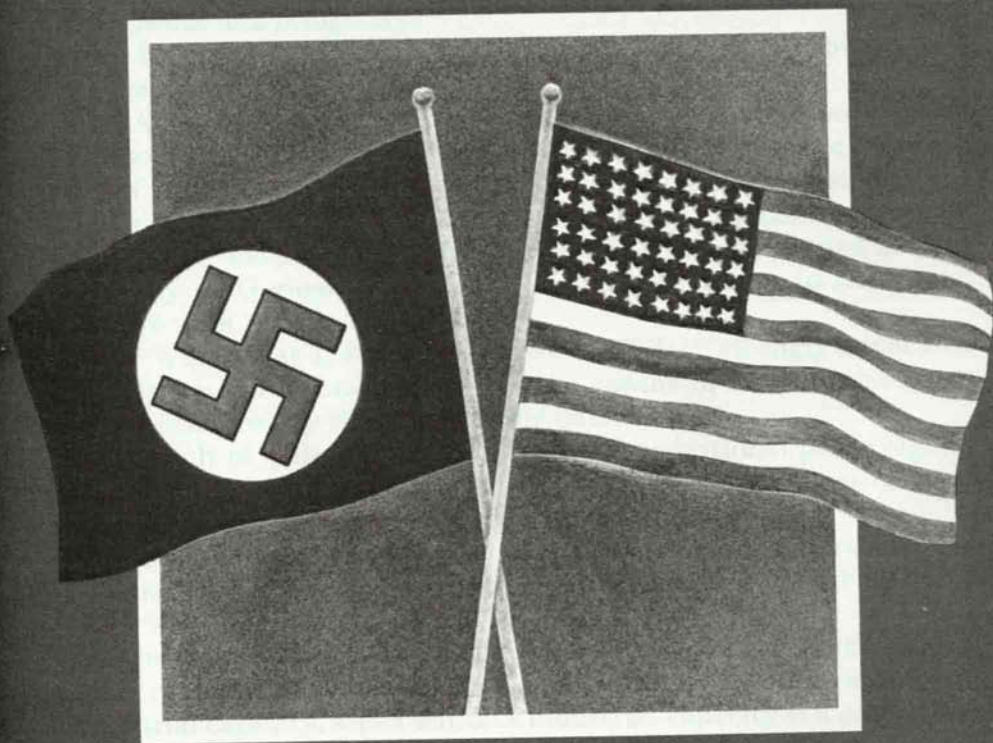


BOOK III

**TITANS
IN
CONFLICT**



The Rise of Hitler

World War II was soon destined to affect more nations — damage more property, cost more money, and kill more people than any past war. Some estimate total deaths (both military and civilian) to be about fifty-five million. The truth is that no one will ever know the true death toll of the earth's most devastating war to date.

How did it come about that a *Second World War* would come so closely on the heels of the First World War? Hadn't the nations their fill of *blood* and *destruction*? Weren't they tired of war? Didn't they really yearn for *peace* and prosperity?

The First World War had left a legacy of hate, suspicion and outright bitterness.

The Allied victors had not used the greatest wisdom in proposing a solution to Europe's difficulties following World War I. France harbored a spirit of revenge, and was determined to see that the Central Powers were punished for their part in the Great War. England genuinely believed that a "hard peace" must be imposed on the vanquished nations — especially on Germany — in order to curb her power to rearm and fight future wars.

After World War I, President Woodrow Wilson strongly advocated that a League of Nations be formed as a means of keeping the peace which had been won by the Allies on the battlefields.

As a result of Wilson's urgings, such an international peace organization was established in 1919. But the League of Nations was *doomed to failure* right from the very beginning.

The United States Congress flatly refused to permit America to join the League. This alone was enough to sound the League's death knell.

Why was this so?

By the end of World War I, the U.S. was indisputably the world's strongest nation. America was clearly far ahead of all other nations in her industrial capacity, and a nation's industrial capacity is a good index of its real strength.

When other nations saw that America refused to join the League of Nations, they didn't have the heart to really try and make it work.

Another major reason the League of Nations was under the death sentence from its birth was the fact that it didn't have power to enforce the peace: it was for all practical purposes impotent.

The League was essentially a sounding board — a place where nations could air their grievances. They could debate. They could even censure a wayward nation. They could give a verbal wrist slap to a nation, but they had no power to enforce their actions.

Shortly after the creation of the League of Nations, unstable world conditions began developing — conditions which would put a severe strain on that organization, and would reveal its total impotence.

Worldwide Depression Brings Stress

The devastation, death and natural hardships which followed in the wake of the First World War soon caused the dislocation of international trade. This dislocation culminated in the Great Depression which struck in America and in Europe in 1929.

Germany had been shorn of her overseas colonies following the First World War. She had also been saddled with huge war reparations (about \$33 billion) which she finally became unable to pay.

When the Great Depression struck, Germany fell into the deepest chasm of economic chaos of any industrial nation. The German mark became so inflated that it literally wasn't worth much more than the paper on which it was printed. The mark was reduced to only one billionth its previous value! Whole boxes, or wheelbarrows full of were necessary to buy one small item such as a loaf of bread.

Joblessness also struck Germany with a vengeance. Eventually, over six million Germans were unemployed. Growing unrest and deep *bitterness* boiled over in Germany after World War I, resulting from the hard terms of the Versailles Treaty of 1919.

When World War I ended, not one Allied soldier had set foot on German soil. Although Germany's partners had capitulated, and the Allied armies were driving the Germans back toward their own country, the German High Command knew this, and begged the Kaiser to sign an armistice before humiliating defeat occurred on the battlefield. When German troops marched back into Germany, following the signing of the November 11, 1918 armistice, they were greeted by their own people, not as a beaten army, but as victors!

Furthermore, the Germans believed the implementation of Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points would insure a just and relatively lenient peace imposed on Germany.

The leaders of Britain and France did not voice their objections to Wilson's terms of armistice until well after the armistice was signed! By that time it was too late for the Germans to do anything about it. Many Germans felt *cheated*. At the final peace settlement President Wilson did not have his way. Only about half of his famous Fourteen Points were accepted.

The heavy war reparations and the reduction of Germany's army, navy and merchant fleet was never acceptable to the Germans.

All of these factors helped to create a very unstable atmosphere in Germany following the First World War. The climate was perfect for the rise of a fanatical leader who could stir up the people to a fanzied pitch of nationalism.

Militarism in Japan

In Japan, militarism had long been held in high esteem. For many generations, the Japanese had held the *samurai* (the warrior class) in the highest regard. They glorified war and conquest. Even before the First World War, Japan had expanded its territories and areas of influence through conquest. In 1894-95 Japan and China went to war and Japan forced China to give up Korea and Formosa.

Russia and Japan also fought in 1904-05, and a victorious Japan compelled Russia to recognize Japanese supremacy. Russia also gave Japan the Liaotang Peninsula, the South Manchuria railway and the southern half of Sakhalin Island. Japan was now an up-and-coming world power.

Following World War I, the Japanese were bent upon expanding their Imperial Empire in the Pacific. They quickly realized that the League of Nations was impotent.

By 1931, the militarists in Japan dominated the government. The same year, the Japanese decided to take advantage of a weak China. Trouble began when Japanese troops created an "incident" in Manchuria; and by 1932 Japan had taken over that province of China and renamed it *Manchukuo*. The United States and other countries did nothing. The League of Nations investigated the incidents and condemned Japan's actions, but also stood by helplessly. Japan withdrew from the League in 1933.

In 1937 Japanese forces invaded China proper, capturing its principal cities — Peiping, Tiensten and Nanking. By the end of 1938 Canton in southern China had fallen.

Italy's Strutting Dictator

In Italy another dictatorship was taking shape. Benito Mussolini (1883-1945), the son of a blacksmith, founded the Fascist party in 1919.

In 1922, King Victor Emmanuel III asked Mussolini to form a government, and he quickly seized power and transformed the country into a totalitarian state. Atop the pyramid of power, none dared to challenge Mussolini's authority.

Mussolini reduced unemployment and improved the railway service. Trains ran on time! He took the title "*Il Duce*" (the Leader).

Mussolini had his talents but humility was not one of them. He had a megalomaniac's dream of restoring Italy to its ancient greatness — when Rome was the center of the mighty Roman Empire. He, of course, would be the *Il Duce* of this restored Roman Empire! He urged the Italian peoples to rebuild the glories of ancient Rome.

In October, 1935, Mussolini defied the League of Nations and invaded Ethiopia. With a quarter million troops at his disposal, his forces — equipped with planes, tanks, mustard gas and other modern weapons — swept into Ethiopia and slaughtered the crudely equipped and poorly trained Ethiopian forces.

Il Duce's son, Vittorio Mussolini, wrote enthusiastically of an Italian air attack during that unequal war: "One group of horsemen gave me the impression of a budding rose unfolding as the bomb fell in their midst and blew them up."

Mussolini completed his conquest of Ethiopia in 1936. Again, the League of Nations stood helplessly by. It reprimanded Mussolini, and even voted economic sanctions against Italy, but later withdrew them. *Il Duce* had followed the Japanese example. He, too, succeeded with his aggression and received a mere slap on the wrist in response. *Il Duce* took Italy out of the League in 1937.

Hitler's Rise to Power

The Great Depression in Germany, plus German hatred of the Versailles Treaty, conspired to bring another dictator to power — Adolf Hitler.

Winston Churchill described the post-World War I depression in Germany — and the man who seized power this way: "Into that void strode a maniac of ferocious genius, the expression of the most virulent hatred that has ever corroded the human breast . . . Corporal Hitler."

Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) was the third child of the third marriage of his father, Alois Hitler, a minor Austrian customs official. Hitler's father, Alois, was the illegitimate son of an unmarried woman named *Anna Schickelgruber*. After Alois's birth, a wandering miller married Anna and signed papers stating he was Alois's father. This miller's name was *Johann Georg Heidler*. Alois spelled it as "Hitler." Later in life, Adolf Hitler's opponents sneeringly called him "Schicklgruber" in order to insult him.

Adolf Hitler's mother was a Bavarian. Hitler was, therefore, of Austro-Bavarian stock, and was fiercely proud to be a German — the elite of all races of the earth.

Adolf made good grades in elementary school, but did poorly in high

school. His father, angry because Adolf made poor grades, vented his harshness and bad temper on young Adolf. Alois Hitler wanted his son to study and become a government worker, as he himself had been. But Hitler had other ideas.

As a young boy, Hitler sang in a church choir, and even thought of becoming a priest. Later in life, Hitler came to hate Christianity, and referred to it as "a religion of weaklings."

As a boy Hitler aspired to become a great artist. Hitler's father died in 1903, when Hitler was only 14 years old. Adolf quit school two years later, and spent his time daydreaming, drawing pictures, and reading books.

Young Adolf went to Vienna in 1907 to become an artist. He failed in his entrance exams at the Academy of Fine Arts, tried again a year later, and again failed. His mother died that same year, so he decided to stay in Vienna.

Adolf Hitler never showed much aptitude for hard work. He avoided steady work of any kind, but took odd jobs shoveling snow, carrying suitcases at the railroad station, or laboring on construction projects. During this time he lived in flophouses, sometimes slept on park benches, and lined up for soup at charity kitchens. During this nadir of his life, tramps and drunks were his companions.

Those who knew Hitler during his residence in Vienna, Austria, described him as easily angered, odd, and moody. As a boy he learned to hate non-Germans (especially Jews and Slavs) and in Vienna his hostilities and resentments smouldered and burned within his hate-filled breast.

Hitler began to earn a little money by painting pictures. He painted a few hundred paintings during this time, but his work was clumsy. Even so, during the rest of his life, he considered himself an artist.

In 1913, Hitler failed to pass the Austrian Army physical examination. Nonetheless, when World War I began in 1914 Hitler eagerly volunteered for service in the German Army. During most of the war, he served as a messenger on the western front, took part in some of the bloodiest battles, and was twice decorated for bravery. Even so, he rose only to the rank of corporal.

Adolf Hitler was wounded in the leg during World War I, and also became temporarily blind due to a poison gas attack. When Germany surrendered in 1918, Hitler was in a military hospital recovering from his temporary blindness.

Germany's defeat in World War I shocked many Germans. As the soldiers returned to a bankrupt country, despair increased. Millions could find no jobs. The defeated German Empire was dismantled, and its government was replaced by the Weimar Republic, a weak democratic republic, the lackey of the victors. Germans blamed their deep troubles

on the new government which was fiercely attacked by nationalist political parties.

On the political left, the growing strength of the Communists alarmed many Germans. On the right, many nationalist groups clamored for a strong, united Germany. Nationalists demanded punishment for the "criminals" who had shamefully made peace with the victors in the name of Germany. They kept up a constant attack on the Versailles Treaty.

Birth of the Nazi Party

Hitler returned to Munich after the war and joined a small nationalist group, the German Workers' party, in 1919. This group changed its name in 1920 to the *National Socialist German Workers' party* (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*), which became known as the *Nazi party*.

The Nazis demanded that all Germans be united in one nation, and they included those "Germans" living in other nations. They favored a strong central government, and demanded the cancellation of the odious Versailles Treaty.

It was at this time that Hitler began to rise to power. He was a consummate schemer, a skilled politician, and an able organizer. He soon seized the leadership of the Nazi party, and quickly began building up party membership. Adolf Hitler possessed an unusual, uncanny ability to stir street crowds with his rabid speeches. He attacked the government, declaring that only the Nazis could assure jobs for the millions of idle workers, and only the Nazis could restore glory to the German peoples. Many began to believe this Nazi propaganda.

Hitler then organized a private army of hoodlums, or bullyboys, who became known as storm troopers. His storm troopers fought with the Communists and any others who tried to break up Nazi rallies. The storm troopers numbered about 15,000 by October, 1923. They were heavily armed — with rifles and machine guns. But Hitler knew it would take more than these storm troopers to solidify his Nazis behind him. He understood party spirit and party psychology. Hitler therefore urged his followers to wear brown-shirted uniforms and to carry the swastika emblem, giving them a sense of unity and of identity.

By 1923, Germany was deep in economic and political doldrums. Her mark was inflated. Belgium and France had occupied the Ruhr Valley. The state government of Bavaria openly defied Berlin.

Hitler believed the time was ripe to strike! He regarded this internal division in Germany as his golden chance to overthrow both the Bavarian and the Berlin governments in one stroke.

Hitler's "Beer Hall Putsch"

Hitler led a rousing rally in a Munich beer hall on November 8, 1923. During that rally, he proclaimed a Nazi *putsch* (revolution). Then he led 2,000 of his storm troopers on a march against the government. Munich police opened fire, killing 16 Nazis.

Hitler had grossly miscalculated, he was arrested and sentenced to serve five years in prison for his treason. But this setback was looked upon as temporary. Hitler said: "For me and for all of us, setbacks have been only the whiplash which drove us onward with more determination than ever before."

It was while he was in prison that Hitler dictated his book *Mein Kampf* ("My Struggle") to his companion, Rudolf Hess. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler clearly outlined his beliefs and ideas for Germany's glorious future. Hitler wrote that Germany should conquer much of Europe. Especially, those territories lost during World War I should be occupied by Germans. Furthermore, portions of Austria and Czechoslovakia (where many Germans lived) should be added to the fatherland. And the resurgent mighty German nation would seize *lebensraum* (living space) from Russia and other countries to the east of Germany.

According to Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, Germans were the highest race of humanity on this earth — destined for a glorious future. They would stay "pure," said Hitler, by avoiding marriage to Jews and Slavs. The children of the *master race* would be "images of the Lord and not monstrosities halfway between man and ape."

Hitler blamed the Jews for just about all the evils of the entire world: "Was there any shady undertaking, any form of foulness . . . in which at least one Jew did not participate?" he asked.

Hitler had no use for democracy. He believed democracy could only lead to Communism and that a strong dictatorship was Germany's salvation — the only way whereby Germany could be saved from Communists and Jews.

Many Germans read *Mein Kampf* and agreed with Hitler. It was not difficult to persuade masses of Germans that Jews and Communists were behind most of Germany's troubles, and their salvation lay in ridding Germany of these "pests."

Glimpses from Mein Kampf

A few quotes from *Mein Kampf* will reveal Hitler's thinking. All too many Germans (and non-Germans) failed to take Hitler's ideas as outlined in *Mein Kampf* seriously. Here are a few of his reasonings:

All human culture, all the results of art, science and technology that we see before us today, are almost exclusively the creative product of the *Aryan*. This very fact admits of the not unfounded inference that (he) alone was the founder of all higher humanity, therefore representing the prototype of all that we understand by the word 'man'!

Those who want to live, let them fight, and those who do not want to fight in this world of eternal struggle do not deserve to live.

The nationalization (the Nazification) of the broad masses can never be achieved by half measures, by weakly emphasizing a so-called objective standpoint, but only by a ruthless and fanatical one-sided orientation toward the goal to be achieved.

Anyone in this world who does not succeed in being hated by his adversaries does not seem to me to be worth much as a friend.

Propaganda . . . for the most part must be aimed at the emotions and only to a very limited degree at the so-called intellect. All propaganda must be popular and its intellectual level must be adjusted to the most limited intelligence among those it is addressed to. Consequently, the greater the mass it is intended to reach, the lower its purely intellectual level will have to be.

The psyche of the great masses is not receptive to anything that is half-hearted and weak. Like the woman . . . who would rather bow to a strong man than dominate a weakling, the masses love a commander more than a petitioner and feel inwardly more satisfied by a doctrine tolerating no other beside itself, than by the granting of liberalistic freedom from which, as a rule, they can do little and are prone to feel that they have been abandoned.

The receptivity of the great masses is very limited, their intelligence is small, but their power of forgetting is enormous. In consequence, all effective propaganda must be limited to a very few points and must harp on these in slogans until the last member of the public understands what you want him to understand by your slogan.

The following quotes from *Mein Kampf* can only be understood if one realizes what Hitler meant by his term "a folkish state." This expression is a Nazi term for a *pure German, anti-Semitic state*. Notice Hitler's rambling on this subject.

A folkish [pure German, anti-Semitic] state must begin by raising marriage from the level of a continuous defilement of the race and give it the consecration of an institution which is called upon to produce images of the Lord and not monstrosities halfway between man and ape.

The folkish state . . . must see to it that only the healthy beget children; that there is only one disgrace: despite one's own sickness and deficiencies, to bring children into the world; and one highest honor: to renounce doing so. And conversely it must be considered reprehensible: to withhold healthy children from the nation.

No boy and no girl must leave school without having been led to an ultimate realization of the necessity and essence of blood purity.

It must be a greater honor to be a street cleaner and citizen of this Third Reich than a king in a foreign state.

The folkish state must free all leadership and especially the highest — that is, the political leadership — entirely from the parliamentary

principle of majority rule — in other words, mass rule — and instead absolutely guarantee the right of the personality.

There must be no majority decisions, but only responsible persons, and the word 'council' must be restored to its original meaning. Surely every man will have advisers by his side, but the decision will be made by one man.

Nazism became a religion to millions of Germans — especially to the young:

The young [Nazi] movement, from the first day, espoused the standpoint that its idea must be put forward *spiritually*, but that the defense of this spiritual platform must, if necessary, be secured by strong-arm means.

"Jewish Bastardization"

Of all people on earth, Hitler believed the *Jews* were the worst — and should be *exterminated* from this planet. His "final solution to the Jewish question" included the liquidation of six million helpless victims — mainly in the Nazis' infamous concentration camps at Auschwitz, Belsen, Buchenwald, Dachau, etc.

Hitler's anti-Semitic sentiments are made plain in *Mein Kampf*:

Bear in mind the devastations which Jewish bastardization visits on our nation each day, and consider that this blood poisoning can be removed from our national body only after centuries, if at all. . . . This contamination of our blood, blindly ignored by hundreds of thousands of our people, is carried on systematically by the Jew today. Systematically these black parasites of the nation defile our inexperienced young blond girls and thereby destroy something which can no longer be replaced in this world.

Adolf Hitler describes in *Mein Kampf* how his anti-Semitic philosophy developed in his thinking:

Since I had begun to concern myself with this question and to take cognizance of the Jews, Vienna appeared to me in a different light than before. Wherever I went, I began to see Jews, and the more I saw the more sharply they became distinguished in my eyes from the rest of humanity. Particularly the Inner City and the districts north of the Danube Canal swarmed with a people which even outwardly had lost all resemblance to Germans. . . . All this could scarcely be called very attractive, but it became positively repulsive when, in addition to their physical uncleanness, you discovered the moral stains on this 'chosen people'. . . . Was there any form of filth or profligacy, particularly in cultural life, without at least one Jew involved in it? If you cut even cautiously into such an abscess, you found, like a maggot in a rotting body, often dazzled by the sudden light — a *kike*! . . . *Gradually I began to hate them.*

Hitler seems to have had delusions of grandeur throughout his life. Later in life he even considered himself a great military genius — equal to Alexander the Great, Caesar, and Napoleon. He believed fate had destined him to lead the Germans into greatness which would last for one thousand years, during which time the glorious Third Reich would show the rest of the world the benefits of the “German Kultur.”

Hitler once boasted: “God has made me *Fuehrer* (leader) and ruler of every man and woman of German blood in every country on earth!”

Hitler Learns from His Mistakes

Hitler learned from the Beer Hall Putsch that, for a revolution to succeed, it must have strong, concentrated backing and thorough organization. He and his Nazi storm troopers had acted prematurely in the 1923 putsch, but the time would soon come for them to act again.

Adolf Hitler only served nine months of his five-year prison sentence. While in prison, he was treated as a privileged person. During his nine-month heel-cooling, Hitler planned his future course, and wrote *Mein Kampf* — which would serve as a blueprint for the Nazis to follow.

Hitler’s aggressiveness and audacity were revealed in his admonition: “Following our old method, we once more take up the struggle and say, *Attack! Attack! Always attack!* If someone says we can’t possibly have another try, remember that I can attack not just one more time but ten times over.”

The German government outlawed the Nazi party after the putsch of 1923. When Hitler was released in December, 1924, he immediately set about trying to convince the German government that he was reformed and would act decently and lawfully in the future. Naïve German officials believed Hitler and lifted the government ban on the Nazi party, thus permitting Adolf Hitler to begin rebuilding.

Hitler now realized he must use flattery and intrigue to win his way into the hearts of the Germans — and into the cockpit of power. He worked his way into friendship with politicians and with those in labor unions, business, industry and agriculture. He also established a private army, the *Schultzstaffel*, or Elite Guard, later to become known as the SS. The SS were not hoodlums, but battle-ready soldiers. These troops provided Hitler with a ready army when he needed it.

Nazis Gain Strength

By 1929, the Nazis had become an important minority political party. By that time Hitler had hand-picked the men who would help him rise to power: Paul Joseph Goebbels (Minister of Propaganda),

Herman Goering (second in command to Hitler), Rudolf Hess (Hitler's secretary and deputy), Heinrich Himmler (the party's chief executioner), and Alfred Rosenberg (the party philosopher).

Events in Germany would soon play into the hands of Hitler and his Nazi party. The worldwide depression struck Germany in 1930, a few months after it had first hit America. German workers again faced unemployment and starvation. The German mark eventually became virtually worthless.

Also, in 1930 the Germans agreed to the Young Plan which was proposed in 1929 — a plan whereby Germany would pay for the war damage it had caused during World War I. Hitler and his Nazi party bitterly opposed the plan. His opposition to the plan made him well known throughout Germany. He led protest marches, and organized mass meetings at which he made frenzied speeches and whipped up German nationalistic fervor.

Furthermore, Hitler charged that Jews and Communists caused Germany's defeat in World War I, and they were now plotting to cheat "true" Germans, and sought to destroy the fruits of years of struggle. Hitler promised to rid Germany of both Communists and Jews, and to reunite the parts of Europe which spoke the German language. This was heady stuff. It appealed to the strong sense of nationalism which was still beating in the German breast.

Hitler knew now how to bide his time and wait for the right moment. He declared: "At the right moment the right weapon must be employed. One stage is probing your opponent, a second is preparation, a third is assault."

When the July election of 1932 came, the Nazi party had skyrocketed into prominence, becoming the strongest party in all Germany, receiving about *40 percent* of the vote — enough to keep any other party from being able to form an effective government.

Though Hitler was offered cabinet posts in exchange for Nazi support, he refused any plan that didn't give the Nazis actual control of the government.

Hitler Becomes Dictator

At this point the cunning Hitler began to use his guile and charm. He promised the aging president, Paul von Hindenburg, that he would act lawfully if he was appointed to head the government. And on January 30th, 1933, Hindenburg named Hitler chancellor of Germany.

From that day forward, Hitler moved *cautiously*.

The Nazis plotted to bring the Communists into disfavor, and burned the *Reichstag* (parliament) building on February 27, 1933, the Communists subsequently being blamed.

Hitler's next move was to persuade the aging Hindenburg to sign a

law "for the protection of the people and the state," to stay the Communist menace. Hitler and his Nazi party were now almost firmly planted in the despot's saddle. Overnight, this new law wiped out individual rights in Germany, and allowed the arrogant Nazis to jail anyone they wished without a trial.

By July, 1933, the Nazi government had outlawed *freedom of the press* and the freedom of all political parties (except the Nazis) and all labor unions. Then the new *Reichstag* gave Herr Hitler full lawmaking and economic powers. From then on, Hitler's loyal secret police, the dreaded *Gestapo*, ruthlessly hunted down all "enemies" and shot and jailed all those who opposed Hitler, or who were so much as *suspected* of opposing him. By the time of Hindenburg's death in August, 1934, Adolf Hitler ruled Germany with an *iron fist*!

He then gave himself the title of *Der Führer* (the Leader) and arrogated to himself the role of leading the Germans into their glorious destiny — that of ruling the world through the Third Reich for *a thousand years*, during which time German peace, German happiness, German Kultur and prosperity would fill the earth.

From that day forward, a Nazi-controlled press and radio flooded Germany with propaganda about the glories of the New Order.

The Nazis began forcing employers in many industries to fire Jews and all political suspects. Schools, colleges and universities were purged of those teachers and administrators who might hinder the Nazi program.

Hitler's Nazi party established strict controls over industry, labor and agriculture, and after 1938, they decided where a person would work, and even set each person's salaries.

The Führer established the Hitler Youth organization in order to win the hearts of young Germans. It became mandatory for all boys and girls to join the Hitler Youth organization. They learned to march, exercise, work on farms, and (most important to the Nazis) were thoroughly indoctrinated with Nazi propaganda. Children were taught to spy on anyone who was suspected of opposing the Führer, and this included their own parents.

In 1928 the Nazi party had received only 810,000 votes out of 31,000,000 in the national elections — and Hitler and his party were a joking matter. Just two years later the Nazis pulled six and a half million votes and were the second largest party in Germany. By 1932, they had become Germany's biggest, most powerful party — with 40 percent of the vote. Hitler's rise had been meteoric.

Hitler's Minister of Propaganda, Dr. Joseph Goebbels, had the task to convince the German people (and the world, if possible) that this evil genius, this former Austrian waif, was actually a heaven-sent *man of destiny* — sent by God to deliver the *Herrenvolk* during their darkest hour.

“Like a servant of God,” wrote Goebbels in his diary, “he (Hitler) fulfills the task which was given to him and he does justice in its brightest and best sense to his historical mission.”

In Goebbels’ newspaper, *Der Angriff*, he once wrote:

What diligence and knowledge and school learning *cannot* solve, God announces through the mouths of those whom he has *chosen*. Genius in all fields of human endeavour means — to have been *called*. *When Hitler speaks all resistance breaks down before the magical effect of his words.*

As Minister of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, Dr. Goebbels exercised tremendous influence over the whole German nation. He continued to view the Führer with awe — and always sought to project to the German people the image of a *redeemer* who had come to save his people. He exercised almost complete control over all media — radio, press, films, and the theater. Through these, he was able to create around Hitler an aura of messianic proportions — an aura which totally disarmed all opposition, and eventually led Germany and most of Europe to the very brink of total disaster.

The Possession of Adolf Hitler

How is it possible to understand Adolf Hitler’s sinister personality?

Perhaps one of the most incisive insights into the mind of Adolf Hitler is that of British author, Goerge Bruce, in his penetrating analysis of *The Nazis*.

George Bruce asks:

Can the mystery of the evil of Nazism be explained? Was there a *Satanic nucleus* at the heart of it? One interpretation of its nature that should be mentioned is the link between Nazism and the alleged attachment to *black magic* and *occultism* of Hitler and his inner circle, including Goering, Himmler, Goebbel, Ley and, in the early days, Dietrick Eckart and Professor Karl Haushofer.

Hitler, according to what may seem to many people a far-fetched belief, was the *medium* through whom contact was made with *supernatural powers of evil*. Hermann Rauschning, who observed Hitler with a cold and analytical eye, declares that he was a *medium*, “*possessed by forces outside himself — almost demoniacal forces.*” Rudolf Olden, political editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt* in the days of Nazism’s rise to power, remarked how the overwhelming, almost superhuman Niagara of words that poured forth during Hitler’s speeches sometimes reached a climax during which he literally “*spoke in tongues*” and seemed *possessed*. Andre François-Poncet, French Ambassador to Berlin, also referred to this apparent *demoniacal possession*.

Was Hitler a *medium* through which evil forces spoke? George Bruce makes these remarkable comments:

Hitler's *mediumistic powers* supposedly provided the link with Satanic forces which spoke through him and led to the *black magic* and *occult* practices in the inner circle of Nazi leaders. Rauschning also reports in *Hitler Speaks* a warning given to Hitler by a percipient woman in his circle, one of the few who dared to speak forthrightly to him. "My Führer, do not touch *black magic*" she said. "As yet both white and black magic are open to you. But once you have embarked upon black magic it will dominate your destiny. It will hold you captive. Don't choose the quick and easy successes.

"There lies before you the power over a realm of *pure spirits*. Do not allow yourself to be led away from your true path by *earthbound spirits* which will rob you of creative power."

"Apparently" says author Goerge Bruce, "Hitler disregarded the warning and was dominated by the *evil forces*, who, bribing him with early successes, forced him along the path of their own choosing towards an inferno which destroyed him, split Germany and impoverished Europe and Britain for two decades."

Bruce adds:

To believe this theory one must suspend rational judgement, but are there not in any case fields of human experience which it cannot explain? And does not this theory of Hitler being dominated by evil supernatural forces throw light for the first time on the reason for Auschwitz, Treblinka, the deaths of six million Jews, the plan to murder 33 million of the Slav population of Russia, the readiness to sacrifice three or four million of Germany's young manhood in war and, finally, the long-term aim, reported by Fabian von Schlabrendorff, for the total and permanent *destruction of Christianity* throughout the world?

If this explanation of Hitler's madness at first seems far-fetched, then consider some of Hitler's very odd behavior.

Hitler — the "God-Man"

George Bruce tells us more about this "self-ordaining God-Man."

In Ernst Rohm's expressive phrase, the Nazis were out to *lift the world off its hinges*, to destroy the power both of the proletariat and the middle classes and to found a new order of society to accord with the commands of the *demonic voices which spoke through Hitler*. "I will tell you a secret," he told Rauschning, "I am founding an Order . . . In my *Ordensburgen* there will stand as a statue for worship the figure of the magnificent, self-ordaining *God-Man* . . ." Hitler at this point checked himself with the remark that there were matters of which even he must not permit himself to speak.

Adolf Hitler considered himself to be a Messiah. It is well known that he believed his glorious Third Reich would continue for *one thou-*

sand years. (Many theologians who have embraced the “Messianic era” concept have likewise concluded that the Messiah would rule the nations of the earth for *one thousand years* — ushering in an era of unprecedented peace, happiness and prosperity.)

When Hitler learned that the leader of the British Empire, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, intended to fly to Munich to appease the Führer, the wildly excited Hitler exclaimed: “*Ich bin vom Himmel gefallen!*” (“I have fallen from Heaven!”)

Some have seen a possible parallel between this reaction of Hitler’s and the statement of Jesus concerning Satan: “I beheld,” said Jesus, “Satan as lightning fall from heaven” (Luke 10:18).

Whose mind was it that spoke with Hitler’s voice: “I have fallen from Heaven”? Was Hitler in actual fact possessed of an unseen, fallen, supernatural force which guided and controlled him at times?

Nazi Spectacular At Nuremberg

In 1933, the Nazis held the first of their annual party rallies in Nuremberg. Hundreds of thousands of faithful Nazis flocked to see the spectacle, heard Der Führer speak, and regenerated their enthusiasm and faith.

This first Nazi rally was held in the early part of September 1933. There at Nuremberg, zealous Nazis had their souls bombarded with a delirious round of music, speeches, parades, and a plethora of pagan pageantry that seemed to equal, if not excel, the pageantry of ancient Rome. Thereafter, the annual Nazi party rallies at Nuremberg became the annual high point of the Nazi calendar.

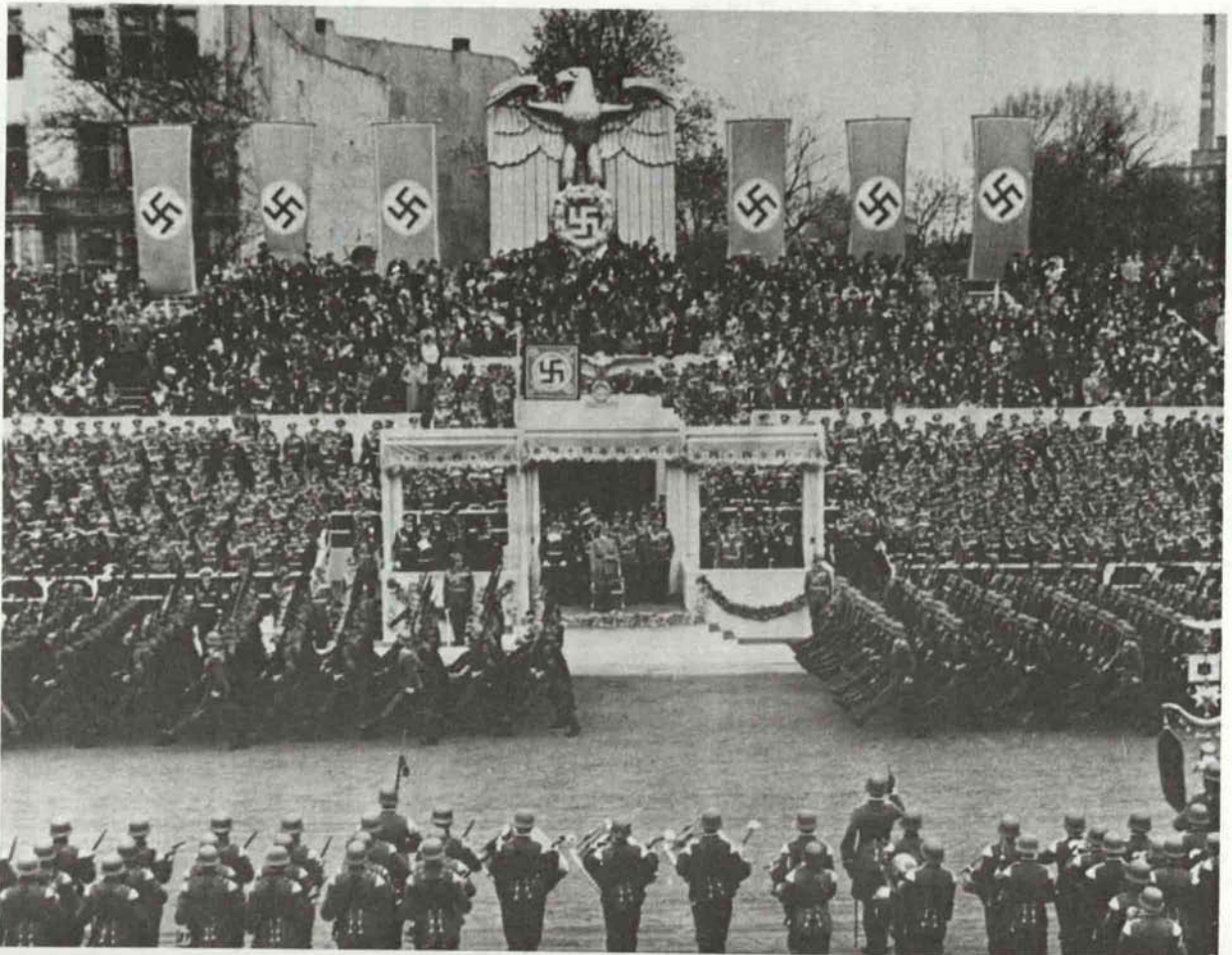
During that emotion-filled week in 1933, music, speeches, torchlight parades and other night spectacles were held. Hitler firmly believed that “in the evening the people’s willpower more readily succumbs to the dominating force of a stronger will.”

The supreme moment of expectation at the Nuremberg rallies was the arrival of the Führer. Herr Hitler proceeded to ignite his hundreds of thousands of faithful Nazi listeners into an emotional frenzy. They listened enthralled as their Führer outlined the future course of the Nazis.

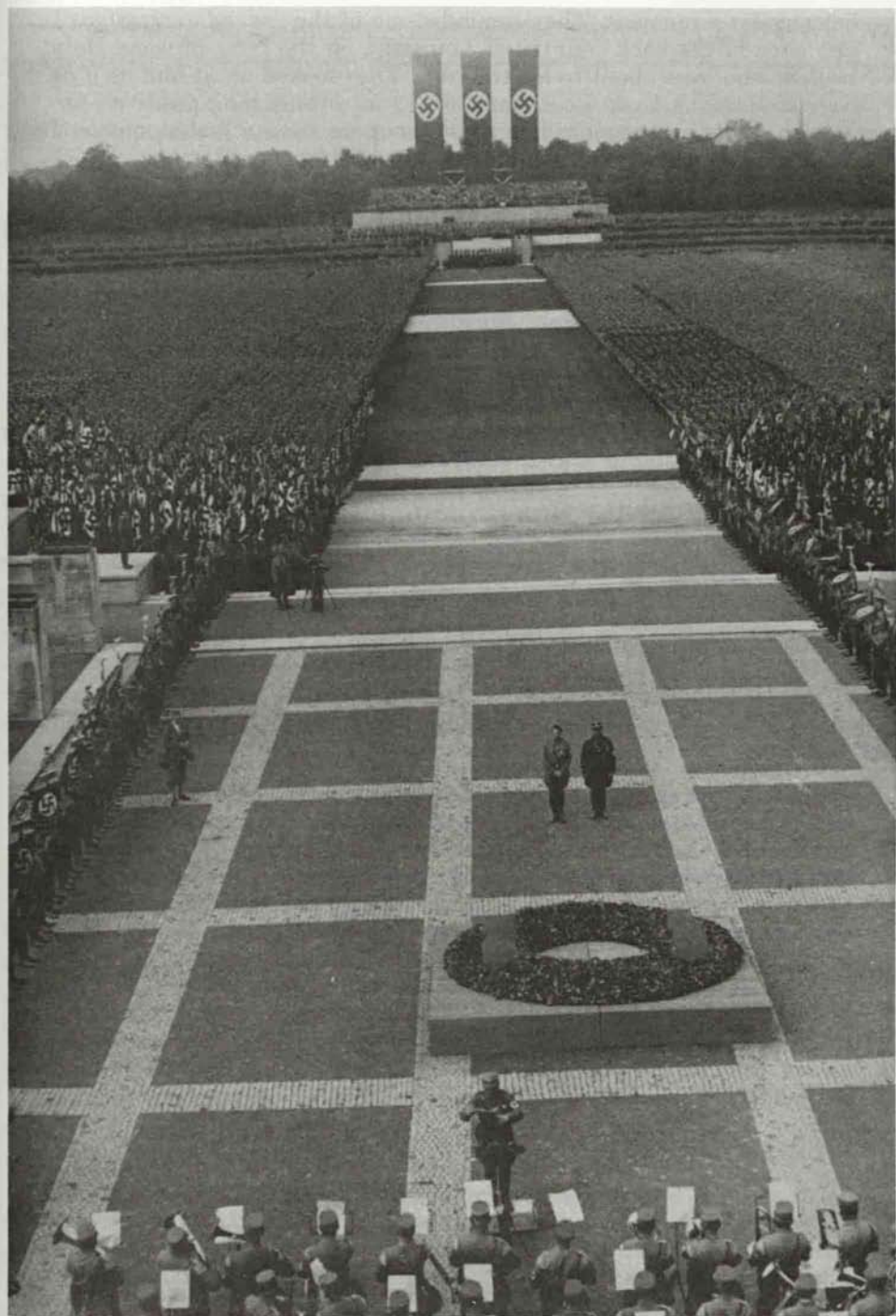
William L. Shirer’s vivid description of that rally (on September 4, 1934) is recorded in his book, *Berlin Diary*:

Like a Roman emperor Hitler rode into this mediaeval town at sundown today past solid phalanxes of wildly cheering Nazis who packed the narrow streets. . . .

About ten o’clock tonight I got caught in front of Hitler’s hotel, shouting: ‘We want our Führer.’ I was a little shocked at the faces, especially those of the women, when Hitler finally appeared on the



Goose-stepping Nazi soldiers parade before Hitler on his 50th birthday, April 20, 1939. — Wide World Photo



Hitler and Röhm stand at attention during a large Nazi rally in Nürnberg in 1933. When Hitler spoke, many Germans became transfixed under his hypnotic spell. — *Ullstein*

balcony for a moment. They reminded me of the *crazed expressions* I saw once in the back country of Louisiana on the faces of some Holy Rollers who were about to hit the trail. They looked up at him *as if he were a Messiah*, their faces transformed into something positively *inhuman*. If he had remained in sight for more than a few moments, I think many of the women would have *swooned* from excitement. . . .

Shirer wrote the following account of the rally which was held on the 5th of September:

I'm beginning to comprehend, I think, some of the reasons for Hitler's astounding success. Borrowing a chapter from the Roman church, he is restoring pageantry and colour and mysticism to the drab lives of twentieth-century Germans. This morning's opening meeting in the Luitpold Hall on the outskirts of Nuremberg was more than a gorgeous show; it also had something of the mysticism and religious fervour of an Easter or Christmas Mass in a great Gothic cathedral.

Shirer speaks of the Hitler Youth, at the same Nuremberg rally, chanting: "We want one Leader! Nothing for us! Everything for Germany! *Heil Hitler!*"

Soon "Deutschland Über Alles" was being sung all over Germany. The goose-stepping Master Race was being told: "Today we rule Germany, tomorrow we rule the world!"

William L. Shirer also wrote of the rally which was held on September 10, 1934:

Today the army had its day, fighting a very realistic sham battle in the Zeppelin Meadow. It is difficult to exaggerate the frenzy of the three hundred thousand German spectators when they saw their soldiers go into action, heard the thunder of the guns, and smelt the powder. I feel that all those Americans and English (among others) who thought that German militarism was merely a product of the Hohenzollerns — from Frederick the Great to Kaiser Wilhelm II — made a mistake. *It is rather something deeply ingrained in all Germans*. They acted today like children playing with tin soldiers. The Reichswehr 'fought' today only with 'defensive' weapons allowed them by Versailles, but everybody knows they've got the rest — tanks, heavy artillery, and probably airplanes.

Shirer summarized:

LATER. — After seven days of almost ceaseless goose-stepping, speech-making, and pageantry, the party rally came to an end tonight. . . . I'm glad I came. You have to go through one of these to understand *Hitler's hold on the people*, to feel the dynamic in the movement he's unleashed and the sheer, disciplined strength the Germans possess. And now — as Hitler told the correspondents yesterday in explaining his technique — the half-million men who've been here during the week will go back to their towns and villages and *preach the new gospel with new fanaticism*. . . .

One reason for German enthusiasm for Hitler and his Nazi party was what they accomplished during the first few years in power. When the Nazis came into power, there were six million idle Germans. There was much political unrest, and actual fighting between Communists and Fascists.

Hitler and his Nazi party put millions of Germans back to work — building autobahns, public buildings and other works.

He promised the Germans a Volkswagen in every garage, and there was every reason to believe Hitler would lead Germany to a glorious destiny.

Many Germans agreed with many of Hitler's aims. They certainly wanted to see all Germans united, and wished to see the last vestiges of the disgrace of World War I erased from the record.

But it is certain that many Germans did *not* realize that Hitler nurtured ambitions of dominating all Europe — and perhaps the entire world! They had no idea that his schemes would ultimately lead Germany to total ruin, bring about the deaths of many millions of their sons and daughters, and cause the dismemberment of their nation. Nor did they realize that they would soon have death and destruction raining down from the skies on their cities and towns, and that victorious enemy soldiers — particularly the Russians, — would rape thousands of their women, leaving cities in a shambles, pillaging houses, rifling apartments, burning, looting and destroying.

On the Road to War

The Führer told the German people: "Conquest is not only a right, but a duty!" From the time he became dictator in 1933 until 1939 he began feverishly preparing the German nation for war. At first, he did so *secretly* — for fear that, if he let the military cat out of the bag too early, the alarmed Allies would move against Germany, and would thwart her aggressive plans.

Hitler was too clever at the beginning of his dictatorship to begin *openly* preparing for war. He would see that German military strength was built up. Then, when it was too late, the world would learn about it.

Hitler had two great passions — the creation of a mighty German military machine, and the shaping of German foreign policy towards conquest.

But, first, Hitler knew he must talk *peace*, while secretly preparing for war. He must not alarm the Versailles powers — must not give the German war aims away to foreign intelligence.

Hitler therefore set about building up the strength of the German war-making machine with unflagging zeal. He ordered the Army to

treble its strength from 100,000 to 300,000 by October 1, 1934. Hitler's Minister of Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, was ordered never to allow the words "General Staff" to appear in the press — since this was forbidden by the Versailles Treaty. Also, the official rank list of the German Army ceased to be published — lest this might give away German military buildup intentions.

Germany began violating the Versailles Treaty by having submarines built secretly in Finland, The Netherlands, and Spain.

Herman Goering, Minister of Aviation (supposedly *civil* aviation) put manufacturers to work designing *warplanes*, and he trained German pilots under the camouflage of the League of Air Sports. Furthermore, the Germans covertly had tanks, planes and other weapons of war manufactured in Russia — to prevent Allied detection. But by 1934 German rearmament had become so massive that it could no longer be concealed.

Hitler's Bold Moves

Herr Hitler established *universal military service* on March 16, 1935 — thereby providing for a peacetime army of half a million men! This meant the death of the military restrictions of the Versailles Treaty unless Britain and France took swift action. And Hitler had judged his adversaries correctly. As he expected, they protested, but did absolutely nothing!

Next, Hitler plotted to occupy the demilitarized zone of the *Rhineland*. The Führer sensed that Britain and France were preoccupied with stopping Mussolini's aggression in Ethiopia. Even though Hitler's generals were against the Führer's plan of occupation of the Rhineland, he decided to go ahead anyway. On March 2, 1936, General Werner von Blomberg, Minister of War and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, was issued with orders for the occupation of the Rhineland.

General Blomberg was ordered to invade and occupy the Rhineland, and if the Allies did not move against his forces, all would be well. But if the Allies (France in particular) forced a military showdown, Blomberg was to beat a hasty retreat back over the Rhine.

A few hours later, the Führer stood in the Reichstag before a delirious audience telling them of his desire for *peace*. In a deep, resonant voice Hitler said:

Men of the German Reichstag! In this historic hour, when in the Reich's western provinces, German troops are, at this very moment, marching into their future peacetime garrisons, we all unite in two sacred vows. . . .

At this point, the members of the Reichstag sprang to their feet yelling and crying, their hands raised in slavish salute.

“No Territorial Demands”

Hitler played his role superbly. Lowering his head, as if in all humbleness, he waited patiently for complete silence. Then, choking with emotion, he made two vows: “First, swear to yield to no force whatever in restoration of the honor of our people. Secondly, we pledge that we have no territorial demands to make in Europe! Germany will never break the peace!”

Hitler knew he was taking quite a gamble when he marched into the Rhineland. He had only a handful of battalions against nearly 200 divisions of France and her East European allies. The Führer later admitted that his march into the Rhineland was the “most nerve-racking” period of his entire life.

Adolf Hitler later remarked: “If the French had marched into the Rhineland, we would have had to withdraw with our tails between our legs, for the military resources at our disposal would have been wholly inadequate for even a moderate resistance.”

Later, at the Nuremberg trials, one of Hitler’s generals testified: “Considering the situation we were in, the French Army could have blown us to pieces (in 1936).”

But the French did absolutely nothing! Hitler had gambled, and got away with it. He would now be emboldened to make further gambles — gambles which would bring death and destruction to tens of millions of helpless victims before the Nazi onslaught was halted in 1945.

Even after German troops had occupied the Rhineland in 1936, nervous German Generals advised that their troops should be pulled back, fearing an attack from France.

“Obliged to Lie”

On March 27, 1942 (while recalling the Rhineland coup) Hitler asked:

What would have happened if anybody other than myself had been at the head of the Reich? Anyone you care to mention would have lost his nerve. *I was obliged to lie*, and what saved us was my unshakable obstinacy and my amazing aplomb.

Hitler blatantly admitted he had lied. He had repeatedly uttered the lie that Germany had no further territorial aims in Europe. But soon afterward, German troops were again on the march — putting an explanation mark after Hitler’s lies!

Hitler’s gamble in the occupation of the Rhineland gave him the upper hand over his political and military associates from that day forward. His overruling his generals gave him such a conceit that he

frequently ignored their advice — which later brought Germany defeat after defeat.

What effect did French inaction over German occupation of the Rhineland have on the rest of Europe? France's allies in the East (Russia, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia) all read the signals loud and clear. They began to realize that France would be unable to offer them effective assistance once Germany became ensconced behind her powerful *Siegfried* fortifications.

If France didn't move a little finger to repel three German battalions, when she had 100 divisions (plus those of her East European Allies) to crush a defiant Germany, what would she do later if her allies in the East were attacked? They concluded France was a spineless ally, and did not have the will to help them.

Hitler Takes Over Austria

Hitler was a master bluffer. He used his *bluff* technique in intimidating the Austrian Chancellor into signing away Austrian independence.

When Hitler presented the Austrian Chancellor, Herr Schuschnigg, a draft document to sign, a scene developed. "Herr Schuschnigg," said Hitler, "here is the draft of the document. There is nothing to be discussed. I will not change one single iota. You will either sign it as it is and fulfill my demands within three days, or I will order the march into Austria."

Even though Schuschnigg capitulated, he made certain protestations. Whereupon Hitler appeared to lose his self-control. He then opened the door and shouted, "General Keitel!" He told Schuschnigg, "I shall have you called later!"

Of course, Hitler was using the big bluff, but the Austrian Chancellor, who was aware of the presence of high-ranking German generals, apparently did not know it.

General Wilhelm Keitel later related how Hitler greeted him with a broad grin when he answered Hitler's call, rushed in and asked for orders. "There are no orders," chuckled an amused Hitler. "I just wanted to have you here." Half an hour later, the Austrian Chancellor signed Hitler's capitulation document — Austria's death warrant!

Within a month, through propaganda, subversion and ruthless military pressure, the Nazis succeeded in taking complete control of Austria.

Legalizing the Austrian Takeover

Hitler felt compelled to make this naked act of Nazi aggression against Austria look good. He used guile to put a good face on the Austrian takeover, hoping to avoid unfavorable publicity.

The Führer, in order to “legalize” his blatant aggression, announced that, on April 10th, a *plebiscite* would follow the so-called *Anschluss* (“political union”).

The Nazis used intimidation, trickery and clever subversion in the “plebiscite” on the Anschluss and reportedly 99 percent of the Austrians voted for the Anschluss — the political union with Germany.

Hitler, without having to fire a single shot (and without any interference from the Allies), had added 7 million to the Third Reich, and had gained a strategic position of great future value to Germany.

Hitler Covets Czechoslovakia.

Next, Hitler cast greedy eyes on Czechoslovakia. His plan to attack Czechoslovakia was code-named “Case Green.” Among the Czechs lived three and a quarter million Sudeten Germans.

When the Czechs saw Hitler’s intent and began to mobilize for war, Hitler was seized by a fit of fury. The *Führer* felt deeply humiliated that the Czechs would dare to resist his military might. He also feared reports that Britain and France might come to the aid of the Czechs — that an attack by Germany on Czechoslovakia could bring on a total war.

Czechoslovakia’s defiance put Hitler in a black, ugly mood, as he brooded in his mountain retreat. He was all the more furious because he had been accused prematurely (but accurately) of being about to commit aggression — which indeed he intended to commit! Hitler decided to swallow his pride and cancel the whole Czech invasion plan. The Allies breathed a brief sigh of relief.

But Hitler, still sulking in his Obersalzberg retreat, developed a burning rage to get even with Czechoslovakia.

After convoking his ranking officers, he told them: “Czechoslovakia shall be wiped off the map! It is my unalterable decision to smash Czechoslovakia by military action in the near future.” The date for “Case Green” had by then been set for October 1, 1938.

Allied Apeasement

Because of the ominous events occurring in Europe, the French Premier, Edouard Daladier, and the English Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, foolishly decided to try to make the best possible bargain with Herr Hitler. France, instead of honoring her pledge to *defend* the Czechs, wanted Neville Chamberlain to meet the German dictator and seek appeasement. Britain and France were willing to go to almost any length to avoid war.

Chamberlain sent Hitler an urgent message:

IN VIEW OF THE INCREASINGLY CRITICAL SITUATION, I PROPOSE TO COME OVER AT ONCE TO SEE YOU WITH A VIEW TO TRYING TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. I PROPOSE TO COME ACROSS BY AIR AND AM READY TO START TOMORROW.

Adolf Hitler was pleasantly surprised when he read Chamberlain's message: "*Ich bin vom Himmel gefallen!!*" ("I have fallen from Heaven!") the astounded Führer exclaimed. Hitler was dumbfounded to see the Prime Minister of Britain and the leader of the mighty British Empire come, hat in hand, pleading with him.

When the two leaders met, the Führer harangued about all he had done for the German people and glowingly told Chamberlain what he had done for peace and for Anglo-German rapprochement. But he explained to Chamberlain, that there was one problem which he was determined to solve: Three million Germans in Czechoslovakia must "return" to the Third Reich.

Then, asked Hitler, would Britain agree to a secession of the Sudeten region to Germany, or would she oppose this move? The British Prime Minister said he could not commit himself until he had consulted his Cabinet and the French. He added, however, that he himself recognized the principle of the detachment of the Sudeten areas. He would have to return to England and seek further consultation.

Chamberlain's words were reassuring enough to Hitler. He felt he could now go ahead with his military and political plans for the actual invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Chamberlain — "You Can Get All"

Later, Hitler issued urgent invitations to the heads of government of Britain, France and Italy to meet the Führer at Munich at noon on the following day to settle the Czech question.

But Hitler did not issue an invitation to Prague, so the Czechs could also attend the conference. After all, was it not their nation that was about to be dismembered? Didn't they have the right to have any say in the final decision which would be made?

When Chamberlain told the House of Commons of his urgent invitation to see Hitler and settle the Czech question, there was wild cheering, shouting and throwing of papers into the air. Some were in tears. One person was heard to say: "Thank God for the Prime Minister!"

The September 29th, Munich Conference was anticlimactic. Chamberlain had previously written Hitler: "After reading your letter, I feel certain that *you can get all essentials without war and without delay.*" This was the kind of news Hitler was looking for. The Munich Conference was little more than a mere empty formality which agreed to render to Hitler exactly what he had asked for.



Hitler and Neville Chamberlain shook hands at Munich. Hitler called his enemies (including Chamberlain) "little worms," and despised the weakness which British and French leaders showed at Munich in 1939.

By now, Adolf Hitler had sensed that England and France would go to almost any lengths to avoid war. The more Hitler demanded, the more Chamberlain conceded to him on a silver British platter.

Hitler had nothing but contempt for the British Prime Minister and the French Premier. Sometime after the Munich Conference, Hitler told his generals: "*Our enemies are little worms. I saw them at Munich.*"

Likewise, Mussolini had little respect for Chamberlain and Daladier. Shortly before Munich, Il Duce had remarked: "The democracies exist to swallow toads."

Hitler had got all he wanted. On September 30, shortly after 1 a.m., Mussolini, Chamberlain, Daladier and Hitler all affixed their signatures to the Munich Agreement which provided for the German Army to march into Czechoslovakia on October 1, 1938, and complete the German occupation of the Sudetenland by October 10th.

"Peace With Honor"

When Chamberlain returned to London, he waved a copy of the Munich Agreement to the cheering crowds and told them: "My good friends, this is the second time in our history that there has come back from Germany to Downing Street *peace with honor*. I believe it is *peace in our time*."

Under the terms of the Munich Agreement, the Czechs were forced to cede to Germany 11,000 square miles of their territory, in which lived 2,800,000 Sudeten Germans, and 800,000 Czechs. Also, within this area lay all the vast Czech fortifications which were the best in Europe after the Maginot Line.

Furthermore, according to the Germans, the dismembered country lost 66 percent of its coal, 86 percent of its chemicals, 70 percent of its electric power, and 70 percent of its iron and steel. Overnight, valiant, prosperous little Czechoslovakia had been dismembered and shoved by its Allies onto the rocks of *bankruptcy*.

"God Help Your Souls"

Even before Chamberlain made his last, and ignominious, departure for Munich, the Czech Minister in London, Jan Masaryk, told the British delegates to the Munich Conference: "If you have sacrificed my nation to preserve the peace of the world, I will be the first to applaud you. But if not, gentlemen, God help your souls!"

After the Munich disaster, Allied credibility in Europe was at its nadir. Even the Russians came to distrust the French and the British as allies.

Despite Hitler's cheap diplomatic victory over Britain and France,



Deluded Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain returned from Munich thinking he had secured "peace in our time" by appeasing the mad Führer, Adolf Hitler. — Ullstein Photo

he was not satisfied. In fact, he was deeply disappointed with the results of Munich. On Hitler's return to Berlin, he exclaimed: "That fellow [Chamberlain] has spoiled my entry into Prague!"

Chamberlain had pressured the Czechs into submitting to all of Hitler's demands, thereby depriving the Führer of a military conquest of Czechoslovakia — which was what Hitler really wanted.

"I Could Not Be Satisfied"

Hitler later told his generals: "It was clear to me from the first moment that I could not be satisfied with the Sudeten German territory. That was only a partial solution." He himself said "The horoscope of the times does not point to peace but to war."

Only a few days after Munich, Hitler planned the total solution to the Czech problem by utterly disregarding his pledge to guarantee the rump Czech state. He began an intense propaganda campaign. Hitler would use internal subversion to force the nation to break up, and this would afford him a pretext for marching into Czechoslovakia so he could "restore order."

On March 14, 1939, the elderly, tired President of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Emil Hacha, was hounded and threatened until he suffered a heart attack. Just before 4 a.m., Dr. Hacha signed the document which totally destroyed the last vestiges of an independent Czechoslovakia, and placed the fate of the Czech people and country in the hands of the Führer of the German Reich.

After Dr. Hacha signed the document of submission, an exuberant Hitler rushed into the room where his secretaries were sitting and told them they could kiss him: "Girls," said Hitler, "Hacha has signed. This is the greatest day of my life. I shall be known as the greatest German in history."

The following day, German troops poured into Bohemia and Moravia, and met no resistance. That evening, Hitler was able to make his triumphant entry into Prague!

Again, the German dictator had broken his pledge to Britain and France, and had gobbled up the helpless remnant of tiny Czechoslovakia which he had already dismembered.

A Rude Awakening

The Allies were about to be rudely awakened. Britain and France were later to regret bitterly their treacherous handling of their friend, Czechoslovakia. They were about to pay a heavy price for their act of faithlessness against a loyal friend who needed their staunch support in her hour of supreme trial.

Now both Britain and France had lost all credibility in the eyes of the nations of Eastern Europe, including Russia. Even though the Soviet Union proposed that military staff talks between Britain, France and Russia be held at once to spell out specifically how Hitler's armies were to be met by the three nations, it was too late. The Germans were now dangling tantalizing bait before Russian eyes — offering them the eastern part of Poland if they would assent to Hitler's invasion of that country.

Prime Minister Chamberlain refused even so much as to censure Hitler in the House of Commons for his disgraceful rape of Czechoslovakia.

This shameful British act produced a national outcry among many Britons, and an alarmed Chamberlain had to quickly reverse himself.

After having spinelessly yielded to Hitler's demands concerning the Czechs, and seeing rumblings that Hitler was about to invade Poland, Britain and France agreed they would stand firmly behind Poland if she were attacked by Hitler. But by this time, even Hitler didn't believe his enemies (the "little worms") would do anything.

Soviet-German Pact

Hitler knew there was the *possibility* that Britain and France would declare war if he invaded Poland. Apparently this didn't bother him all that much. He thought they were too weak-willed to attack.

But just in case he was wrong, he decided it best to reach an accord with the Russians before the invasion so he could make certain the Soviets wouldn't also declare war on him. At the time, Hitler, like Britain and France, didn't have a very high opinion of Soviet military prowess.

Britain and France asked the Russians to join them in helping stop Germany. But Stalin, angered at the way he had been totally ignored during the Munich crisis, had come to have nothing but contempt for the Western Allies after seeing their record of shameful appeasement. He decided it wiser to join with Germany, than with the perfidious British and French.

Accordingly, a Nazi-Soviet nonaggression pact was signed August 23, 1939. It was signed by Russia's Molotov and Germany's von Ribbentrop. It included secret clauses which divided eastern Europe into zones of influence that cut Poland in two.

The stage was now fully set for World War II to begin — a war which would last over six years, and would involve most of the important nations of the earth in the greatest carnage of history.

Hitler was certainly troubled by the reports he'd received that Britain and France might go to war if he invaded Poland, and for a time, he even changed his mind about attacking Poland, and drew back from the brink of war.

Then, on August 26th, 1939 he made the final, irrevocable decision. On that day, according to an eyewitness report:

Hitler suddenly got up and, becoming very excited and nervous, walked up and down saying, as though to himself, that *Germany was irresistible*. Suddenly he stopped in the middle of the room and stood staring. His voice was blurred and his behavior that of a completely abnormal person. He spoke in staccato phrases: "If there should be war, then *I shall build U-boats, build U-boats, U-boats, U-boats, U-boats.*

On August 31, Adolf Hitler took the final step. The invasion of Poland was labelled "Case White." The order was given to attack Poland the following day, September 1. On that day the world became convulsed in its worst bloodbath in history.