speer to gather Hu

Hitler
200 p. 1938

1940-41

Book of
Euthanasia
program

*Euthanasia had shown him that liquidation must be kept as the #1 secret. He said to himself “A death-grip must be kept held on this secret.” I engaged his use of the word “death-grip.” It must be said that when Jodl was without a word, he was most certainly without it.

(1940-41)

takes were his misreading of the British, especially in the summer of 1940, and his consequent conviction that he ought to attack his Russian neighbor no later than in the early summer of 1941.

HE FAILED TO CONQUER RUSSIA. But was his failure ordained from the beginning? He was stopped only at the gates of Moscow in December 1941. Not all of the mistakes of the German military strategy in Russia were attributable to him. If his decision to hold on to Stalingrad was wrong, his often-criticized directive, overriding his generals, not to drive directly on to Moscow in July 1941 is at least debatable,* and his determined order forbidding an overall retreat in December 1941 proved to be surprisingly effective. But these pages are directed to questions about his strategic statesmanship, not about his military tactics. Why did he choose to plan an invasion of Russia as early as July 1940? (The final directive was issued in December.) That was his supreme folly—thus the generally accepted opinion,† convincing because of what we know of its consequences. A strategic folly, motivated by his Lebensraum folly, aiming at something much more than the defeat of an opponent: to the permanent conquest of those lands for the purpose of settling Germans there.

But was this the reason why he chose to plan a war against Russia in July 1940? That, too, is debatable.‡ He took this step at the very

*Hillgruber (and others) make much of this. Yet as early as 5 December 1940, Hitler refused to make Moscow the main operational objective.

†"His ideology ["Weltanschauung"] now dominated his Realpolitik." 69, p. 240.

‡It was—and it ought to be—debated. Hillgruber, in HST, repeatedly wrote that after July 1940 the war against England was of secondary [zweitrangig] importance to Hitler. This argument is not tenable. (About this see Lukacs, and LEW, *passim*.) The German historian Bernd Stegemann (1982) refuted it convincingly, in GWU, 1982, pp. 206–13 (also in 1987); also Hartmut Schustereit, *Vabanque. Hitlers Angriff auf die Sowjetunion 1941 als Versuch, durch den Sieg im Osten den Westen zu bezwingen* (Herford/Bonn, 1988). In Manfred Funke, ed., *Hitlerdeutschland und die Mächte. Materialien zur Aussenpolitik des III. Reiches* (D, 1977), Hillgruber (p. 100, note 18) criticized Broszat's article in VFZ, 1970, in which the latter wrote that Hitler's decision to go at Russia was not a "calculated plan to realize his [Lebensraum] ideas" but that he felt compelled [ein Zugzwang] to get out from waiting in the summer of 1940 and proceed to a decisive ending of the war." Broszat was right; Hillgruber's

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ING; and there was no reason for in 1939. So here we come to the up that was inseparable from the a hurry. This was not the result of ut Hitler's career there had been ow to wait, sometimes to the extent e have seen that in the winter of If that he did not have long to live; ytical habits, including his medica- hat he was more ill than he actually eeling about himself onto the des- it Fate, or Providence, might not s for Germanism. Already at the iber 1937, he said that he had to s" must be solved before 1943–45, ermany, when the rearmament of t her would be completed. His ainst this—and not only because 1939. Time was *not* working for r. They would not sustain a disci- rearmament against a National ally, strong and resplendent across he innate superiority of National sm of the West, should have lis- ily right; but for reasons peculiar ibly the most important miscalcu- d to his undoing. Two other mis-

h people had much to do with his hatred thus brought about a world war. Haffneraving won the war against Poland mili- for realizing his original objective, which ce they had previously refused." At the the, potentially suicidal, character of his November 1939: "In this struggle I will if my people. For the outside [world] no So it was to be.

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1940-44, 45

—since, unlike in the natural
wledge may be understanding
exists a substantial body of his
not only in his public speeches
before that, in the hundreds
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n *Kampf* and in *Hitler's Secret*
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ally thought.

We may say—at the risk of some imprecision—that his purpose was to make Germany one of the greatest powers of the world, certainly the greatest in Europe. The fundament of this was the achievement of a new and unprecedented unity of the German people (which involved the expulsion of the Jews among them), and the eventual unity of nearly all German-speaking people in Europe in a single Reich. We may essay the statement that this was probably his minimal aim,* even though he did not (and could not) follow it with any great consistency. Especially during the war, his policies would evolve and change. We shall see, for example, that his policy of expelling Jews from Germany eventually evolved into the aim in 1940) of expelling them from most, if not all, of Europe; then (in 1941), when emigration and expulsion were no longer possible, to have masses of them exterminated, and then (in late 1944) the mass extermination of the remnant millions in the death camps was suspended (a complicated matter to which in chapter 6 I shall have to return). There is, of course, ample evidence that the presence of Jews (at least in Germany and Europe) was a fundamental obsession of Hitler's. There is also ample evidence of his desire for "Lebensraum": to obtain, or conquer, if need be, more lands for German settlement in the east of Europe, including Russia. But while obsessions and intentions may overlap, they are not altogether the same thing; and, despite Hitler's innumerable and often categorical statements and directives concerning the latter, his Lebensraum policies were less consistent than his Judeophobic ones.†

This is the main reason why we must qualify the widely accepted view, according to which anti-Judaism and the conquest of European Russia leading to *Lebensraum* were not only the two fundamental but

"God writes straight with crooked lines." Paradoxically, his defeat and death achieved this (except for Austria and the South Tyrol). In the last year of the war, millions of Germans abandoned their lands and fled westward, into what remained of Germany; after the war, millions more were expelled from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia. Thus, for the first time in eight hundred years, there were few Germans left in Eastern Europe beyond the Oder River—which was perhaps the most enduring, and historic, consequence of Hitler's war.

†Schreiber (SCHRB, p. 65) mentions that Hitler used the term "Lebensraum" in MX only twice. (The term came from the German geographer Ratzel and others, as early as 1897.)

aa). Deuerlein is very perspicacious
... a "Timetable of a World Con-
himself said; lead articles for [a]

Berkeley, Calif., 1982 (hereafter:
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on should know first of all that you
intentions until I give them out as
erent. You will never learn what is
his personally to Fleming.) See also
eder, admitting his own "three ways

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obedient and subservient to him. In 1939, "Czechia" became a German protectorate under the name of Bohemia-Moravia, and Slovakia an "independent" state, yet entirely subservient to him. A. J. P. Taylor ("Only Danzig prevented cooperation between Germany and Poland") was entirely wrong: Hitler wanted a Poland that was a satellite or, at best, a junior partner of Germany, without any independence in foreign policy. These aims of a Hitlerian Realpolitik superseded his ideological preferences. All over Europe (for example, in Holland, Denmark, France, Romania, and in a few remarkable instances even in Austria), local National Socialist leaders were abashed when they found that Hitler did not support them and paid them hardly any interest at all. He preferred to work with the established pro-German governments of such provinces and states. The most telling example of this occurred in Romania in January 1941. There the National Socialist and populist Iron Guard (whose anti-Semitic ideology and practices were perhaps the most fanatic and radical in all Europe) got into conflict with the nationalist and military government of General Antonescu, whom Hitler respected and liked. When in January 1941 fighting broke out between the Antonescu and Iron Guard forces, the Germans unequivocally supported the former at the expense of the latter, on occasion with German armor and tanks.

Of course he had his reasons. While the war lasted, he needed order in the countries that were his allies or satellites—a kind of stability that must not be endangered by revolutionary experiments, and that assured undisrupted deliveries of necessary material supplies to the Reich. Thus he put up for a long time with allied chiefs of state—Pétain, an Antonescu, Regent Horthy of Hungary, King Boris of Bulgaria—some of whom he knew were not wholly loyal or unconditional adherents of a National Socialist Germany. Still, it is significant that he did not offer the slightest promise or give the slightest indication to the effect that sooner or later, perhaps after the war, his foreign National Socialist followers would get their rewards.* In sum, a perfect conformity with the requirements of German foreign policy

*He would, of course, recognize and support some of them in 1944, when his former satellites or junior partners deserted him; but that was no longer important.

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also entrusted with a special person
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†Hitler to Mussolini in January 1940
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(as late as December 1944, he made
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‡Speer, *SP*, p. 319: As the war went o
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pidly." He knew that this was
of argument would impress
like nine years before, when

his revolutionary attempt was shot down in the Munich streets,
he would become the ruler of Germany legally, constitutionally,
democratically, and not against but with the support of the most
respectable people in Germany—at least in part because of their
anticommunism. It is significant that he continued using this theme
even after he became chancellor, and even after the election cam-
paign that finally led to his consolidation of power. On 14 Octo-
ber 1933 (and in a speech justifying Germany's departure from
the League of Nations), he said: "The Red revolt could have spread
across Germany like wildfire. . . . For eight months now we have
been waging a heroic struggle against the Communist threat to our
people. . . ." (This at a time when the Communists in Germany had
been annihilated, their leaders in prison or in exile.) On 27 June
1934 (three days before his move against Röhm, the "Night of the
Long Knives"), he received three Catholic bishops, to whom he
declared: "The defense of Europe against Bolshevism is our task for
the next two or three hundred years."⁸

He knew how to appeal to the conservatives. Already in *Mein
Kampf* he praised the Christian-populist Karl Lueger, "who knew
how to use the existing structures of power and authority, using
such older elements and institutions to the advantage of his own
movement." We saw that he sought, and gained, entry to conserva-
tive circles in Munich as early as 1920-21. In 1926, he fought and
won against the radical Gregor Strasser within the party, agreeing
to vote in favor of a restitution of properties to the former Ger-
man princes that had been taken from them in 1918—a cause dear
to the older German conservatives. In 1930, he said: "Against us
stands an older Germany. It is no longer our world, but we do not
wish to be torn away from this older Germany, because to it belong

⁸ Cited by Klaus Scholder, *Die Kirchen und das Dritte Reich*, 8, 1985, 1, p. 246. He
would, of course, return to such arguments after his invasion of the Soviet Union in
June 1941, but at that time he would no longer do so in the service of domestic
politics but as an instrument of his statesmanship; while at the same time (again,
privately), he often expressed his admiration for Stalin, together with his contem-
puous hatred of the reactionary capitalists Churchill and Roosevelt. For more
details about this, see chapter 5.

ism among the working classes in
of Marx. It may also be of interest
popular not when the power of the
of Marxists were strongest but when
tries in the 1930s and in the United
McCarthy years.

1933

1933

1920

1930

1941

1929-33 1933-1935 1941
 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 coterie 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!"

1941
 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

1938
 "I am not a dictator and will never be one . . . any popinjay can rule as a dictator." Cited by Fest, F, p. 572.

‡TIT/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 monarchy, his friend Muss what Hitler saw, and though many of his confidants. The merits 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 sent a congratulatory telegram 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 state but the reality of it would achievements—domestic results of his leadership of Germany

*HR, p. 417. In I/W, p. 65, Irv chies are at most capable of ha empires are won only by revolution
 †Hermann Giesler, *Ein anderer* after: GR, p. 393.

‡F, p. 25.

**Especially by a German generally addressed, but also by Deuerlein, and others); by Haffner

D. T. By
 now he
 knew
 enough
 to react
 wisely on
 his own

1945 He, who was obsessed with the influence of Jews on Roosevelt and Churchill, knew that Jews had no influence on Stalin; that, indeed, Stalin was an anti-Semite of sorts. Great Russian nationalism, and—perhaps—pan-Slavism made Stalin and Russia formidable. Near the end, in 1945, he even ruminated whether he should have attacked Russia at all; and that a nationalist Russia, purged of Jews, might be the greatest danger yet.*

WE NOW COME TO THE last year of the war and the last year of Hitler's life. Now the necessity of adjusting his ideas to circumstances, of subordinating what remained of his military strategy to what he thought were the requirements of statesmanship, had become absolute. Military and political decisions, and their purposes, are of course never entirely separable. This Hitler knew very well. Yet it is possible for a historian to list their respective evidence

1944 1945 of danger to Moscow in the winter of 1941 in which he saw something similar to [his own] situation. [This in 1945.] On other, earlier occasions he said, half-jokingly, that in the event of a victory over Russia the best thing would be to entrust Stalin with the administration of that country, naturally under German supremacy, for Stalin would be the best man for that. All in all, he saw in Stalin something like a colleague. As late as July 1944 (SP, p. 399), Hitler speculated that Stalin might have been right in the purges; perhaps the Moscow process against General Tukhachevsky was not a fake. Zitellmann in ZIT/A, p. 161: "The thesis spread by propaganda [it was not only spread by propaganda but expressed by Hitler on occasion] that 'the issue was the defeat of Jewish Bolshevism Hitler did not himself believe'; he had concluded that Stalin pursued 'a national-Russian policy, having freed himself from the Jewish influence through his purges.' Yet the same Hitler, on 8 November 1941, in one of his public speeches (Heer, HR, p. 384): Stalin is 'nothing else . . . but an instrument in the hands of an all-powerful Jewry' behind him stand Kaganovich 'and all those Jews who are [leading] that powerful state.'"

1944 1945 O.H./B, 26 February 1945: "The brutal manner in which [Stalin] decapitated the Jewish intelligentsia, who had rendered him such signal service in the destruction of Tsarist Russia, encouraged me. . . ." Also: "That Stalinist empire which, in all its essentials is only the spiritual successor to the empire of Peter the Great." 2 April 1945: "It is possible that under the pressure of events, the Russians will rid themselves completely of Jewish Marxism, only to reincarnate Pan-Slavism in its most fierce and ferocious form."

separately, while recognizing same: to bring about a br

Hitler's phrase in July battle at Kursk, is tell as a giant torch ["ein F flame, demonstrating t vincible, that it was still counter-Stalingrad. The Russia and Italy were im defense and invincibility remarkable how, in early German retreat from Fr the Allies' attempt to cr preparations for a grea dennes.† He knew, in a situation, that the great running out of steam, ar thrust into Germany pr the great winter offensiv perhaps even all of Belgi not Paris but Antwerp) b and British armies in Be gomery's army into a se stun the Americans to su

*He was, of course, imprecise production. From 1942 to 194 support [Hitler's] thesis that the noses and anxieties may be too

†Carr (c, p. 105; also Schra generals on 31 August 1944: "shall not let an opportunity pass; childish and naive to hope for The time will come when the spite of everything the rupture up, but you must await the moment continue to fight until there is it. . . . Whatever happens we: Great said, 'one of our damne

194

THE HITLER OF HISTORY

1941, 43, 1944

was his evident unwillingness to read or hear or see reports of what was really done to Jews in the east. This unwillingness accorded with his unwillingness to visit or even to look at photographs of severely bombed German cities, or at pictures of the German refugees trekking westward in the brutal winter of 1944-45, pictures that he, at least on one occasion, pushed aside (and perhaps even with his unwillingness to look at photographs of the July 1944 conspirators' executions).^{*} Here we are faced, again, with a duality in his character. Generally speaking, not wanting to know something means preferring not to think about it at all. Within Hitler's person we may recognize an element of weakness in a man who otherwise could not be described as a coward; or, at best, a sensitive (and, in a way, feminine) element in the character of a man whose brutal ideas and brutal expressions were the very opposite of sensitive. Hitler was not a sadist. He took no sensual pleasure in the sufferings of his enemies or victims. Sadism is a sin of the flesh; Hitler's sins were those of the spirit. There is no evidence that his often-stated beliefs—that by persecuting the Jews he was acting as an instrument of God, and that the war had been forced on him by Jews—were meant for public consumption only.[†]

factories in Germany. In March 1943, Dr. Korherr, a statistician working for the SS, was ordered by Himmler to prepare an exact statistical account of the number of Jews remaining in the East; this was then summarized and typed on a special typewriter for Hitler to read. According to Eichmann (FL, p. 138), Hitler saw it and then ordered it to be destroyed.

See also the article by Dieter Pohl ("Die Holocaust-Forschung und Goldhagens Thesen") in VFZ, January 1997, p. 11: "... it is still not wholly clear whether economic motives, meaning the preservation of Jews for work, did not have a considerable influence on the sequence of the mass murders."

Maser (M/A, p. 255) makes an interesting remark about Hitler's unwillingness to confront one of his last cooks, Frau Manzialy, who was of (partly) Jewish origin: "... this also suggests that even in connection with the killing of Jews he was 'only' inhuman as long as he did not have to face his victims."

† To this we may add another possible connection of the Final Solution with his private knowledge that the war could no longer be won: He knew not only that he would lose his war but also that the Jews of the world knew this. The perceptive Burrin (his concluding paragraph), p. 169: "Around the middle of September 1941, when he decided to kill the Jews, he certainly did not think defeat was inevitable. But he must have assuredly felt that it would take a great deal of luck in the future

XXXX Give me a monster who long to become human again, and I can align myself in his place.

THESE WERE, as we have seen, the ical condemnation of Jews. individuals. There is the st Giesler,^{*} who saw Hitler re: raphy of Emperor Frederic valist Ernst Kantorowicz. (11 December 1941), he ask are there, any decent Jews? "who took his own life as decomposition of other nati sions Hitler mentioned the ' Dr. Bloch, as we have seen

for him to win; and he saw clearly The extermination of the Jews, th vengeance. By putting to death d little did it matter to his obsessee civilians—he was demonstrating somehow sacrificial death of the Je victory, to fight on to annihilation ating spilled German blood, and a conduct this exercise of vengeance as the situation worsened, and as h

^{*}Giesler, p. 520; about him see

† In *Hitlers Tischgespräche im Führerhauptquartier* (1968), p. 36, Dietrich Eckart, Hitler's friend and confidant, wrote: "The decent Jew, Lukacs, LEW, pp. 452-453, book entitled *Geschlecht und Charakter der Juden und Christen*, the problem. [He ...] was probably right in his anti-Semitism. He was wrong in his and rising, Christianity: 'Against d Humanity thirsts for the founder o a decision as in the Year One. Betw and culture, between woman and i between nothingness and Godhead the two opposite kingdoms: There i a Third Reich that was to be ruler religion of the folk."

Always better to have a man who lusts for blood in the abstract.

* The angels were coming to him every day, but how hideous ~~and~~ they must have seemed to him. Power to torment him. Like devils!

§ P.T. He could confront an entire society more easily than one victim, that was good for us. Nothing messy in his habits for us to have to clean up. Much better to have one executioner who does it with a pen, or in case of greater security with a

word or an inkblot. Inspiration of the hand. Then with the broad

for hear or see reports of what . This unwillingness accorded ven to look at photographs of r at pictures of the German ital winter of 1944-45, pictures ashed aside (and perhaps even tographs of the July 1944 con- faced, again, with a duality in it wanting to know something t at all. Within Hitler's person kness in a man who otherwise r, at best, a sensitive (and, in a er of a man whose brutal ideas r, opposite of sensitive. Hitler leasure in the sufferings of his f the flesh; Hitler's sins were vidence that his often-stated he was acting as an instrument orced on him by Jews—were

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ation every night
us that we
it him. Like devils

(2)

THERE WERE, as we have seen, a few exceptions to Hitler's categor- ical condemnation of Jews. There were his exemptions of certain individuals. There is the statement by his apologist, the architect Giesler,* who saw Hitler reading, in October 1944, the great biog- raphy of Emperor Frederick II by the fine German Jewish medie- valist Ernst Kantorowicz. In one of Hitler's table conversations (11 December 1941), he asked the rhetorical question: Were there, are there, any decent Jews? Hardly any. Otto Weininger, perhaps, "who took his own life as he realized that the Jew lives by the decomposition of other nations and peoples!"† But on other occa- sions Hitler mentioned the "Edeljude," the "noble Jew," Dr. Bloch.

Dr. Bloch, as we have seen (in chapter 2), was the Jewish physician

for him to win; and he saw clearly the price he would have to pay to avoid defeat. The extermination of the Jews, then, was at once a propitiatory act and an act of vengeance. By putting to death those he thought of as his archetypal enemies— little did it matter to his obsessed mind that these were powerless and unarmed civilians—he was demonstrating his will to fight to the end. By means of the somehow sacrificial death of the Jews, he was fanatically steeling himself to achieve victory, to fight on to annihilation. At the same time, and above all, he was expi- ating spilled German blood, and avenging beforehand a possible defeat. He would conduct this exercise of vengeance, as it turned out, with mounting determination as the situation worsened, and as he advanced toward an apocalyptic end."

*Giesler, p. 520; about him see chapter 7.

†In *Hitlers Tischgespräche im Führerhauptquartier*, ed. H. Picker-A. Hillgruber (M: 1968), p. 36, Dietrich Eckart, Hitler's early mentor, had told Hitler about this only decent Jew. Lukacs, LEW, pp. 452-53: "Weininger in 1902 wrote an extraordinary book entitled *Geschlecht und Charakter* (*Sex and Character*) about women and men, Jews and Christians, the problem of whose relationship consumed his fiery mind. [He . . .] was probably right in foreseeing the rise of a tremendous movement of anti-Semitism. He was wrong in believing that this would be the result of a new, and rising, Christianity: 'Against this new Jewry a new Christianity comes to light: Humanity thirsts for the founder of a new religion, and the struggle moves toward a decision as in the Year One. Between Jewry and Christianity, between commerce and culture, between woman and man, between earthbound life and a higher life, between nothingness and Godhead, mankind will again have to choose. These are the two opposite kingdoms: *There is no Third Reich*.' There was to be a Third Reich, a Third Reich that was to be ruled not by the religion of Christianity but by the religion of the folk."

against America was "a tragedy";
 ured hopes of a break between
 hich he could then profit, at least
 were in accord with the great
 en though in 1945 latent difficul-
 were much more evident than
 ow, Hitler, again like most Ger-
 k not between the former but
 he had given up all of his earlier
 esolute anti-German strategy and

and his private statements we may
 ican statements and clichés, and
 w of American civilization.* Yet
 ad and realistic view of America.
 instances, it may be too much to
 s of his thoughts; but it may not
 ed them.

that is, before the failure of the
 and before the event of Pearl
 no longer win the war: more pre-
 ned to wage and to win. There is
 s war diary of 18 November 1941
 Army Group Center to resume its
 er: "The recognition, by both of
 annot annihilate each other, leads
 ust consider the possibility that it
 principal opponents to annihilate
 rely." This is corroborated by an

with America might come only after his
 ents until they began to accumulate in
 1941—probably because he then foresaw
 . Thus, for example, his table conversa-
 mo on 25 October, and to the Bulgarian

(2)

Statesman and Strategist

1946, 1945

1942-4

emphatic statement by Colonel-General Jodl, the man who was per-
 haps closest to Hitler during the war.* From prison in Nuremberg, he
wrote that by the winter of 1941 Hitler knew that "victory could no
longer be achieved." In a memorandum dictated to his wife about
 Hitler: Hitler's "military advisers—today one often hears it said—
 should certainly have made it clear to him that the war was lost. What
 a naïve thought! Earlier than any person in the world, Hitler sensed
 and knew that the war was lost. But can one give up a Reich and a
 people before they are lost? A man like Hitler could not do it."

1945
 Jodl's
 letter
 to
 his
 wife.

Significant considerations arise here for a historian. One of them is
 obvious: The portrait of Hitler, blinded by his fanaticism, believing
 till the end that the war would not, because it could not, be lost is, at
 best, oversimplified and, at worst, false. The other, connected with
 the above, is the now growing discrepancy between Hitler's publicly
 expressed views and his private ones. ("Private" may not always be a
 useful term, since so many of his statements to his private circle were
 meant to impress them.) In other words, this man, who was at times
 capable of making circumstances conform to his ideas,† would from
 now on be increasingly compelled to adjust at least some of his ideas
 to circumstances that he could perhaps influence but not control. In
other terms: the purpose of his military strategy was less con-
quest than the forcing of at least one of his enemies to deal with him,
preferably on his terms. But: this was not truly an admission of defeat.
Invincibility now had a priority over conquest. The time for short,
 sudden victories ("Blitzkriege") may have been over; he and the Reich
 must now settle down for a longer war, during which German power
 would still be so strong that sooner or later one of his enemies—of
 that unnatural coalition of Anglo-Saxons and Russians, Capitalists

1942-4

*Halder diary, 18 November 1941. Jodl's statements cited by Schramm, *sch*, pp. 26-27 and 204. There are some signs that Hitler began to think that as early as mid-August. (Goebbels diary, 18 August 1941: "Separate peace with Stalin? Will Churchill fall?") Hitler considered the American entry into the war as practically inevitable.

†Hitler on 23 May 1939 to his generals: "The principle whereby one evades solving a problem by adapting oneself to circumstances, is inadmissible. Circumstances must rather be adapted to demands [*Forderungen*]." (IMT, xxviii, 079-1, p. 549)

(2)

1933, 1936, 1944

as Bullock, put it: Hitler was popular revolutionary movement natives such as Papen.* Perhaps generally speaking, the statement is during the Historians' Controversy the National Socialists . . . could the voluntary support of a cons.† And by March 1933 many derata of a Third Reich. This only an inevitable element for a "faute de mieux," in place of had become eminently respectable contributed to his respectability

fair summary, and unexceptionable: on the German Right, who not only of the Republic but made Hitler old ruling class of Imperial Germany war or to the overthrow of the monarchy by the Republican regime which of power and influence. . . . All this Whatever may be said of individuals, antipathetic and hostile to the regime they which was the pride of the biggest Party to the Republic." In xv, p. 120, Bullock the considerate treatment Hitler results of high treason in a state where of indignation to mercy."

giving evidence from the Goebbels of Hitler's absolute conviction that

summer of 1932, "conservatives" such as doubted whether a government

ed Marshal Mackensen was much 1933. He was somewhat critical of my heart as a statesman, soldier, and no political influence or following, age estate to Mackensen. In December birthday. In 1941, he allowed on a special train.

(perhaps especially among the people at large); but the converse was also true: His respectability contributed to his power (perhaps especially among the conservative elements of German society)—or at least to the feebleness of resistance against him. As Heer concluded: "Neither in German Catholicism nor in the Vatican did Hitler meet an opponent who was worthy of him [der ihm gewachsen war]." Among all of the institutions, including the churches, of the Hitler era, the record of the Catholic Church—of some of the bishops and priests as well as some of the Catholic population—was, relatively speaking, the least compromised and was sometimes even inspiring. The historical literature devoted to that complicated subject is extensive. At the same time, some of the responses to Hitler by otherwise non-Nazi or even anti-Nazi members of the hierarchy are less than inspiring, especially in retrospect.†

*HR, p. 471.

†A few random examples. Cardinal Faulhaber, archbishop of Munich, to Hitler at the signing of the 1933 Concordat: "What the old parliaments and parties had not been able to accomplish in sixty years, your far-seeing statesmanship achieved in six months on a world-historical level . . . a great deed of immeasurable blessing." In 1936, Faulhaber visited Hitler at the Berghof. He was much impressed, agreeing entirely with Hitler about the necessary worldwide fight against Bolshevism. "The Führer also demonstrated social and diplomatic manners worthy of a born sovereign." HR, pp. 282, 316: "Evidently the Austrian charm of the Führer had impressed the Cardinal." Faulhaber's strong pastoral letter against Communism (on 27 December 1936) was made at Hitler's request. In 1936 even the principled and anti-Nazi Cardinal Preysing of Berlin remarked: "National Socialism in Berlin has undoubtedly eliminated the very dangerous agitations of Socialism and Communism as well as many phenomena of smut and dirt (*Schmutz und Schund*) so very dangerous to religion and morality." In Joachim Kuroпка, ed., *Clemens August Graf von Galen. Neue Forschungen zum Leben und Wirken des Bischofs von Münster* (Münster, 1992), p. 211. The weak Cardinal Bertram of Breslau, then president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, sent fulsome congratulatory telegrams to Hitler on the latter's birthdays. (In 1939 he said: "I told the children: Heil Hitler—this is valid for this world. Praise be Jesus Christ—that is the tie between earth and heaven." No nearer formula can be imagined. Lukacs, LEW, p. 465.)

Public respectability for many German hierarchs was inseparable from expressions of nationalism. Bishop Berning in a letter to Göring in March 1942: "The entire nation must stand united, to accomplish the final (!) victory over its enemies." Kuroпка, p. 357. About Bishop, later Cardinal, Galen's praise of the German invasion of Russia in 1941, in the same sermon in which he attacked the

* D.T. I had worked long and hard on his manners which is to say that

I kept turning his attention to fine examples of courtesy, gentle wit, self-deprecating irony of the modest sort and attention to detail. He absorbed it all but in the way that a talented actor keeps adding valuable details to his role

1933

1936

Score

1944

1939

1944

can force fathers to beget children (or mothers to bear them); and confidence in the future had much more to do with national perspectives than with economics. Social conditions are not material conditions, just as social history is not economic history.* From 1932 to 1939, the number of suicides committed by Germans under twenty dropped 80 percent during the first six years of the Hitler regime (from 1,212 in 1932 to 290 in 1939). Consider, too, not only Hitler's autobahns but his agricultural reforms, the extraordinary popular outpouring of support for the "Winterhilfe" ("No German must be hungry or cold"), Hitler's special interest in providing inexpensive vacations for German workers.† Hitler's National Socialist Germany demonstrated that it was possible to achieve a high standard of living under a rigid dictatorship.

It may be argued that many of these achievements were not "revolutionary"; but they were surely modern. Hitler's interest in and respect for technology were considerable. Schramm cited Hitler: "Just as the bird represents, in comparison to the flying fish, a higher stage of development, the ship is a preliminary stage of the airplane. The future belongs to the airplane." Hitler on 3 October 1941: "[He] thinks that the automobile is the most beautiful invention of man, as long as he really uses it for his pleasure. The automobile opened up the landscape for people. . . ." Of Hitler's city planning, Toland wrote: ". . . there would be automated underground parking, a traffic-free center, numerous parks and green areas, and strict pollution control."‡ Some of this is imprecise; it was developed in better detail by Zitelmann, with evidence culled from Hitler's written and spoken statements of the 1926-30 period. In the ZIT/PR volume of collected studies, Hans-Dietrich Schäfer

*LEW, pp. 175, 176, 177. Also 177, note 5: "It is perhaps significant, too, that in 1939 among German cities, Danzig and Gleiwitz, on the Polish border, registered phenomenally high birthrates, over 24 per thousand (the average of German cities of comparable size was 17.5 per thousand); even more phenomenal was the marriage rate in Linz, this then prototypically Nazi town, the cradle of Hitler as well as of Eichmann, with 25.8 marriages per 1,000 inhabitants, more than twice the national average."

†There's a good general summary in HB, pp. 96-97.

‡SCH, p. 86; TO, p. 405; also Koeppen notes, p. 41.

presented two interesting historical continuities: "In harm achieved more than the social there was a levelling of classes society which earlier research 'Economic Miracle' of the [West] mann's and Schäfer's present Zitelmann: "Hitler did not [that is, reactionary] visions says his model was the Unit socialist economics and the den tirelessly admired its technology often saw as a model for German methods of advertisement. So lated the wishes and anxieties psyche of people without the attract and lead Germans free Some of this had been noted prior effects of Nazi marches : German Communists before the popular effect of the cult he was certainly the most m his time."† Earlier the philo Socialist preference for the we [to organize], which appealed mechanization of the human guage."‡ It affected everyday for many young people.

Modernization does not ne-

*ZIT/PR, p. 214 (Schäfer); p. 16 cited a book published about advertising to have a total effect . . . in text). But already Viktor Klempzig, 1960) noticed many of the Nazi Third Reich.

†F, pp. 399, 410.

‡Klempereper, pp. 126, 191.

①

1938, 1941

"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: H2B). 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 time—was 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 with any great consistency would evolve and change. of expelling Jews from G in 1940) of expelling them 1941), when emigration as have masses of them extermination of the remn pended (a complicated ma 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 E. sions and intentions may c thing; and, despite Hitler's ments and directives conce were less consistent than hi

This is the main reason 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 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 result.

†Schreiber (SCHRB, p. 65) mentions only twice. (The term came from the East only twice.)

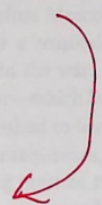
D.T.: his public but also his growing fear that he did not know himself

just so great and my influence was his, silence, and statement — "One need only speak the truth if it is a large truth and new beliefs you mean it."

①

(1941), 1944-5

1944-5



ish were not giving in. As
t the Berghof on 31 July
ssia and America. Against
ussia were knocked out,
ould be eliminated. The
hen be untrammelled and
chill and Roosevelt would
n people would be forced
ar, and many among them
n the liquidation of Com-

onable. "Russia: England's
generals and to his staff
ain; many records of that
and probably not only for

war in the East (it was not yet a
s convinced of the possibility of
it so convinced then. The often
1, p. 516) wrote: "He took the
illock is not clear about this (su,
ion of Britain in the front of his
tack on Russia in 1941, whether
ality; but he is undecided. JHH,
Lebensraum in Russia. That was
this when he attempted to con-
6: "Everything indicates that he
ether he really believed the new
o or whether he introduced it to
quest is of course hard to deter-

, among which is the one on
d on concentrating all German
done until England's last conti-
t: When Russia is defeated, "this
r." Halder's war diary, 14 June
1 of his calculation that the col-
the struggle." That same day:
ublished source taken by a Luft-
wever—in Irving, 1/11, p. 266.)

purposes of self-justification. It was not to them but to his party
cronies that he kept speculating about Lebensraum during his 1941
and 1942 table conversations (though seldom before the begin-
ning of the invasion of Russia). And at the end, in one of his last
"table" (i.e., Bormann-recorded) conversations, he said: "No deci-
sion which I had to make during the course of this war was graver
than to attack Russia."

For Time—and it's always Time, you notice—would have
been increasingly against us. In order to persuade Britain to
pack up, to compel her to make peace, it was essential to rob
her of her hope of being able still to confront us, on the
Continent itself, with an adversary of a stature equal to our
own. We had no choice, we had at all costs to strike the
Russian element out of the European balance sheet. We had
another reason, equally valid, for our action—the mortal
threat that a Russia in-being constituted to our existence.
For it was absolutely certain that one day or another she
would attack us.*

"We had no choice"? "Absolutely certain"? Not at all. And what
is significant: In Hitler's explanation of his decision there is not one
word about Lebensraum.

It is of course possible that his emphasis on the English factor was
meant to impress his generals. Possible, though not probable: for
none of his leading generals showed the slightest reservations about

Hewel diary, 20 June 1941: "A long conversation with the Führer. Expects a lot
from the Russian campaign . . . he thinks that Britain will have to give in." (Note
that Hewel was *not* a general.) To Keitel on 18 August 1941 (ADAP/D/13/1, p. 346):
"The ultimate objective of the Reich is the defeat of Great Britain." On 22 August
1941, with his armies at Leningrad, storming toward Kiev, and closer and closer to
Moscow, Halder war diary: Hitler's aim is "to finally eliminate Russia as England's
allied power on the continent and thereby deprive England of any hope of a change
in her fortunes with the help of the last existing Great Power." Hitler to Admiral
Fricke (КТВ/СКЛ, 28 October 1941): "The fall of Moscow might even force En-
gland to make peace at once."

*ЛН/В, p. 15, February 1945.

Account
1941

the "Barbarossa" plan.* Indeed, they were more sanguine in their expectations than was Hitler himself, who, before the invasion of Russia, was suddenly beset by anxiety.†

We must keep in mind that while every human act arises from a multiplicity of motives, there is such a thing as a multiplicity, or at least a duality, of human purposes too.‡ It is wrong to presume that it was *only* Lebensraum, and ideology, that made Hitler choose to turn and plan his invasion of Russia in July 1940. It may also be wrong to assume that not only the principal but the *only* purpose of his invasion of Russia was strategic and political, to compel the British (and also the Americans) to recognize the hopelessness of the war against him. Both elements existed in his mind: to knock out the last potential ally of a Britain that he could not—yet—invalidate; and to achieve an—as yet undefined—Lebensraum in the conquered East. I incline to believe that of the dual purposes, the first was primary—without saying that the second was inconsequential.**

*Barry A. Leach, *German Strategy Against Russia 1939–1941*, Oxford, 1973, p. 100: "... this attempt to give the operations in the East some relevance to the war already being fought in the West was a rationalization for the ears of the generals. The true purpose of the campaign was the fulfillment of Hitler's *Lebensraumpolitik*." Not so. Haffner is more measured, but his conclusion is debatable, (HF/AN, p. 115): "One should not take these rationalization attempts of Hitler too seriously. Hitler's attack on Russia was not made *because* but *in spite of* the continuing war against Britain." (Haffner's italics)

†As early as 9 January 1941, KTB/OKW: "The Russians should not be underestimated even now." On 21 June 1941, Himmler to Heydrich: "The Führer is not so optimistic as his military advisers." Leach, above, p. 156. The night before 22 June, someone in Hitler's circle spoke of Russia as "a big bubble." The generals were, without exception, confident. Hitler suddenly became thoughtful. He said that Russia was rather like a ship in "the Flying Dutchman." He added: "The beginning of every war is like opening the door into a dark room. One never knows what is hidden in the darkness." (Lukacs, LEW, p. 139.)

‡Historians on the duality: Jackel in JHW, p. 68; also p. 56: "... in the prevailing circumstances the Eastern campaign was also to serve a dual purpose. It was meant to lead to the conquest of living space as well as to discourage Britain once and for all." Haffner, HF/AN, p. 102: "It is always a mistake in politics to pursue two aims simultaneously." Perhaps. Zitellmann (ZIT/A, p. 147) writes that Hitler's purposes were not clear; he does not mention a duality but brings up Hitler's habit of amassing "every possible argument to justify his decisions."

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THE SEVENTH OF DECEMBER 1941. The Russian wastes before Moscow and the attack on a tropical morass in the South Pacific—these were the new States into the war. Hitler: world war—which he could he had wished to win it. In many consequences, to w something must be stated: States on 11 December 1941 as Hitler's supreme folly by

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* P.T. His anxiety was also mine. I had enlisted him to this

concept—the defeat of Russia would determine the long-term reluctance of England and America to resist Germany. Now, I suspect that the eagerness of the A.A. to have such a war could conceivably mean that it would not be in the least, easy, and might be catastrophic.

... At that time, I was proceeding and I obeyed him

the "Barbarossa" plan.* Indeed, they were more sanguine in their expectations than was Hitler himself, who, before the invasion of Russia, was suddenly beset by anxiety.†

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1941 1943

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THE SEVENTH OF DECEMBER IN 1941 was the turning point of
World War II. The Russians halted the Germans in the frozen
wastes before Moscow almost at the same moment that the Japanese
attack on a tropical morning at Pearl Harbor thrust the United
States into the war. Hitler's European war now became a veritable
world war—which he could no longer win, or at least not in the way
he had wished to win it. He himself realized this—a realization with
many consequences, to which I must soon turn. But at this time
something must be stated about his declaration of war on the United
States on 11 December 1941. This has been defined and categorized
as Hitler's supreme folly by many historians.*

It was, in some ways, an unusual event. Hitler himself said in June
1940—questioning Mussolini's stentorian declaration of war on
France and Britain—that declarations of war belonged to the past,
to the hypocritically chivalrous trappings of dynastic wars. How-
ever, in December 1941 he had Ribbentrop make such a declaration
to the American chargé d'affaires in Berlin. Many historians have

September 1941—which at least suggests that this had begun to serve him for pur-
poses of justification. Consider, too, that beyond Hitler's general speculations in
his table talks, detailed plans for German settlements in the East were not made by
Hitler but by Himmler and others (and in 1943 a Führer order led to the stoppage of
these plans). Zitelmann in ZIT/A, p. 161: "The long accepted view that with the con-
quest of the Russian lands Hitler wanted to introduce a 're-agrarianization' of Ger-
man society in order to realize an 'anti-modern' and 'anti-industrial' utopia is wrong."

*Emphatically—and wrongly—by A. J. P. Taylor. Bullock in BU, p. 662: "Hitler
never supposed—any more than Hindenburg or Ludendorff in 1917—that he
would have to reckon with a major American intervention in the European war."
Not at all. Hitler to Jodl (KTb/OKW, I, p. 996) on 17 December 1940—that is,
the day before issuing the definite Barbarossa directive: "We must resolve all
continental-European problems in 1941, since from 1942 the U.S.A. will be in a
position to intervene." Haffner in HF/Al, p. 229, on Hitler's decision to declare war
on the United States: "This must be the most puzzling of any of his decisions in
World War II. I cannot explain it. . . ." HF/AN, pp. 117-18: "There is to this day no
comprehensible rational explanation for what one is tempted to describe as an act
of lunacy . . . what induced Hitler to trigger America's entry into the German war,
an entry which he had so far sensibly done everything to prevent, was not the
Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor but the successful Russian counteroffensive at
Moscow. . . ." An inadequate explanation.

look up 1954 for
explanation of why
he declared war
on America. It is
not very convincing.

1941

1943

Himmler
Plan

①

1938, 1941

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, FH, p. 520ff. In these pages Schenck demolished Binion's thesis about Bloch's medical errors and his medical—and financial—irresponsibility. (See also Bloch's article about Hitler in Collier's, 15 and 22 March 1941.)

* Bloch warns him of the pains his mother will suffer. "If medicine were not so backward, there would be a mechanism invented that would allow me to take up pain into myself."

The (Chapter 1

*Hitler in the hist.
The problem of "public opi
Third Reich—
clas*

THE HISTORY OF GER includes Hitler. This perhaps understandal 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 an non-German people (perhap women) to the effect that Gei was but another German thi Second War, a continuation one. What we face here are e tions of a perennial question:

1941,

7

1944

Allen
Goebbels
or the
please.

*JHH, pp. 49-50.

* D.T. Spar will
not quite answer
He was the only man
could not be seen

conversations he said that the war against America was "a tragedy"; and to the last moment he nurtured hopes of a break between Washington and Moscow from which he could then profit, at least to some extent. In this his wishes were in accord with the great majority of the German people. Even though in 1945 latent difficulties between London and Moscow were much more evident than any between Washington and Moscow, Hitler, again like most Germans, put some hope in a break not between the former but between the latter. (By that time he had given up all of his earlier illusions about the British, whose resolute anti-German strategy and policy filled him with hatred.)

It is true that in both his public and his private statements we may find enough evidence of anti-American statements and clichés, and of a generally condemnatory view of American civilization.* Yet these coexisted with a more informed and realistic view of America in his mind. In this as well as other instances, it may be too much to say that his wishes were the fathers of his thoughts; but it may not be too much to say that they baptized them.

AS EARLY AS NOVEMBER 1941—that is, before the failure of the German army before Moscow, and before the event of Pearl Harbor—Hitler knew that he could no longer win the war: more precisely, *his* war, the war he had planned to wage and to win. There is evidence of this in General Halder's war diary of 18 November 1941 (that is, before the last attempt of Army Group Center to resume its advance on Moscow), quoting Hitler: "The recognition, by both of the opposing coalitions, that they cannot annihilate each other, leads to a negotiated peace." And: "We must consider the possibility that it will not be possible for either of the principal opponents to annihilate the other, or to subdue them entirely." This is corroborated by an

*See his statement in H2B that a conflict with America might come only after his lifetime. But then he made few such statements until they began to accumulate in his table conversations in the autumn of 1941—probably because he then foresaw that the war with America was soon to come. Thus, for example, his table conversations of 10 September, his statements to Ciano on 25 October, and to the Bulgarian foreign minister Popov on 27 November.

emphatic statement by Haps closest to Hitler wrote that by the winter longer be achieved."] Hitler: Hitler's "militarism" should certainly have been a naive thought! Earlier and knew that the war people before they are

Significant considerations obvious: The portrait until the end that the war best, oversimplified and the above, is the now expressed views and his useful term, since so meant to impress them capable of making circumstances that h other terms: the purpose quest than the forcing o preferably on his terms. Invincibility now had a sudden victories ("Blitzk must now settle down f would still be so strong that unnatural coalition

*Halder diary, 18 November pp. 26-27 and 204. There are mid-August. (Goebbels diary Churchill fall?) Hitler considered inevitable.

†Hitler on 23 May 1939: solving a problem by adapting circumstances must rather be adapted p. 549)

ed to admit it. He might no
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until the very end. It was his
to a Frederician view of his
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case the warrior-king rather
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not only that Frederick was
the field against great odds;
tion of his enemies, a coal-
pitalists and Communists in
l Hitler almost until the last
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t reservations. Even if Fred-
ien, his opponents would at
: Prussian king; but Hitler's
l Hitler.‡

our main story. December

ut this is SCHRB, p. 133, note 252.
ed to the chancellery bunker with
ght champagne: "The Empress is
ss Elizabeth in 1762 led immedi-
tion and to Frederick's triumph.)
1, p. 781: "Goebbels's mood was
Hitler, who was carried away by
agne.)

roeder, in his excellent book (*The*
ford, 1994), p. 477, on the great
y victory was never the primary
al stages of the war. The allies,
rms, always sought a negotiated

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1941-2

Statesman and Strategist

159

1941 not only marked the turning point of the war and a change in Hitler's view of it; it led to new decisions and to a change in his work habits. He ordered the entire German economy to be placed on a full wartime footing. (He was especially fortunate to find Albert Speer as a successor to the able Todt, who died in early 1942; Speer was neither an economist nor an administrator, but Hitler recognized his organizational abilities.) Hitler himself assumed the post of army commander in chief upon the resignation of the sick General Brauchitsch. But most important was his order superseding the suggestions and inclinations of some of his generals. He forbade a cautious retreat of the German armies (except at limited local salients) in spite of the awesome severities of the Russian winter and the hardly less awesome fighting abilities of the Russians. And after two months, at the latest by March 1942, it became evident that not his generals but he, with his unorthodox military directive, had been proved right. A catastrophe was avoided, and he could say in April: "We have mastered a destiny which broke another man 130 years ago."^{*}

peace in one form or another and agreed that the war should be ended as soon as the right terms were attained. The reason the war lasted to a military decision, though not total victory, was Napoleon's persistent refusal to negotiate seriously. As soon as a French government agreed to negotiate, the war was ended, though at the time the French army was still capable of fighting and controlled most of France and vital areas outside it as well." This was not true of Hitler and World War II, certainly not after 1941.

*There was an astonishing recovery within the man himself. In November 1941 he sometimes gave the impression of being depressed. Now he changed his long-established habits of work. These had included a bohemian element; he was often unorganized in his daily routine. But now his disinclination for regular and continuous work disappeared. Speer was one of the first to notice this (sp, p. 306): "Instead of his former habit of arranging things in spurts, between periods of lassitude, there came now an extensive working routine. Previously he understood excellently how to let others work for him; now he, with increasing burdens, took more and more details upon himself. He made himself into a strongly disciplined worker, and as this went against his character [Wesen], it did not [always] work well for his decisions." Also Fest (F, p. 917): "his great, desperate self-discipline." And Maser (M/A, p. 254): Deep down and secretly he no longer had illusions about a [final] victory, in 1941-42, and that "kept him from visiting the front line. [But] that was not the result of a fear for his own life." Two elements in his routine did not change: his habit of rising late in the morning and retiring very late at night; and his growing dependence on a great variety of medicines.

March 1942

March 1942

1941-2

(2)

1940-41, 1938, 1942

Steengracht 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 VFZ, 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.

[‡]Gorlitz-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 refusal 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 the or Madagascar, is the same about Madagascar—and a Regent Horthy in April 1941 responded, plaintively, that Hitler said something about they "would either have to were no other alternatives. fairly barbaric procedure then left over. Roughly speaking" In 1944, Hitler asks. Speer confirmed to Fleming wanted Speer to gather Hu

1940-41
see p 1938

1940-41
Dietrich
Fleming
Gorlitz-Quint

*Euthanasia had shown him that liquidation must be kept as the #1 secret. He said to himself "A death-grip must be kept held on this secret." I enjoyed his use of the word "death-grip." It must be said that when Gdolf was without a song, he was most carefully without it.

(2)

1941

Acme

1941-2

1919-20

THERE WERE, as we have seen, a few exceptions to Hitler's categorical condemnation of Jews. There were his exemptions of certain individuals. There is the statement by his apologist, the architect Giesler,* who saw Hitler reading, in October 1944, the great biography of Emperor Frederick II by the fine German Jewish medievalist Ernst Kantorowicz. In one of Hitler's table conversations (11 December 1941), he asked the rhetorical question: Were there, are there, any decent Jews? Hardly any. Otto Weininger, perhaps, "who took his own life as he realized that the Jew lives by the decomposition of other nations and peoples!"† But on other occasions Hitler mentioned the "Edeljude," the "noble Jew," Dr. Bloch. Dr. Bloch, as we have seen (in chapter 2), was the Jewish physician

for him to win; and he saw clearly the price he would have to pay to avoid defeat. The extermination of the Jews, then, was at once a propitiatory act and an act of vengeance. By putting to death those he thought of as his archetypal enemies—little did it matter to his obsessed mind that these were powerless and unarmed civilians—he was demonstrating his will to fight to the end. By means of the somehow sacrificial death of the Jews, he was fanatically steeling himself to achieve victory, to fight on to annihilation. At the same time, and above all, he was expiating spilled German blood, and avenging beforehand a possible defeat. He would conduct this exercise of vengeance, as it turned out, with mounting determination as the situation worsened, and as he advanced toward an apocalyptic end."

*Giesler, p. 520; about him see chapter 7.

†In *Hitlers Tischgespräche im Führerhauptquartier*, ed. H. Picker-A. Hillgruber (M: 1968), p. 36, Dietrich Eckart, Hitler's early mentor, had told Hitler about this only decent Jew. Lukacs, LEW, pp. 452-53: "Weininger in 1902 wrote an extraordinary book entitled *Geschlecht und Charakter (Sex and Character)* about women and men, Jews and Christians, the problem of whose relationship consumed his fiery mind. [He . . .] was probably right in foreseeing the rise of a tremendous movement of anti-Semitism. He was wrong in believing that this would be the result of a new, and rising, Christianity: 'Against this new Jewry a new Christianity comes to light: Humanity thirsts for the founder of a new religion, and the struggle moves toward a decision as in the Year One. Between Jewry and Christianity, between commerce and culture, between woman and man, between earthbound life and a higher life, between nothingness and Godhead, mankind will again have to choose. These are the two opposite kingdoms: *There is no Third Reich.*' There was to be a Third Reich, a Third Reich that was to be ruled not by the religion of Christianity but by the religion of the folk."

l or hear or see reports of what . This unwillingness accorded ren to look at photographs of r at pictures of the German ital winter of 1944-45, pictures ashed aside (and perhaps even tographs of the July 1944 con- faced, again, with a duality in t wanting to know something t at all. Within Hitler's person kness in a man who otherwise r, at best, a sensitive (and, in a er of a man whose brutal ideas /, opposite of sensitive. Hitler leasure in the sufferings of his f the flesh; Hitler's sins were vidence that his often-stated he was acting as an instrument orced on him by Jews—were

ther, a statistician working for the act statistical account of the number summarized and typed on a special umann (FL, p. 138), Hitler saw it and

ocaust-Forschung und Goldhagens still not wholly clear whether eco- for work, did not have a consider- ers."

emark about Hitler's unwillingness /, who was of (partly) Jewish origin: uth the killing of Jews he was 'only' rems."

tion of the Final Solution with his he won: He knew not only that he e world knew this. The perceptive and the middle of September 1941, did not think defeat was inevitable. e a great deal of luck in the future

him every way for
just how ~~crude~~
it was. Hitler ~~devised~~