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HOW HITLER CONTROLLED THE PRESS

THESIS

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Adolf Hitler advocated total control of the press for many years before he was elected Führer. Almost immediately after he assumed power in 1932, Hitler began writing new laws and regulations that totally exorcised all freedoms from the German press.

This study follows the path that Hitler took to control the German press from 1920 until the end of World War II. It utilized translations of documents and statements by men whom Hitler appointed to control the press and books written by experts in the fields of communications as well as men who prosecuted Nazi war criminals after World War II.

The study found that the control of the press was indeed a very necessary ingredient in Hitler's climb to power and remained crucial during his reign as Führer.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Bombardments have rained down on members of the press corps almost from the profession's beginning. The barrage has continued throughout the history of the world, reaching paralyzing proportions in many countries.

This malady is like a malignancy in that if some kind of action to protect the rights of the press is not enacted, the malady will grow to dangerous conditions that can bring about the death of a free press.

The danger of what this trend--gag rules, contempt of court citations and closed courtroom testimony--can mean lies only shadows away in the history of Adolf Hitler's Germany. The Führer's march to power began in many of the same ways. And before it ended in the bloody flames of the conclusion of World War II, Germany was a country without a free press. It was a country where

(1) reporters and editors faced almost immediate imprisonment if they printed a story critical of the

Third Reich or wrongly interpreted a long list of public events as to their effect upon the public;

(2) voluminous news releases were issued by the government and were ordered to be printed without editing and with prominent display on front pages;

(3) anti-Hitler newspapers and publications were closed in acts of censorship, the result being the elimination of anti-Hitler publications; and

(4) the press was used to further the Nazi Party and was filled with scathing and savage attacks on Jews, turning their pages into vehicles to further the fatal foment against this people.

Actually, nobody should have been surprised at this turn of events. Hitler blatantly projected it in his early days. So did many of the men who eventually would join his forces and clamp a rule of destruction, fear, malevolence and death on the country.

Hitler said it well in Mein Kampf. He said it repeatedly, but, perhaps he said it no more bluntly than when he wrote:

But, then it will be necessary for everything in print, from the A-B-C in which the child learns to read, to the last newspaper, for every theatre and every cinema, every column of advertisements and every heading to be placed at the service of this one great mission, until the pusillanimous invocation which our patriotic associations address to heaven today, "Lord give us freedom," is transformed in the brain of the smallest child into this ardent prayer: "Almighty God, bless

our arms one day; be as just as thou has always been, decided now if we deserve freedom, Lord bless our struggles" (6, p. 115).

When Hitler began his climb to rule over Germany, it was a country wracked by inflation and high unemployment. By 1930, 4,000,000 workers were without jobs. The people were still hurting from the wounds dealt them by disastrous defeat in World War I. The people were full of frustrations that made them ripe for Hitler's tramp to dictatorship. His greatest concern was not ideology, which was little more than a series of slogans. His Nazi Party--its success, its organization and its varied activities--and his conception of ideology were nothing more than cliches. His real interest was in questions about effectiveness, timeliness, psychological tactics, organization, and propaganda (2, p. 3).

More than ten years of defeat and frustration had set the stage for the prophet of a new order, who, a son of the middle class himself, expounded his creed in terms easily understood by the middle class. The stratum, once instrumental in molding national ideology, found itself reduced in the postwar period to a state of acute disintegration, while organized labor and organized industry shaped economic policies. The common foundations of national homogeneity were crumbling (3, p. 12).

The exercise of political power has always been psychological as well as physical. Governments have never been fashioned exclusively out of the bodies of men, nor out of their material possessions, but erected ingeniously upon the foundations of collective attitudes, habits of thought and mental interrelationships. Officialdom has always recognized the importance of opinion upon prevailing currents of desire of expectation, even fear, upon streams of opinion that trickle through a populace to rush madly over the body politic (1, p. 1).

Hitler minced no words about wanting total control of the country. He preached this repeatedly as he ranted his lengthy oral and written epistles. He knew, and he advocated strongly, that to achieve the pinnacle of power that he so ardently wanted, and to preserve this position once it was obtained, he had to have not only total control of the government, but total control of the country's press.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to analyze how Hitler's control of the press of Germany during his reign was critical for him to stay in power.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the different ways that Hitler achieved power and control over the press.

It examined Hitler's advocacy of this control and the reasons in his philosophy for the importance of this control. It looked at various documents and decrees he wrote or ordered written and then enforced in the country to achieve this control. It looked at the methods he utilized to maintain this control.

Questions

This study asked the following questions about Hitler's control of the press:

(1) Prior to becoming Führer, what warnings did Hitler give in writings or in speeches that the press would become totally controlled?

(2) Why did Hitler want control of the press?

(3) How did he achieve this control?

(4) How did he maintain this control?

(5) What was the effect of this control on the press?

(6) What kind of people did Hitler put into strategic positions in order to maintain this control of the press and to insure that his propaganda was published unedited?

Review of the Literature

Since 1960 only one master's thesis listed in Masters Abstracts: Abstracts of Selected Master Thesis on Microfilm deals with the question of how Hitler controlled the press. In 1975, Debra Cosby examined the

importance of propaganda in Hitler's time of leadership. She said that propaganda was the genius of National Socialism. Hitler's political party owed its most important successes to propaganda (7, p. 25).

She said that Hitler attracted wealthy sympathizers and with their funds, he was able to purchase in December, 1920, the Völkischer Beobachter, an independent Volkisch newspaper. Since the newspaper was an important link with the people in Munich as well as those in the provinces, Hitler had full rein to spread party ideology. She said that although the tone of the newspaper's propaganda was aggressive, aimed at emotions rather than intellect, it made an impression on the working populace and, through its pages, Hitler was able to speak to a number of people sympathetic to the movement but who otherwise would have been put off by the drama of the numerous rallies he was conducting (3, p. 55).

Cosby said that Hitler was given broadbased emergency powers in February, 1933, including power over the basic civil rights of the German people. From these powers came a decree that virtually outlawed freedom of the press. But, Cosby touched very lightly on how Hitler controlled the press.

Alexander G. Hardy, who served as a United States prosecutor during the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial, wrote

about the controls of the press during Hitler's regime. In his book, Hitler's Secret Weapon: The Managed Press and Propaganda Machine of Nazi Germany, Hardy said that as a result of the unbridled thrust of Hitler's news machine, the Führer and his Nazi henchmen were able to warp the collective mind and spirit of millions of people, not in the pursuit of a civilizing mission but for the purposes of war and annihilation. He said the German press became sort of a Frankenstein monster (5, p. 13).

Oron J. Hale has written about the tight grip with which Hitler held the press during the Third Reich. In his book The Captive Press in the Third Reich, Hale said the control will go down in history as one of the tightest and most ruthless ever enforced against a nation's news media (4, p. 2).

There were some reports coming out of Germany soon after Hitler gained power which told about the crushing acts a wide-spread portion of the populace was receiving. One of these reports was prepared by the World Committee for the Victims of German Fascism and resulted in the book The Hitler Terror. It gave a day by day listing of the victims of Hitler's terror squads. However, the report lists all of the victims together and does not single out the cases involving the news media (8, p. 347).

Justification

In view of the increased pressure that is occurring with more and more regularity and in heavier portions against radio, television, and newspaper reporters in the United States, it is well to review the history of a country that had a free press and then had it suddenly exorcised by a dictator. By reviewing such history, as in this case, Germany under the reign of Hitler, much can be learned about how a dictator can take and maintain control of the press and the results of such actions.

Limitations of the Study

The study focused on the period from 1920 when Hitler first began his political actions, until the end of World War II and concerned newspapers only.

Methodology

A review of historical literature about Hitler written in English, as well as translations of works written in German about Hitler and Germany during this period, was utilized for this study. The study focused mainly on the printed medium in Germany during this period.

Organization of the Thesis

This study is organized into six chapters: Chapter I presents the introduction; Chapter II reviews Hitler's

feelings about the press; Chapter III looks at the key men whom Hitler appointed to maintain control of the press; Chapter IV analyzes the laws passed that controlled the press; Chapter V gives some examples of what happened to reporters not obeying Hitler's press laws; and Chapter VI presents a summary and conclusion.

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CHAPTER II

HITLER'S NEWSPAPER PHILOSOPHIES

Early in his life, Adolf Hitler's feelings that the only good newspapers were ones strongly and totally managed by a country's rulers were stamped deeply into his beliefs.

This philosophy started with early volatile feelings about the press that began during his time in Vienna as a young man. He could spend no more than a couple of minutes reading leading newspapers, he said, because their tone affected him like moral vitriol (5, p. 20).

He felt that the newspapers were loathsome and said their writings were done with an incredible gall. He said they employed every means of slander and lied with a virtuosity that would bend iron beams (2, p. 50). All, he said, was done in the name of a gospel of a new humanity.

Hitler, a vociferous reader of newspapers, was repulsed by the phraseology and style utilized by newspapers to write about the external character of social democracy. He said it was done with an enormous expenditure of words that were incomprehensible and unclear

in content. He said only decadent metropolitan Bohemians could feel at home in such a maze and obtain an inner experience from what he called the dung-heap of literary dadaism.

Hitler grew to view the large newspapers with caution. He criticized them for writing stories praising France and said their licking of that country's boots made him throw the publications away in disgust. He attributed much of what he saw wrong with the newspapers to the presence of Jewish writers. He said that he became aware that the Social Democratic Press was directed predominantly by Jews.

I swallowed my disgust and tried to read this type of Marxist press production, but my revulsion became so unlimited in so doing that it endeavored me to become more closely acquainted with the men who manufactured these compendiums of knavery. From the publishers down, they were all Jews (5, p. 61).

He charged that the German newspapers after World War I conducted themselves with a cowardice in the face of responsibility and played a large part in starting a plague of uncertainty and decay in the nation.

A Strongly Supervised Press

Hitler believed that the press must be carefully supervised because it had a continuing and not intermittent impact upon the faces. "The state therefore must proceed with ruthless determination and take control of this

instrument of popular education and put it in the service of the state and nation," he said (3, p. 76).

So it was not surprising that during the early maneuvers of the Nazi Party, control of the press was advocated. This was proclaimed as early as February 24, 1920 during one of the party's large gatherings at Munich. Twenty-five points covering the philosophy of the party were adopted. Among these were guides for future press behavior once the Nazis took over the government.

The points demanded legal opposition to lies and their promulgation through the press. The points called for writers and employees of newspapers appearing in the German language to be members of the race; that non-German newspapers be required to have the express permission of the state to be published, that they not be printed in German language, and that non-Germans be forbidden by law to have any financial interest in German publications or any influence on them. Punishment for such violations included the closing of such publications as well as immediate expulsion from the Reich of the non-Germans concerned. The points demanded legal prosecution of artistic and literary forms which exerted destructive influence on the German national life, and the closure of organizations opposing the demands (4, p. 18).

Those demands closed with a blood oath that pledged leaders of the party to sacrifice their lives to support the execution of the points. The eventual formulation of these points spelled an end to a free press. It created poisoned pens for the Nazi Party Press and the propaganda apparatus which adroitly provided a steady diet over the years of falsification and distortions (4, p. 247).

Hitler Denounces the Press

Hitler spelled out in detail the way the press should be controlled in the pages of Mein Kampf, a book he wrote while serving a prison sentence for treason at Landsberg in 1924-1925. Even his reasons for writing the book contained an attack on the press: "I am using this to give an account of my own development, so it may serve to destroy the foul legends about my person dished up in the Jewish Press" (5, p. v).

The book, written in volcano-like anger, denounced the Jews, the press and the democratic system. In its pages, Hitler announced in minute detail, long before he came to power, feelings of terror in a self revelation of such overwhelming frankness that few among its readers had the courage to believe it. But Mein Kampf became a best-seller, second only to the Bible, and made Hitler rich.

Hitler said that the importance of the press could not be overestimated. He said that readers could be

divided into three groups: those who believe everything they read; those who have ceased to believe anything; and those who critically examine what they read and judge accordingly.

He said the first group was the largest, consisting of the great masses and consequently represented the simplest-minded part of the nation. He said that this group believed everything that was set before them in black and white. The influence of the press with this group was enormous, he said (5, p. 240).

Hitler said the state had a crucial role to perform over the press. He said,

It must exercise strict control over the press, for its influence on the people is by far the strongest and most penetrating, since it is applied, not once in awhile, but over and over again. It is here that the state must not forget that all means must serve an end; it must not let itself be confused by the drivel about so called freedom of the press and let itself be talked into neglecting its duty and denying the nation the food which it needs and which is good for it. With ruthless determination it must make sure of this instrument of popular education, and place it in the service of the state and the nation (5, p. 242).

Hitler hated the press of pre-World War I, calling it the worst poison ever imagined which had injected the worst kind of pacifism into the hearts of the German people. He said the liberal press actively engaged in digging the grave of the German people, and he censured the state for doing nothing to stop this mass poisoning of the nation.

Hitler believed that one great weakness of the written word was that writers never knew into what hands the literature would fall. Because of this weakness, Hitler said it was necessary for the state to control the press totally (5, p. 470).

Hitler called for the printing of the Nazi Party emblem on newspapers because he said that a reader who has been won to a movement will steadily read a newspaper if he knows it is the party organ. He believed the reader would read it as a running news service of his movement.

Hitler believed that the press should be used to propel Nazi propaganda. He said it should take a form calculated to support the aim which it served. He said propaganda should aim to influence the entire populace but that it must avoid excessive intellectual demands on the public. "The receptivity of the great masses is very limited, their intelligence is small but their power of forgetting is enormous," he said (2, p. 180).

In Mein Kampf, Hitler repeatedly struck out at the Jews, blaming them for a host of ills that had rained down on Germany. Among these maladies Hitler attached to the Jews were lies that he said Jewish writers placed in German newspapers.

He attacked the stupidity of the masses and blamed much of this on the press. He said,

As long as millions of the bourgeois still piously worship their Jewish democratic press every morning, it very well becomes these gentlemen to make jokes about the stupidity of the comrade who in the last analysis only swallows down the same garbage, though in a different form. In both cases the manufacturer is the one and the same Jew (5, p. 86).

A Missile of Action

In analyzing Mein Kampf, historians called it a missile of a man of action. It is a passionate, madly ambitious, hurting book, badly written in parts, but inflammatory and intensely vital. It was a handbook of lawlessness. Its final argument was always the army. Its gospel was force and fraud (2, pp. 1, 75).

Mein Kapf called for and achieved wholesale dismissal of all officials whose loyalty to the facist leaders was uncertain. This served the two-fold purpose of strengthening the Nazi's hold on the administration and of enabling them to satisfy their trusted followers with vital jobs throughout the country's industry, including the press. Hitler advocated and achieved the exorcism of all rival pattern-makers, including the newspaper man. He cut them off from the German people and the German people submitted (2, p. 123).

By achieving his aims--all spelled out in Mein Kampf--Hitler utterly subordinated the German press to his party. He gutted universities and secured control of every publishing house and diverted their revenues and the

revenues of the newspapers, to men on whom the party could rely (2, p. 135).

Hitler's Feelings Never Changed

Hitler never changed his feelings about how the press should be controlled nor the role it should play in his reign. In speeches and informal discussions with the people he had put in high positions of power, Hitler frequently discussed the press.

In a speech on February 17, 1933, Hitler attacked his political opponents for speaking against the rules Hitler had passed to regulate the press. He was asked about the suspensions of the liberty of the press and if this would be permanent. He said that when the communist influence was stamped out and the normal order of things returned, that he would be anxious for the normal state of affairs to be restored as soon as possible. It was a promise that was never fulfilled (1, p. 252).

Hitler frequently criticized the Jews for what he called their widespread control of the press. Then, after achieving control of the press, he repeatedly stressed how much better it had become. In March, 1933, he said,

Consider this fact alone, our entire German educational system, including the press . . . is today conducted and controlled exclusively by our German fellow countrymen. How often were we

not told in the past that the removal of Jews from these institutions must lead to their collapse or to sterilization. Our press has become a mighty instrument in the service of our people's self-preservation and contributes to strengthen the nation (1, p. 734).

On January 1, 1934, Hitler said that control of the press had been beneficial to the nation's religions. He said,

The fight against the features which marked the collapse in religion, in ethics, and in morals would have been purposeless if we had not raised the German press from the level of a work of disintegration which often positively was systematic and had made of it a real institution for the education of the masses in the best sense of the word (1, p. 506).

On that same day, Hitler told L. P. Hochner that he had no desire that the press print only that which was handed to them. He said that it was no pleasure to read newspapers when they all used practically the same words. He said that eventually, German editors would be so schooled that they would be able to make valuable contributions of their own to the national reconstruction. He said,

One thing, however, I can assure you; I shall not tolerate any press whose sole aim is to destroy what we have undertaken to create. If the attitude of an editor is that he wishes to oppose his own interesting view of the world to ours, he must know that in the same way I shall employ the modern possibilities provided by the press to fight him (1, p. 507).

Later that year, in a speech on September 9, Hitler told how his party took power. He said that legislation

and measures of organization had allowed the press to enter into the service of the National Socialist Party's mighty idea and the German people's task. "And, now the press cooperates to produce in an ever higher degree the unity of opinion and of will," he said (1, p. 643).

In a speech delivered in the Reichstag on January 30, 1937, Hitler talked of how much national socialism had achieved in the cultural sphere of books, newspapers and lectures. He said that the press had become a mighty instrument in the service of the people's self preservation and had contributed to strengthen the nation (1, p. 734).

Press Brings Unity

Hitler stressed in a speech on February 20, 1938 the important role the press had played in bringing the country to unity: "What has strengthened our feelings toward unity is the fact that in the country, state leadership and the press policy follow one path. The government does not talk of mutual understanding while the press agitates for the opposite course" (1, p. 1402).

Also in 1938, Hitler described the task which the party had to perform in order to continue on its road of excellence. He said it had to break up and destroy the other world of parties and to declare unrelenting war on the world of class and social prejudices. "It has to take into its hands all means of guiding the people,

the press, theatre films, and all other forms of propaganda and direct them toward a single goal," he said (1, p. 121).

Early in January, 1939, Hitler talked about what he called falsehoods appearing about Germany in foreign newspapers. He said it had become necessary that Germany's press should always make a point of answering those attacks and above all bring them to the notice of the German people so they should know the men who wanted to bring about war by book or by crook.

In May, 1939 in Berlin, Hitler talked about foreign newsmen, saying;

We love peace. I do not need to stress this. But, I know that a certain type of international journalism pours forth his lies day after day and covers us with his suspicions and his slanders. That does not surprise me, for I know these creatures; some of them were in Germany. They are also an article of export, but only as the spoiled goods of the German nation (1, p. 1660).

He called the foreign press creatures and agitators and international scribblers who were monstrously clever. "They are parasites . . . brain parasites," he said (1, p. 1661).

Hitler repeatedly stressed the importance of controlling the press during meetings with this staff. On the nights of February 23-24, 1942, he told them at an informal gathering that the organization of the press had been a true success. He said,

Our law concerning the press is such that the divergences of opinion between members of the government are no longer an occasion for public exhibitions which are not the newspapers' business. We've eliminated that conception of political freedom according to which everybody has the right to say whatever comes into his head (1, p. 332).

On the evening of March 1, 1942, Hitler was in a philosophical mood as he discussed a variety of subjects ranging from women to his reading material. He said he never read a novel because that kind of reading annoyed him. Then he talked about the Augsburger Abendzeitung, the oldest newspaper in Europe, and the Fliegende Blätter. Max Amann, one of Hitler's press chiefs, had kept the first operating but had closed the latter because it did not meet all of the press regulations passed by Hitler. "When one cannot keep the two enterprises alive at once, I'm in favor of suppressing the newer and keeping the older," said Hitler (1, p. 360).

Battling the Jewish Influence

In a talk on May 6, 1942, Hitler discussed how he had combatted the influence of Jews in the newspaper advertising agencies. He said the Jews had used their power in this field by threatening to cut off advertising revenue to newspapers, raising the possibility, he said, of reducing even the greatest newspapers to the verge of ruin. Hitler said he had turned that threat away from the Nazi newspapers, by making them completely

independent of the Jewish advertising agencies and thus impervious to economic pressure. "This happy success with the press of the Party encourages me to set about making the whole Party, in every branch of activity, economically impregnable," he said (1, p. 464).

The Führer was in a particularly expressive mood about the press during a dinner on May 14, 1942. He said that since he had come into power, he had tried to bring the whole German press into line and had hesitated when necessary to take radical steps. He said it was evident to his eyes that a state, which had at its disposal an inspired press and journalists devoted to its causes, possessed the greatest power that one could imagine.

He said that what was called the liberty of the press did not mean that the press was free but simply that certain potentates were at liberty to direct it as they wished, in support of their particular interests and if need be, in opposition to the interests of the state. Hitler said it was not easy to explain this philosophy to journalists and make them understand that as members of a corporate entity, they had certain obligations to the community. He said it took endless repetitions before the press grasped the idea and could see that opposing it would end only in harming themselves. He cited the example of a town with a dozen newspapers with each one reporting various items in its own way. "In the

end, the reader can only come to the conclusion that he is dealing with a gang of opium smokers. In this way the press gradually loses its influence on public opinion and all contact with the man in the street," he said (1, p. 480).

Press Likened to Aircraft

Hitler compared the press to military aircraft. He said that as the aircraft had become a combat weapon, so had the press become a combat weapon in the sphere of thought. He said,

We have frequently found ourselves compelled to reverse the engine and to change, in the course of a couple of days, the whole trend of imported news, sometimes with a complete VOLTE FACE. Such agility would have been quite impossible if we had not had firmly in our grasp that extra-ordinary instrument of power which we call the press--and not known how to make use of it (1, p. 480).

Then he said the role of the journalist had changed drastically:

Today, the journalist knows that he is no mere scribbler, but a man with the sacred mission of defending the highest interests of the State. This evolution has been in progress throughout the years following our taking power, and today, the journalist is conscious of his responsibilities, and his profession appears to him in a new light. Viewed in this way, the role of the press must be guided by certain principles, which must be rigorously applied (1, p. 481).

On May 14, 1942, at a luncheon, Hitler talked about the difficulties he had faced with Paul von Hindenburg in trying to convince him of the importance of controlling the press. He said he had accomplished his desires by

playing a trick on the aging ruler. He said he had addressed Hindenburg not as "Mr. President," but as "Field Marshal." Then, Hitler said he asked Hindenburg what would happen if in the Army, criticism was allowed to come from a foot soldier to a captain and on up to the general. "This old gentleman admitted this would not be right and without further ado approved of my policy, saying, 'You are quite right, only superiors have the right to criticize!' And with these words the freedom of the press was doomed," said Hitler (1, p. 502).

Press Must Be Controlled

In the summer of 1942, Hitler cited reasons he believed why the press should be tightly controlled by the man ruling the country. He said,

When I am traveling, I can stop at any railway station, give any instructions I consider necessary, and be sure that, through the medium of the press and the radio, by the next morning public opinion will be properly prepared for any political announcement I may have to make, even a Russo-German pact! (1, p. 525).

Hitler was reflective about the press during a midday conference on August 21, 1942. He said that events had shown that journalism demands a style of its own. But, Hitler said he believed that real journalistic jargon came into being in the Völkischer Beobachter during the Nazi's electoral campaign in 1932. He said that Alfred Rosenberg had feared landslide defeat for the National Socialist Party. He said that Rosenberg had become

depressed and disgusted with the party newspaper's readers because he had found that the more he lowered the intellectual level of the journal, the more sales increased.

But, Hitler said at the beginning of the Nazi's ownership of the Völkischer Beobachter, that even he had difficulty in understanding it because it was on such a high intellectual plane. Hitler said that such high intellectual writings did not accomplish what he deemed necessary for the press. The writing, he said, had to be plain, easily understood and capable of the intellectual grasp of all citizens (1, p. 649).

Hitler never departed from these feelings which were blunt, cold and brutal about the press and that it should never be free.

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CHAPTER III

HITLER'S PRESS LORDS

The hatred manifested in Hitler's philosophy and personality toward the Jews and his desire to achieve and maintain total control over the nation's press required much more than just the efforts of one man. To achieve these goals required a pragmatic approach with a deep, permeating maneuver that would find the government thoroughly saturated in this philosophy. Hitler accomplished his goals so well that in analyzing his efforts, historians have had to go deep in trying to find analogies that describe his accomplishments. For what he did to the German press, many writers have turned to medical books for suitable terms. They use phrases like "sickness" and "cancer" to conjure up the abyss into which Hitler dumped the country's news media.

In analyzing the personalities of the top men he appointed to control the press, all have several common threads woven into their philosophies. They, like Hitler, possessed a deep hatred of and prejudice toward

the Jews. They also had a blind faith that the Third Reich would eventually conquer and rule the world.

The total warping of the press seems almost unbelievable when examined today. But, it was accomplished, and accomplished well. By taking over total control of the press, Hitler was able to use clever and persistent propaganda. He and his Nazi henchmen were able to warp the collective mind and spirit of millions of people, not in the pursuit of a civilizing mission but for the purposes of war and annihilation. The Nazi press and propaganda machine became a sort of Frankenstein monster which, by means of monstrous mass hypnosis, bears the guilt for the cataclysm of war and the extermination of millions (6, p. 13).

Hitler and his press lords used the media as an indispensable instrument in achieving their totalitarian state. As a result, the press experienced an extraordinary measure of exploitation at their hands. This was accomplished to a degree never before dreamed of in efficiency, range, depth and intensity, nuances or expression, and timing.

The men who were appointed by Hitler to stamp his vise onto the press, to some, may appear less interesting than those men like Heinrich Himmler, named to organize and head the SS (Schutzstaffel). But, there is no doubt that they were just as important. Their work was

performed in board rooms, lawyers' offices, and management suites, hence out of the public eye (3, p. vii).

Goebbels Named Propaganda Chief

Dr. Josef Goebbels was chosen to anchor the post of minister of public enlightenment and propaganda. His position was established by a decree put into force on June 30, 1933. That decree stated,

The Reich Minister of National Enlightenment and Propaganda is in control of all questions connected with the exercise of an intellectual influence upon the nation. Propaganda in the interest of the state, of culture and of the national economy, the instruction of public opinion at home and abroad concerning the same, and the administration of all organizations designed to serve these ends is delegated to him (5, p. 64).

With these powers, Goebbels had unlimited power over radio, the press, films, the theater, writing, the plastic arts, advertising lectures, exhibitions, celebration arrangements, party congress, education literature and foreign intercourse. It was a job he handled well.

Goebbels possessed a mind that was keen, practical, and sober. He was able to cope with lightning rapidity with any situation, unconquerable, and never at a loss. His capacity for work was enormous and his energy was said to be, by many who worked with him, inexhaustible. He had that iron will which was necessary for the men to whom Hitler gave power (3, p. 66).

Goebbels' wit was considerable and was wrapped in heavy satire. He possessed an excellent memory and had

a well-rounded knowledge of people as individuals and of their motives and their capacities. He was quick to make snap judgments and was incredibly well informed, a fact due to his omnivorous reading. He believed so strongly in keeping abreast of developments that he assigned a large staff to abstract current books, magazines and newspapers for him (7, p. 83).

Goebbels was born October 29, 1897 at Rheydt, in the Rhineland. His father was a foreman and then a manager of a small factory. Goebbels was reared a Catholic and studied art, history, literature and philosophy. As a child, who was born with a deformed foot, he was constantly plagued with maladies.

Hans Fritsche, a former worker under Goebbels, felt that his crippled right leg, which caused him to limp, and his short and fragile and wholly non-Nordic body, accounted for his ambitions and drive. He was called the "malicious dwarf," and was small, ugly and deformed, dark and obviously not the Aryan type (3, p. 84).

Goebbels founded a small newspaper, The National Freedom Völkischer Freiheit, in the early 1920s. It had little influence. Then he founded a secret news organ for party members, The National Socialist Letters. It was full of scathing attacks on the Jews and high promises of what the Nazi Party would bring to Germany (3, p. 68).

Early in his career, Hitler recognized that Goebbels could become a valuable instrument in carving out the empire that Hitler wanted. So it was not surprising to see Goebbels frequently at Hitler's side during his early maneuvers. Goebbels went to Berlin with Hitler in 1926. It was here that Goebbels proved to be an excellent agitator and organizer. He quickly built up a powerful defense squad and founded another newspaper, a weekly, Der Angriff, which means attack (3, p. 70).

Goebbels was toadying to Hitler. But, he was brutal and coarse to subordinates. Even his own men frequently complained about the pothouse language he used. His temper was capricious and displayed repeatedly. On one occasion, a fairly important SA leader was waiting to see Goebbels. He finally knocked on the door and entered, without waiting for acknowledgment. Goebbels became furious. He rushed over to the man and jolted him with a savage punch to the face (3, p. 77).

This type of behavior was never far from Goebbels. He possessed a sadistic streak and frequently utilized sarcasm, cruel jokes and mockery, not only in his speeches but in direct withering blasts at his aides and co-workers. He seldom praised and his attitude toward his friends was cold (3, p. 84).

His affairs with other women were well known. Many times, Hitler intervened to reconcile Goebbels and his

wife, who had previously been married to a rich manufacturer. Once, he initiated a hot pursuit for a film actor's wife. The actor became aware of the romantic endeavor and caught Goebbels. Goebbels was severely beaten by the actor and for days had to go about with black eyes and numerous other injuries (3, p. 78).

Goebbels' Feelings About the Press

Goebbels voiced early in his career what he considered the proper role of the press. He believed that propaganda had only one object: to conquer the masses. Every means that furthered this aim was good; every means that hindered it was bad. He was quite willing to admit that his speeches and writings were usually on the primitive side. But he said that his side's propaganda was primitive because the people thought primitively and that he was speaking the language the people understood. He once said that masses were unformed stuff and only in the hands of the political artists do masses become a people and the people a nation.

Goebbels kept a lengthy and exhaustive diary during his career as propaganda minister. It is filled with acid comments about the danger of a free press and the need for a total government press. Perhaps one short statement best summarized his feelings when he wrote, "News

policy is a weapon of war. Its purpose is to wage war and not to give out information" (4, p. 56).

Rosenberg Fit Hitler Mold Well

Goebbels was matched in his hatred of the Jews by Alfred Rosenberg, who held a variety of media posts in the Third Reich. He was an intense looking man with a broad nose, thick lips, cleft chin, and eyes that sunk deeply into their sockets and had a penetrating, intense look. He was called an evil genius with a paradoxically Jewish name. He was a suave and gifted writer and statesman, whose talents were dedicated to rendering acceptable the inhuman causes served up by Hitler (6, p. 80).

He was born January 12, 1893 in Reval, now called Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, then a Russian province. He was a precocious youth and early in his life devoured many volumes of history and philosophy. He studied architecture in Riga and in Moscow, mainly under German professors. His studies in history and philosophy were largely self-directed, so it was not surprising that his methods lacked critical discipline (2, p. 5).

He was called the most influential and representative intellectual leader of the Nazi Party and had become an intimate associate of Hitler during the early days of the party in Munich. He was named editor of the Völkischer Beobachter, in 1921. In 1932 he was named

editor of the Nazi monthly, The Nationalsozialistische Monatshefte, and on April 1, 1933, he was appointed director of foreign policy of the party. In 1934 he was named supervisor of the entire educational activity of the Nazi movement along intellectual, religious and philosophical lines. His office scrutinized all literary activity in the Reich. In 1936, Germans were no longer allowed to receive the Nobel Prize. National prizes of 100,000 marks were established. Rosenberg was the first to receive the honor (2, p. 4).

Rosenberg anchored himself solidly in Hitler's campaign against the Jews when his book, Myth of the 20th Century, was published in 1930. It became second in ranking in Germany only to Mein Kampf, and on some instances, including religious works, it was far more explicit than Hitler's book (2, p. v).

The title was misleading. The term "myth" did not mean something that was untrue but something which was true in a profounder way than science or common sense. It meant a view of life and nature that was accepted on faith and inspired social action. It was a kind of cult, or religion, or intuitive philosophy.

The work was violently anti-Jewish and anti-Catholic. It attacked communism, democracy, and high finance as devices of Jewry. It attacked the protestant churches for retaining too many Jewish and Catholic influences.

The appeal made by Rosenberg was to the educated classes. The myth was adopted to sway and win the minds and hearts of young students who revered learning without being sufficiently well informed to detect Rosenberg's errors, and who were full of vague aspirations, although dissatisfied with conventional religion.

Rosenberg constantly exhorted German youths to redeem their fatherland by liquidating the Jews, rejecting traditional types of christianity, and pursuing Nordic ideals. He traced the history of the ancient world and when he found evidence of tall, blond conquerors of darker, shorter races, he assumed that the conquerors were Aryans.

In the book, Rosenberg recognized no rights of minorities and expressed no pity for the problems of transplanted people. His proposals were ruthless. He said that one could not educate Jews but must render them harmless as quickly as possible. When he touched on the Jew, his pen spurted anger, and though he did not explicitly propose mass murder, he did try to prepare his readers' minds for such a policy (2, pp. 29, 30, 36).

Rosenberg believed that the God in the bosom was the only God that he could adore. The emotions he displayed were chiefly hatred and contempt for Jews, and hostility and contempt toward Catholicism. He expressed a pride in the Aryan race and a zeal for reform. He

recommended a mystic religion as appropriate to the enhancement and expansion of Germany, rather than to feel and rejoice in such a religion himself.

Rosenberg rejected both individualism and universalism in all fields. He felt both were hostile to the racial national unit. Individualism and universalism, he believed, were straight lines racing off to infinity. What he demanded of his fellow Germans was not loyalty to humane ends but servile support of inhumane policies (2, pp. 65, 84, 115).

Rosenberg was called cold, reserved, and haughty, traits considered characteristic of Baltic Germans. His mode of life and dress were extremely simple. He seemed to lack the intense personal ambition and dynamic drive of other Nazi chiefs, yet he was tenacious in defending his unalterable convictions. And he did have Hitler's ear. It was Rosenberg who persuaded Hitler to attack Norway and it was he who set up "Task Force Rosenberg," that looted enough goods and artistic treasures from occupied territories to fill 27,000 railroad cars (6, p. 81).

Otto Dietrich's Power

Another man who ranked high as for getting an agreeable hearing at all times from Hitler was Otto Dietrich, the Reich press chief. He was born in 1897 in the

Ruhr and became attached to Hitler's entourage in 1929 as his personal press advisor. He helped Hitler secure funds for the party by introducing him to coal and iron magnates. He was appointed by the Fuhrer as director of the Reich Press Office of the Nazi Party in 1931. He controlled every press detail of Hitler's sensational serial election campaign, during the course of which Hitler flew 30,000 miles and addressed 10,000,000 Germans at 200 meetings.

Dietrich was appointed Reich Press Chief of the Nazi Party on February 28, 1934. A year earlier, Hitler had appointed him to membership in a select group of reich-leiters (party cabinet members) that numbered seventeen. In 1937, he was named state secretary in the Reich Propaganda Ministry, continuing in that post until 1945. On December 24, 1932, shortly before Hitler gained total power, he became a member of the SS. He moved quickly to the top of this group, attaining the rank of SS Obergruppenfuehrer, a select group of top SS leaders headed by Hitler, who was number one. Dietrich was number twenty-one.

As party press chief, Dietrich controlled the policy and content of all party publications and newspapers. He and Max Amann, the business and financial manager, had complete control over the entire press network of the Nazi Party.

Dietrich's power over the press can be seen in the role he played from November 1937 until March 1945. As Reich press chief of the government, he was in charge of and responsible for the German press, foreign press and periodical press. He had at his disposal, 3,000 publications in the newspaper field and 4,000 publications in the periodical field. Combined circulation of these publications was more than 30,000,000, a powerful vehicle with which to spread anti-Semitism in a vast, comprehensive manner (6, pp. 52-54). Dietrich often bragged about his power. In a welcoming address to representatives of the German and World press at the Nuremberg Party Rally of 1934, he repeatedly emphasized the significance of the press as a major weapon. He said that during the first quarter of 1934, the German daily newspaper editions totaled 16,700,000 copies. He said,

That means that 16,000,000 newspapers reach our German compatriots every day. With 17,700,000 households in Germany, it appears that a daily paper is read in almost every household; however, the number of readers, is of course, considerably greater as there are several readers in each household. We are, therefore, able to state authoritatively, that at least three quarters of all adult Germans are, every single day, subject to the influence of the daily newspapers (6, p. 58).

Looking at the figures compiled about the circulation of newspapers during the Third Reich reveals that Dietrich was not exaggerating. The audiences addressed by the Nazis were not casual groups united to passion by an

occasional eloquent spell-binder. The potential mob was the entire German people and the spell-binders--the 3,097 newspapers--were all briefed daily by Reich Press Chief Dietrich. Germany had the highest newspaper coverage in the world, exceeding by far the 1,911 journals of the United States and the 1,500 French newspapers. The power exerted by the Nazi press over which Dietrich ruled was staggering (6, p. 31).

Dietrich's power was cited in Hitler's 1934 decree about the press. He directed all operations and decided whom would be employed as news media personnel. He presided over daily press conferences, during which he disseminated news releases and directions as to where they would be played in newspapers. He was in control over a domain embracing all German editors, the party press wardens and the press of the affiliated organizations, which included the Hitler Youth with a membership of 16,000,000, the SA with a membership of 1,500,000, the SS with a membership of 800,000 and the Labor Front, a worker's association formed to replace the dissolved labor unions with a membership of 25,000,000 (6, p. 20).

There can be no question as to Dietrich's ability as an administrator. The methodical cadence of his various press conferences, held daily to keep the pressure on and to serve the Führer's purposes, has no equal. These daily press conferences were by far the most

important way of maintaining iron-clad control over the German press (6, p. 36).

Hitler Fond of Dietrich

Hitler's fondness for Dietrich is found in many places. He frequently mentioned the press chief during sessions with other Nazi chieftains. In February, 1942, during a late night meeting, Hitler voiced happiness because he knew the newspapers would always be filled with his point of view. He said;

Our little Dr. Dietrich is an extremely clever man. He doesn't write well, but his speeches are often first rate. I'm proud to be able to think that, with such collaborators at my side, I can make a sheer about-turn, as I did on 22nd June last, without anyone moving a muscle. And that's a thing that's possible in no country but ours (1, p. 332).

At another time, Hitler was talking about Julius Streicher and his anti-Jewish publication, Stürmer. He said that Dietrich had once published a magazine entitled Flamme, which was even more violent than Streicher's publication. "And, yet I never knew a gentler man than Dietrich," he said (1, p. 331).

It was an image that Dietrich wanted the world to share. At the end of the war, he tried to project the image that he was just a desk man through all of the bloody marches made by Hitler. But, history's records show that he was as blood-thirsty as any of the Nazis in Hitler's entourage and that he actually participated in the blood bath (6, p. 60).

Max Amann Head of Finance

The ability to commit brutality seemed to run deep in all of Hitler's press captains. Certainly it was evident in Max Amann, who personally handled the financial trunk of the many-branch Nazi press tree. He was born in Munich on November 24, 1891 and attended business school. He served an office apprenticeship in a municipal law firm and served five years in the Bavarian Army. It was during World War I that he met Hitler and for a time, he was his company sergeant.

Although dwarf-like in stature, Amann was an aggressive, rowdy type of Nazi. One historian said, "In his entire life, Amann was never anything more than a brutal sergeant. Behind a jovial Bavarian exterior, Amann was temperamental, brutal, domineering, and materialistic." He was dictatorial, ruthless, and personally greedy. His income increased from 108,000 marks in 1934 to more than 13,800,000 marks by 1944. His country home at Tegersee cost 500,000 marks (5, p. 28).

Shortly after Hitler gained ownership of the Völkischer Beobachter, he named Amann financial manager of the newspaper. Amann put the newspaper on a firm financial basis and added much more money to the Nazi cause by developing and founding the book department of the Eher Verlag. He was the driving force if not the creative brain of the party's

monopoly of newspaper publishing and Hitler never ceased to praise Amann and his astuteness as a publisher and businessman.

Amann was given further powers in the Nazi reign over the press in 1934, when he was commissioned to create a press with an obligation to the German nation.

Under Amann's guidance, the Nazi party perpetrated a raid upon the publishing industry that was one of the largest confiscations of private property that occurred under the Third Reich. But, Amann believed strongly in the move. At a party conference in Nuremberg in September 1935, he listed his beliefs about the press' membership. Those included the exclusion of all non-Aryans and self-interest groups, whether they were economic, class, or confessional. He called for the elimination of the influence of anonymous capital exercised through trusteeships and juridicial personalities. He urged enforcement of the principal of personal responsibility of the publishers of newspapers, an idea that became law and subjected all publishers to regulations handed out by the Nazi party (5, p. 219).

Hitler loved Amann for his work at strengthening the Nazi's hold on the press. He called him a genius and the greatest newspaper proprietor in the world.

In February, 1942, Hitler was in a particularly chatty mood while talking about Amann. He said,

Amann, what a jolly chap he is. When we were at the front, he used to let joy loose amongst us. In my unit, even at the worst times, there was always someone who could find something to say that would make us laugh (1, p. 334).

Hitler said that without Amann he would never have been able to keep the Völkischer Beobachter on its feet. He called him an intelligent businessman who refused to accept responsibility for any enterprise if it did not possess the economic prerequisites of potential success.

In a rambling discussion about the press during a dinner on May 14, 1942, Hitler praised Amann and his abilities. He said:

Thanks to his military discipline, he has succeeded in getting the very best out of his colleagues, supressing particularly all contact between the editorial and the administrative staffs. That discipline, with the severity that is proper to it, Amann succeeded in imposing on all his colleagues. He behaved as if the editorial staff and the editors were nothing but a necessary evil. And yet what a task of immense educational value he has thus accomplished. He has moulded exactly the type of journalist that we need in a Nationalist Socialist State. We want men who, when they develop a theme, do not first of all think of the success the article will bring them or of the material benefits it will give them; as formers of public opinion, we want men who are conscious of the fact that they have a mission and who bear themselves as good servants of the state (1, p. 479).

But this was not a true picture of Amann. Not only did he enjoy vast power, but he also enjoyed vast profits. Of all the Nazi leaders he made the greatest material gains from his political and business association with

the party. In 1943, his value for tax purposes was set at 10,306,000 marks (5, p. 317).

Weiss Also Reaped Financial Rewards

Though many did not reach the lofty financial height of Amann, many men who helped control the press did enjoy huge financial gains. One man was Wilhelm Weiss, who served as editor and chief of the Völkischer Beobachter, and president of the Reich Press Association. A dark-haired man with a large full nose, he had large lips and dark, cold eyes behind nose glasses. In many photographs, he always had a look that could be construed as condescending.

Weiss came from the middle class. He was born in Stadtsteinach, Bavaria on March, 1892. During World War I, he reached the grade of captain before being severely wounded and losing his left leg.

He was a rabid nationalist before joining the Nazi newspaper and wrote press releases for quasimilitary and veteran organizations that flourished in Munich and Bavaria. He denounced Marxism, Jewry and political Catholicism. He had ten convictions for infraction of the press laws before Hitler gained power. He participated in the Beer Hall Putsch, for which Hitler was convicted and sentenced to prison, and served as editor of an anti-Semitic periodical, Brennessel. The publication compared

to Julius Streicher's Stürmer, but was satirical rather than sadistic.

In 1934, Weiss gave the principal address at the annual conference of the journalists' association. He declared, "The press in the old liberal sense is dead and will never be called to life again. It must remain dead because the spirit of the epoch, which lacks being, is also dead" (5, p. 35).

By nature, Weiss was quiet, reserved and conciliatory. He avoided at all costs collisions and difficulties with the party leader. There are several instances of tolerance and decency in professional relationships in his life. However, there is no evidence that he ever recognized the truth about National Socialism or disassociated himself from its ideology (5, p. 36).

Der Stürmer Had No Equal

Julius Streicher, publisher of the notoriously anti-semitic and pornographic weekly newspaper, Der Stürmer, was certainly the opposite of Weiss. He loved confrontation and encouraged it in the opening of his publication, which had no equal in the history of mankind for dissemination of hatred. He constantly stressed in its pages, which were read by 600,000 subscribers, his idea of a greater Germany without Jews. Perhaps, he, more than any other person, was responsible for the Jews' extermination (6, p. 82).

He was originally a leader of the German Socialist Party and a rival of Hitler. He joined the Führer, who welcomed him because of Streicher's ability to concoct hatred so abundantly. His publication carried filth and pornography directed at the Jews. These pages were ripped from the publication and displayed on public bulletin boards in glass-covered cases.

He called the Jews a variety of slanderous terms, including "the warmongering Jew," "the evil Jew," and "the Jewish criminal." His barbs were perpetrated through cartoons and caricatures that presented the Jew in the most horrible of circumstances.

He loved to preach his hatred of the Jews to children. On one such instance, he was delivering a Christmas story to a group of children at Nuremberg. When he reached the climax of the story which concerned a little Aryan boy and girl, Streicher suddenly asked the children, "Do you know who the devil is?" The children shrieked in response, "The Jew. The Jew." Streicher then gave them expensive presents (6, p. 83).

Hitler praised Streicher. He said that one must never forget the services rendered by the Stürmer and the many scandals in which the Jews were involved that it exposed. He credited Streicher with exposing the perjury of a Jew at a trial at Nuremberg in which he

said through the *Stürmer* that it was shown that the defendant tried to blackmail a witness. "Today, everyone's eyes are opened, but at the time people found it difficult to believe that such things could happen. In such a state of affairs, Streicher rendered immense services. Now that Jews are known for what they are, nobody any longer thinks Streicher libelled them," said the Führer (6, p. 331).

The International Military Tribunal did not think so highly of Streicher. It said, "In his speeches and articles, week after week, month after month, he infected the German mind with the virus of anti-semitism and incited the German people to active persecution" (6, p. 84).

The Gold Tooth Collector

Another man who held a high post in the Nazi Party who was as ruthless as Streicher was Walter Funk, known as the gold tooth collector. Though he was associated with the press and propaganda machine for only a short time, he made his mark, serving as Goebbels' assistant and as press chief. Later, he served as a vice president of the Reich Chamber of Culture, Nazi minister of economics, and president of the Reichsbank. He once was described by Hermann Goering as "a Nazi nonentity who popped from nowhere at the whim of Hitler" (6, p. 84).

He was a short and stocky man who early in his life wanted to be a musician. He became an obscure journalist

and rose to financial editor for the conservative Berliner Boersenzeitung. His most important function for Hitler was as a contact man between the Nazi Party and important business leaders needed to finance and support the efforts of the Nazis. He took economic measures against Jews by confiscating and looting their property and removing German Jews from firms they owned. His nickname came as a result of an arrangement with Himmler for the shipment of gold teeth, silver spectacles and other valuables taken from concentration camp victims to the vaults of the Reichsbank, of which he was president (6, p. 85).

A Printer Called Müller

There is little doubt that in addition to intense hatred for the Jews, want of financial gain led many men to Hitler's press troops. Such a man was Adolf Müller, owner of a large printing company who became the official printer of the Nazi publications. Hitler described their first encounter as unpleasant. He expressed such feelings to Dietrich Eckart. "I agree that he's as black as the devil and more cunning than the cunningest peasant, but he's the best printer I've known in my life and also the most generous man," Hitler quoted Eckart as replying (1, p. 350).

Hitler soon agreed with Eckart and became a great admirer of Müller. He was impressed by his printing

firm, which was equipped in the most modern style. But he admired his cunning ways. "Cunning, nobody could be more so," said Hitler (1, p. 350).

Hitler loved to travel with Müller. He said that he never made a journey with Müller without his having to pay a visit to some woman by whom Müller had a child. At the birth of each illegitimate child, Müller would open an account for it with a first payment of 5,000 marks. Hitler said,

I actually know four illegitimate children of his. I wonder how such an ugly blighter manages to have such lovely children. I must add that Müller adores children (1, p. 351).

Summary

These were just a few of the men whom Hitler annointed with power to take and maintain total control over the press. The part they played in thrusting his doctrine of hate and slaughter of the Jews on the German people was huge.

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CHAPTER IV

THE FUHRER'S CONTROLS OVER THE GERMAN PRESS

It was an intoxicating night for Hitler and his workers when Field Marshal Paul von Hindenberg appointed Hitler chancellor of Germany. "God knows our hearts were pure that day, and if anyone had told us of the events to come, no one would have believed it, least of all, I. It was a day of glory and happiness," said Hans Frank, an attorney and close confidant of Hitler (5, p. 291).

Those feelings were rampant in the Hitler entourage. Tears of joy ran down many of their faces. Even the people in the street were delirious with joy. One Brownshirt remembered,

Everyone felt the same, that things would get better. Although realistically there was no reason for them to believe things would improve, they believed it. They had hope again. It was remarkable. I don't think that Germany will ever again find another man who could inspire as much hope, trust and love as Hitler did at that moment (5, p. 291).

Goebbels was ecstatic that night. He wrote in his diary, "It is almost like a dream, a fairy tale, the new Reich has been born. Fourteen years of work have

been crowned with victory. The German Revolution has begun!" (5, p. 300).

Few Germans realized the trail of brutality and terror that would follow and permeate every thread of their working lives. The essence of what would happen, however, had been prophetically written nearly a century earlier by Heinrich Heine, a Jew. He said;

German thunder is truly German; it takes its time. But it will come, and when it crashes it will crash as nothing in history crashed before. The hour will come. A drama will be performed which will make the French Revolution seem like a pretty idyll. Never doubt it, the hour will come (5, p. 292).

The hour had come for the death of many freedoms. One of the most important freedoms to die was the freedom of the nation's press. Hitler knew how crucially important it was to quickly take control of the press. He had used the press well in obtaining the total power that had now been handed to him. He had said that the more radical and inflammatory the Nazi propaganda had been, the more it had frightened weaklings and hesitant characters and prevented them from penetrating the primary core of his organization. He said the propaganda had converted hundreds of thousands to the Nazi cause, making them to believe his cause to not only be right but also causing them to want the Nazi victory (4, p. 586).

Hitler knew he had to initiate immediate steps that would allow the Third Reich to control the press. He

knew that by so doing, the Nazi Party's philosophy could become saturated in the German populace. His beliefs about the power that could be achieved by controlling the press are proven by looking at the statistics of the country's press. The press was a large and fertile field that would allow the poison of the Nazis to become black like the printer's ink and flow night and day from the biased pens throughout the Reich and into the veins of German and world thought (3, p. 15).

Gutenberg had invented printing with movable type and Friedreich Koenig had developed the mechanically powered press. During the 1920s, 7,000 periodicals in all fields of interest and knowledge, 4,000 daily and weekly newspapers and 30,000 books were published annually in German (2, p. 35).

The German press of the 1920s had been decentralized. It was weak on objective news coverage, compared to American journalism. But, the German press surpassed all other countries as an educational and cultural medium. It was a serious press (3, p. 2).

The overcrowding of the press, a lack of unity among segments of the publishing industry, and the historical discords between the editors' and publishers' associations, helped the Nazis achieve their control of the press.

The country's press economic foundations had been hammered hard by the depression caused by World War I and which was still strongly clamped about the country. This had led to the penetration of the press by special interest groups and had even deepened the rift between journalists and publishers. The freedom of the press had already felt pinches by certain emergency decrees of the Bruning and Papen governments (3, p. 108).

The press reflected the mood of the country. There were confusion, uncertainty and fear, the clash of irreconcilable parties and ideologies. So when Hitler took power in 1933, the country's 4,703 daily and weekly newspapers were ripe for controls to be pressed into them (2, p. 3).

Fear Helped Hitler

The element of fear in the German press was a strong point in Hitler's favor in gaining control over the news medium. This had begun in the early Nazi campaigns and had reached almost epidemic proportions in 1932 during a year of chaotic and violent politics. As the Nazis continued their victorious sweep in state and national elections, the middle class became less positive in combating this madness that seemed to grip the people.

The Nazi party already had in its hands two major publishing firms. The Eher Verlage, the party's publishing

company, and the Völkischer Beobachter, the party's official newspaper, had teetered on the brink of bankruptcy in the early 1920s. Both had been purchased for relatively low prices. The Völkischer Beobachter was long known for its anti-Semitic excesses, which had brought about several publication suspensions.

After Hitler gained power and effected control over the nation's press, both of these publishing ventures, as well as others that fell under Nazi tutelage, became extremely profitable. The Eher Verlage became one of the country's largest business enterprises. It controlled 150 publishing companies; employed 35,000 people and had net profits of 100,000,000 marks. It was described as the world's largest poison gas factory (2, p. 15).

The Völkischer Beobachter became the first German newspaper to achieve one million in circulation in all editions. This was not due to its excellence. It was due to the fact that it was the official organ of the party and carried on its front page the party's official stamp. The control of party publications was vested in the central party directorate and only this directorate could designate papers as official and authorize the use of the Nazi emblem on the front page (3, p. 134).

First Controls Came Quickly

The first rules from the Nazi press lords came in April, 1933. Otto Dietrich, Hitler's press chief, took

over as chairman of the Reich Association of the German press. He immediately ordered the writing of a new constitution, which included a new ruling on requirements for membership. Dietrich said the membership must be purged and announced that old as well as new members would be screened for racial and political reliability. Marxists and Jews were banned (2, p. 82).

Four months later came an even more pervasive law. It arrived with the creation of the Reich Press Chamber, one of seven chambers constituting the Reich Chamber of Culture. It was put into effect on September 22, 1933 and on the surface it appeared to invest trade and professional organizations with broad powers of self government and administration. Actually, they became captive organizations through which the state and the party controlled all reportorial and creative writing, all publishing and the dissemination of printed materials.

Paragraph R of those laws was the one that was used to purge undesirables from the press. Under it was Paragraph 10, which became very well known. That paragraph provided for the expulsion from membership any person deemed unreliable or unfit for the exercising of the vocation or profession. It was applied ruthlessly in the publishing field and became in effect the instrument of unlimited expropriation and despoilment (2, p. 92).

In less than a month, another stern measure was enacted against the press: the Editor's Law, written by Goebbels and passed on October 4, 1933. It set the cornerstone of state and party control of the press was concerned primarily with the working journalist. But it also hit at publishers and proprietors. The law, like so many passed by Hitler, appeared to give editors and journalists protected status in a self-governing body. It said that journalists were required by law to regulate their work in accordance with National Socialism as a philosophy of life and a conception of government, legally terminating the professional independence of the journalist and the freedom of the press.

The law was destructive regarding the relations of the editor and the publisher. It said the chief editor was responsible for the total content and attitude of the textual part of the newspaper. This deprived the publisher of all rights in determining the content and establishing the policy of the newspaper.

The publisher was completely manacled. It was a crime for the publisher to influence the editor by offering advantages or threatening disadvantages. Such acts were punishable by fine and imprisonment or withdrawal of the publisher's license. The publisher could not terminate an editor's contract without the concurrence of the professional association. This meant that the

editor became the equivalent of a state official, responsible to the state instead of his employer. It was a device to achieve the Hitler-Goebbels presspolitik, placing the entire middle class press in its new dissemination and opinion forming functions at the disposal of the Nazi state (2, p. 83).

Explicit Regulations Passed

The editorial control law had explicit regulations outlined in forty-seven sections. It ordered absolute control over all journalistic activity transferred from private management to the Third Reich. It restricted editors to men of Aryan descent, placing them under obligation to follow strict political directives. It united all acceptable editors into the Reich League of the German Press of which Otto Dietrich was chairman. The league was given power to maintain professional courts with jurisdiction over the offenses committed by editors. The Editorial Control Law, by effectively muzzling German editors and causing a complete blackout of freedom of thought, was the cornerstone of the tremendous word factory created by Hitler, Goebbels and Dietrich (3, p. 31).

Hitler personally spelled out further powers in his decree about the press. In an unusual display of support to Dietrich, Hitler used personal pronouns in outlining the strength Dietrich wielded in his role. He said,

He directs in my name the guiding principles for the entire editorial work of the party press. In addition, as my press chief, he is the highest authority for all the press publications of the party and its agencies.

The editorial staffs of the party press as well as of the Gau (district press offices of the NSDAP) are subordinate in their work to the Reich Press chief. He has the right to raise objections in all personnel questions.

All the press divisions, press offices, etc., within the party or its affiliated and subsidiary organizations, SA and SS, Hitler Youth, German Labor Front, are, irrespective of their particular administrative affiliation, subordinate and responsible to the Reich Press Chief.

The issuance of authority for press services and correspondence which are published by an agency of the NSDAP or which call themselves National Socialists lies with the sphere of duty of the Reich Press Chief of the NSDAP. The Reich Press Chief of the NSDAP shall take all measures necessary to the carrying out of his task (3, p. 19).

This meant that Dietrich was in control over all German editors, the party press wards and the press of affiliated organizations. That included the Hitler Youth with 16,000,000 members, the SA (Stürmabteilung) with 4,500,000 members, the SS (Schutzstaffel) with 800,000 members, and the Labor Front, a worker's association, whose compulsory membership reached 25,000,000.

It was Paragraph 10 of the Editorial Control Law that gave the Nazis the power they wanted to cleanse the country's press ranks of people undesirable to their cause. Less than a year after its passage, enforcement of Paragraph 10 reached a new level. In April 1934, the Nazis began formulating official questionnaires about the backgrounds of every publisher. These were checked

by all local party and state agencies to make sure that a detailed report on publishers was obtained. The Gestapo and SS officers were delegated to obtain these background reports, which included a long and exhaustive list of information. The reports contained personal impressions of the publisher; his past and present political attitudes; present and past political or Masonic affiliations; relations to local party officials; background reports on his children and were they being brought up as national socialists; was he a former Nazi; was he an anti-Nazi, and if so, had he changed his mind (3, p. 98).

Within a year further controls came in a series of ordinances written and instigated by Max Amann. These were particularly heavy handed and provided Amann with broadbased powers needed for him to acquire almost at will any publishing firm or company.

The first ordinance provided for the withdrawal of publishing rights from any publisher whose paper by sensationalism, or offenses against public taste of morals, cast reflection on the publishing business and the honor of the press. Ironically, the ordinance was never enforced against the country's worse offender, Julius Streicher and his Der Stürmer (3, p. 114).

The second ordinance provided for the closing of newspapers to eliminate unhealthy competitive conditions. This ordinance said that the RVDS could indicate the

places where overcrowding existed. The Cura Auditing and Management Staff--part of the vast Nazi press machine--would examine the financial and business portion of each enterprise and order a report as basis for action.

The final ordinance provided for insuring the independence of the newspaper publishing industry. It required full disclosure of the capital and ownership relations of all publishing firms. It required that owners provide proof of German or German-related ancestry since 1800. The same proof of ancestry was required for wives and board members of corporate enterprises which owned newspapers (3, p. 148).

During the 18 months after passage of the ordinances in April 1935, a wave of closures, consolidations and distress sales of large and small publishing houses occurred. Between 500 and 600 newspapers, including some of the choicest properties in Germany, were merged or were purchased by the Eher Verlag, the Nazi press holding company, or one of its subsidiaries (2, p. 151).

Powerful Ordinances

The Amann Ordinances and Paragraph 10 became the mechanism for achievement of party domination of the press. By using them, the Nazi press lords could eliminate any publisher or major stockholder in a publishing enterprise who in their judgment blocked party objectives.

In order to enable the Nazi Party to control the press, several publishing companies were established and used as holding or management concerns. The Phoenix Publishing Company was one of those. Its purpose was to obtain ownership of former center party newspapers which could not be left in the hands of the current publisher but which the Nazi authorities wished to continue under disguised party control. Most of the papers acquired by the Phoenix were in the Catholic regions of Rhineland-Westphalia and South Germany.

Two of the more important acquisitions were the Verbo and Zeo combinations. The Zeo cooperative group comprised 14 small papers in Westphalia. They served a Catholic clientele but such combinations were prohibited under the Amann ordinances. So the shareholders had to turn the enterprise over to the Phoenix. The same thing happened to the Verbo group in Southern Wurttemberg. Thirty-two small town publishers had formed a cooperative and established a modern printing plant in Friedrichshafen. Their publications were strongly confessional in tone, again a point that was prohibited by the Amann ordinances. They surrendered their stock to the Phoenix (2, pp. 212, 218).

Tremendous pressure was exerted on provincial publishers. They stood alone with no organization to back them. They were always under pressure from the party

officials so the strain and worry were terrific. Consequently, their properties became prime and easy pickings for the Nazi press holding companies.

The Nazis formulated a plan to use when approaching the publisher of a newspaper which the party wanted to acquire. Reinhardt would first face the publisher and say that the publisher would receive no financial payment. Then Winkler would meet with the publisher, express sympathy for him, and promise a compromise. He was considerate and unctuous. At the end of the meeting, he would add with a sly wink, "But, one never knows how these gentlemen have slept the night before." The publisher would quickly accept Winkler's proposal, though it always meant he would receive far less than what his property was worth (2, p. 194).

Confiscation of publishing companies quickly became common. One of the first occurred in May, 1933 in the Cologne area when the thriving Rheinische Zeitung was seized by Kurt Thiele, a Nazi Reichstag deputy. He said,

The property of the Social Democratic Press has been seized and confiscated by the Reich. The party secretaries and editors are under arrest. Her Faust (the editor) widely known for his swinish writings is now more suitably employed in cleaning toilets in a concentration camp (17, p. 68).

Another example was the Münchener Post, with a circulation of 15,000. It continued to publish after Hitler

became chancellor until March 9, 1933, when it was stormed by the Munich SS. The library was plundered, and fixtures and equipment destroyed and thrown into the street. The large rotary press was started and an iron bar was thrust into the gearing, thoroughly wrecking the machinery. The SS locked the wrecked plant and placed it under supervision of an appointed building superintendent (2, p. 278).

Many of Hitler's press lords purchased properties for themselves as a result of the regulations that had been forged. Perhaps none was as aggressive at obtaining choice publishing firms as Amann. His first major purchase in the spring of 1934 set the pattern for many that would follow. That first purchase was the Ullstein Publishing Company, Germany's largest newspaper, periodical, and book publishing house. It was Jewish owned, liberal, and a product of capitalistic enterprise and initiative. Because of this, it was a target for concentrated Nazi hate.

"It must be thoroughly Aryanized in the shortest time," said Amann. It was. The Nazis purchased the property, valued at 60,000,000 marks, for 6,000,000 marks. The family accepted. They feared they would get nothing if they refused (2, p. 68).

The Schunemann Verlag, publisher of the Bermer Nachrichten met the same fate. The Schunemann family had a long tradition of liberalism and had strongly combatted National Socialism from 1930 to 1933. They tried to

stall the Nazi purchase. But Amann said the newspaper had combatted the NSDAP and National Socialist movement in a most hateful manner. The family sold the paper at a drastic loss after Amann told them,

The person of the Führer was ridiculed and treated with scorn and further examination of the paper to 1933 has revealed that it has not met the requirements demanded of the press in the National Socialist State. Facts reveal that you do not fulfill the requirements and conditions established for publishers in the National Socialist State. It is therefore not possible to permit you to continue participating in the shaping of public opinion. Publication of the Bremer Nachrichten under your direction must therefore cease (2, p. 209).

The Nazis acquired the semiofficial Wolff Telegram Bureau and the Hugenberg Telegraph Union. They merged the two and formed the Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau, a state-owned news service.

The same thing happened in the national advertising field. The Nazis took over control of the private advertising agencies that once existed. It was done, the Nazis said, because of "the serious abuses which exist in the advertising business make one necessary under the National Socialist State" (2, p. 138).

By 1938 Amann boasted, "We have freed the newspapers from all ties and personalities that hindered or might hinder the accomplishment of their national socialist tasks." It had been easy with all of the new laws, regulations, and ordinances. To support a charge of

unreliability under Paragraph 10, it was sufficient to show that a publisher had not reported a charity concert sponsored by the SA or a children's party. To exclude a publisher on grounds of unreliability, all that was needed was to show minute things such as that he may have criticized Hitler's Mein Kampf (2, p. 218).

Faced with closure or the loss of their newspapers, some publishers joined the Nazi Party as a way to curry favor or to survive. Many, after having the pin of the Nazi Party stuck into their lapel, said it "burnt like a coal of fire" (2, p. 197).

Daily Press Briefings Compulsory

The newsmen had to endure other hardships that took away their freedoms. The daily press conferences conducted by the Nazis were compulsory. During these, confidential and secret directives called "tagerparole" were given to all editors. It was mandatory that these directives be destroyed and failure to comply with the directives or to not destroy them meant severe punishment.

Dietrich supervised the daily press conferences. He authorized representatives in various sections of the nation to preside over the conferences. They were strictly tailored for the Nazi cause. Each representative had to notify the presiding officer of remarks that he might make at the conference. The remarks had to be in

accord with directives and orders of Dietrich or the Führer. Any differences of opinion in the voting conference were referred to Dietrich, either in person or by telephone. He was supreme unless overruled by Hitler (3, p. 36).

After reading directives, the chairman furnished commentaries. He frequently made criticisms of particular newspapers that had not adhered strictly to the directives. In serious cases, disciplinary measures were threatened. There were instances, particularly in the early period, when newspapers were confiscated for such conduct.

There was an aura of fear at the conferences. Dietrich carried this mood out well, appearing in the black SS uniform.

The directives went to all newspapers, even those in the small villages in the Lower Rhine. Though the directives were ordered to be destroyed, some of the editors secreted them. They were introduced as evidence during the war criminal trials, and amounted to a highly coordinated and systemic hate campaign.

Brutal Directives Given

Titles of the directives revealed the brutality that the Nazis were prepared to deal out in huge portions. They included "The Jews Are To Blame," "The Jews Want

To Destroy Germany," "Allies Are Ready To Kill Innocent Citizens," and "Allied Soldiers Rape Young Girls." The directives showed how the Nazi Party subordinated the entire German press to the political, diplomatic and military purposes of the Nazi leaders (3, p. 46).

But the systematic deception of public opinion was as necessary to the realization of the Nazi program as the production of armaments and the drafting of military plans. Without the press, it would have been impossible for German fascism to realize its aggressive intentions or perpetrate war crimes and crimes against humanity. The finesse of Dietrich and his staff in prescribing the exact press treatment before many acts of aggression was apparent in a number of the directives issued to the press (3, p. 92).

An example was Germany's invasion of Austria. Relations between the two countries had steadily worsened. German troops marched into the country on March 11, 1938. Press directives were given to publish on the front pages a fake telegram sent to Field Marshal Hermann Goering by Austrian leaders, asking for the presence of German troops to prevent disorder.

The same tactics were employed in the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Dietrich issued directives to play up the alleged persecution of Sudeten-German and Slovak minorities within the country and the anti-German

policies of the Prague government. Stories were handed to the editors with headlines that said such things as "Czech Teachers Preach Hatred," "New Unheard-of Provocation by the Czechs," "Blood, Death, and Suffering of the Sudeten Germans," and "Police Fire on Peaceful Population" (3, p. 100).

Dietrich issued stern warnings to the newspapers about writing or publishing anything that might hint of harm in German marching into any country. In one stern press directive on January 18, 1938, Dietrich said that newspapers had published a rumor about a meeting of Austrian officials to study ways to turn back the possible German invasion. The papers were ordered to carry a report that said the Austrians had denied the meeting. "The German press has been warned before to carry this report. Some of them have not obeyed this order. If such violations are repeated, the newspapers will be confiscated," said Dietrich (3, p. 94).

Many of the directives given to the editors by Dietrich were full of ways to attack the Jews and fan the country's hatred toward these people. These started early after Hitler gained power and continued until the end of the war. In a directive issued on April 28, 1943, Dietrich wrote, "The newspapers will receive a Jewish theme daily, one that should not be seized upon unimaginatively but used only to incite. The newspapers here have

a wide field and there are countless sensational stories wherein the Jew is depicted as the author of crime." In another directive issued February 5, 1943, Dietrich said, "Bring out only the well known examples of Jewish lust for destruction. Quote always from fresh proof from the rich literature on Bolshevism and also from less recent Jewish atrocities." In one of his schemes, which never reached fruition, Dietrich participated with Himmler and Professor August Hart to measure the skulls of Jews before death and then afterwards. The idea was to show they were not the same as other people and then publish this in news stories, proving the Nazis' theory about the subhuman nature of the Jews (3, pp. 175, 190, 199, 207).

Nazis Clamp Strong Vise

There was no doubt that within a short period, Hitler had clamped a strong Nazi vise on the press. It printed only what he ordered. It printed it where he ordered. It printed it in the length that he ordered. But there was a problem. Circulation began to fall. Statistics show that from the first quarter in 1934 to the second quarter of 1935, circulation dropped from 20,254,374 to 18,692,880 (3, p. 231).

The matter of the press apparently had soured Hitler's mind. In a speech in 1937, during which he boasted of the accomplishments of his regime from 1932

to 1937, Hitler cited everything from the building of bridges to the birth of babies. The only significant cultural activity unmentioned was newspaper production and circulation. The reason was obvious. There was nothing about which to boast; millions of Germans had given up reading newspapers because they were dull, politically offensive, or boringly inferior in content and opinion.

One reason for this was that it was becoming hard to attract young people into the field. There was no place in the system for critical and creative minds. For example, at Hitler's direction art editors were forbidden to write art criticisms. Instead, they had to write art appreciation. The pressures upon writers, editors and publishers had become intolerable.

Dietrich and the other press lords were almost pleading in their cries for creativity and for uniqueness in the press. Even Hitler said, "It is not my desire that the press simply print what is handed out to it. It is no great pleasure to read 15 newspapers, all having nearly the same textual content." But, the system simply did not permit originality, creativeness or brightness (2, pp. 235, 240, 242).

In fact, the strict controls established by the Reich deprived all editors and writers of independence and initiative. The newspapers became megaphones. The public became uncertain and mistrustful of the press. The

citizens became bored or suspicious, and the press as a source of information and opinion lost its standing and influence.

Rolf Hoffman, who headed the Foreign Press Department of the NSDAP in Munich and who served for two years in the propaganda department during the war, was tough in his criticism of the system. He estimated that 80 percent of the members of the profession found the system intolerable because of the regulations and pressure. He said most journalists became hypocrites without any initiative. There was no recruitment of young talent and editors were always receiving complaints and reprimands from Dietrich, he said, adding, "But, how could an editor publish a good paper when he sat with one foot in jail and the other in the editorial room" (2, p. 322).

Despite the criticism, even from the men who supervised the press, there was one fact that could not be debated. Control of the press became a lethal weapon in the hands of the Nazis. They used it to condition the people to accept aggressive wars. Without it, it would have been impossible for German fascism to realize its aggressive intentions, to lay the groundwork for, and then to perpetrate war crimes and crimes against humanity (3, p. 33).

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CHAPTER V

THE UNDERGROUND PRESS IN HITLER'S GERMANY

Hitler's reaching into the German people for his quest for power was based largely on fear. This feeling of fear that clamped itself into the minds of the nation's people was accomplished with stern and strict authoritarian regulations which were enforced by the SS and Gestapo, two groups whose philosophies were heavy with brutality. This feeling of fear was very prominent in the minds of newspaper personnel and helped prevent members of the profession from launching large scale counter-acts on Hitler's control of the press.

Hitler and his entourage in suppressing independent editorial opinion among the German press were very successful. The International Military Tribunal (MT) issued this statement about what happened to the press during Hitler's reign after the lengthy trial of war criminals at Nuremberg:

Through the effective control of the radio and the press, the German people, during the years which followed 1933, were subjected to the most intensive propaganda in furtherance of the regime. Hostile criticisms, indeed criticisms of any kind was forbidden, and the severest penalties were imposed on those who indulged in it (2, p. 33).

The reorganization of the press took place under the vigilant eyes of the SS and the Gestapo. All district and city police officers were alerted by Gestapo headquarters in Munich to establish surveillance on publishers and publishing firms. Agencies were instructed to be especially watchful of those people and firms known to be unsympathetic toward the regime and to take appropriate measures. Control and checks on newsmen were affected by wire taps on telephones and telegraph services. As a result of these measures, a legal net was plaited with a mesh so fine that the chance of publishing any story that was not approved by the press rulers was practically impossible.

At first, there was widespread resistance among the news media to the measures of control. But, as more and more editors and reporters were marched into SS interrogation rooms and sentenced to prison, resistance became weaker and weaker.

A survey in 1933 showed that Hitler had built forty-five concentration camps. By July, 1933, these camps contained 35,000 to 40,000 prisoners. The concentration camps included Dachau, Hueberg, Kieslau, Rastaff, Pfalz, Hohnestine, and Ottensten, and they contained many journalists (6, p. 286).

The prison sentences soon reached an accelerated pace. On February 27, 1933, a special court in Berlin

sentenced Max Ziebler and Richard Schröter to 18 months hard labor. Their crime had been the distribution of a newspaper that the Nazis said contained unfavorable stories about Hitler (6, p. 45).

That sort of thing happened repeatedly. Age offered no cushion for the violators. This was proved when in April, 1933, three fifteen-year-old girls received six months imprisonment for producing and distributing news leaflets that the Nazis found objectionable (6, p. 307).

The Nazis utilized their own press to try to camouflage what was happening to journalists. An example of this happened on April 25, 1933. Harold Hammerstine, a writer for a small weekly, was found dead in his small bungalow. He had been warned repeatedly by the Nazis to refrain from writing critical stories about the Reich.

This fact, however, was omitted from a story about his death in the Völkischer Beobachter. That story read,

A man living in a bungalow on the Honer Moore has committed suicide in a terrible method. He went into a tool house built onto his bungalow where there was a barrel of tar.

After taking off some of his clothes, he smeared himself with tar and set fire to the barrel. He died in the fire which resulted. The motive of the suicide was melancholia. The bungalow was completely burned down. The suicide was a married man with several children (6, p. 315).

An investigation and autopsy revealed that Hammerstine had been hanged and then burned.

The murders committed by the Gestapo and the SS were not stopped until the end of World War II. A list of the murders for 1933 reads like a play-by-play account of a football game. They included,

March 9: Landgraf, director of publishing house; shot when the Volksstimme building was occupied.

March 11: Hans Saile, circulation manager, shot when newspaper office was occupied.

March 16: Leon Krell, editor, Berlin, beaten to death.

July 10: Joseph Niles, journalist; Erfurt, and Alfred Noll, writers; all three shot by storm troopers when illegal print press was discovered.

July 14: Franz Braun, editor Volkswacht, murdered in his cell the day after he was arrested.

July 15: Klara Wagner, reporter, Berlin; found with her throat cut (6, p. 339).

So death was a common companion to members of the news media during Hitler's reign. For those who escaped death there was expulsion from the profession after they had failed to qualify for membership under the microscopic examination created by the Nazi regulations. Fritz Schmidt, who worked in the agency regulating licensing of journalists, estimated that 1,473 publishers alone were disqualified (1, p. 120).

Circulation Falls

As Hitler's rules tightened against the country's newspapers, readers began to cancel subscriptions and circulation began to fall. The press overlords were not without a solution to the problem.

They sent canvassers door-to-door to solicit subscribers. This was not unusual. But the clothes the canvassers wore were. They were dressed in the black, foreboding uniforms of the SS and the Gestapo. It was a form of intimidation, based on the ingredient so important to the recipe Hitler had concocted for the press: fear (1, p. 103).

But in spite of the terror clamped on the German press, knowledge of what really was happening did manage to filter back to some of the people. One such case was the raid on Poland by Germany. It was a classic case of how Hitler's press team manipulated the news to strengthen the Nazi cause.

Josef Grizmek was working in a custom house on the Polish border on September 1, 1939. He told about coming out of the building in the dark and stumbling over the bodies of several men. He knelt and saw they were wearing Polish uniforms and that their heads were shaved.

Grizmek checked the men to see if they were Germans. Then he tried to pick one up. "I found that he was completely rigid. They had been concentration camp prisoners, executed and then dressed in Polish uniforms," said Grizmek. "The next day the Völkischer Beobachter ran headlines that said, 'Polish Insurgents Cross the German Frontier.' It was a lie used to give Hitler reason to invade Poland" (3, p. 265).

As a result of the press manipulation of stories like the Polish invasion, efforts at establishing an underground press aimed at letting the people know what really was happening were launched. Illegal newspapers began appearing the year that Hitler took power. One of the largest was the Rote Ratne, printed by duplicating machines. Printing sheets were made from wax or metal (6, p. 331).

The Ruhr Echo, which appeared weekly, continued for over a year despite the fact that the Nazis tortured every distributor they caught (6, p. 340).

The underground press utilized ingenious ways to make the printing plates. Linoleum was used in many instances. The underground newspapers were hidden in rolls of paper and then distributed (6, p. 341).

The effort by the newsmen meant putting their lives on the line. Many lost the battle and were put to death. Others were sent to prison. But, their works were often acclaimed in the papers they were distributing. The Arbeiter Zeitung, a six-page illegal weekly, said:

Tens of thousands of nameless heroes are fighting to free Germany and the world from the shameful barbarism of the Brown Shirts. They are facing court martials and the gallows, torture and concentration camps. Their loyalty and courage cannot be broken, and their ceaseless activity is fanning the spark which will burst forth into the flame of freedom (6, p. 337).

Resistance in any form was dangerous. But it was much more extensive than conditions obtained in a police

state would lead one to suppose. Resistance in Germany could be defined as the struggle against totalitarianism and for the respect of human dignity. The German Resistance started on the morning after Hitler's accession to power in 1933. It had its heroes and its martyrs though it lacked in efficiency (4, p. 14).

Included in this resistance were members of the underground press. At Munich, Hans Schol and his sister Sophie, two young students, were among the most courageous figures of the resistance. Their main goal was to get to the people news of what Hitler's regime was really doing. They began distributing tracts called The White Rose.

The language in their small leaflet was strong; it minced no words about Hitler's action. One of the stories from one of the leaflets read,

Who has counted the dead, Hitler or Goebbels? Certainly neither of them. Every day thousands die in Russia. It is time of harvest, and the reaper takes full swings into the ripe harvest. Mourning enters the cottages of our homeland and nobody is there to dry the tears of the mothers. But Hitler lies to those whose dearest treasure he has taken away and has driven into a meaningless death.

Each word that comes out of Hitler's mouth is a lie. When he says peace he means war, and when he sacrilegiously mentions the name of the Almighty, he means the power of the wicked, and the fallen angel, Satan. His mouth is the stinking jaw of hell, and his might is rotten at the foundations. It is true that the fight against the National Socialist state of terror must be led with rational means; he who still doubts, however, the real existence of the demonic powers has not understood by far the metaphysical background of this war.

Can there be, I ask you who are a Christian, can there be in this struggle for the maintenance of your highest values any lingering, any playing with intrigues, any postponing of the decision in the hope that someone else will take up weapons to defend himself? Hasn't God given you yourself the strength and the courage to fight? We must attack evil where it is most powerful, and it is most powerful in the power of Hitler (5, p. 18).

The Schols were arrested in 1942 in Munich after having been caught distributing their leaflets among the student body at a university. They were tried and executed.

But, still the underground press and the Resistance continued. It was irregular and unorganized. But it existed because there was a craving among the people for the truth, regardless of how small a glimpse might be available (7, p. 50).

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CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

From the very beginning of his entry into politics, Hitler voiced in both writings and speeches that a totally controlled press was a necessity in his philosophy about governmental power. Even in his private life, Hitler frequently brought into conversations the subject of the nation's press. In those informal discussions, he spoke strongly for a controlled press, saying repeatedly that such a press was crucial and necessary for the survival of the Nazi party.

Hitler wanted to control the press because he knew that such control would give him an almost infinite power over the country. By being able to twist all accounts of major news events into stories that would tell only the good side of the Nazi program and would offer only good motives for each act, Hitler knew that he could totally saturate the minds of the German people, almost severing their abilities to make any kind of decision except in favor of the Nazi program. Hitler knew that by maintaining total control over the press, he could

change his mind about major issues, and without the press's freedom to note such changes, his standing could not be criticized by the public.

Hitler achieved control of the press through a series of harsh and strong laws and regulations enacted by the government. Since Hitler had received total control over the government, he could secure any kind of regulation he believed necessary to achieve control of the press. The laws gave the Führer many means for purging from the profession any reporter or editor he felt might offer a threat to the Nazi cause. The laws provided him many ways to close and censor newspapers that did not meet his expectations.

Hitler maintained his control over the press by utilizing fear, a major ingredient in welding his grip over the country. This fear was evident among members of the press. The news media knew that if they tried to dodge the laws and regulations passed by Hitler, they were endangering their lives as well as their profession and livelihood. Hitler strengthened this fear by ordering reporters imprisoned and executed.

Hitler placed his minions in strategic positions to maintain and enforce his press laws and regulations. These men, including Otto Dietrich, president of the Reich Press Chamber, Julius Streicher, publisher of the

violent, anti-Jewish newspaper, and Dr. Joseph Goebbels, minister of propaganda, were all willing to carry out all aspects of Hitler's requirements. They would stop at nothing, including sentencing to death recalcitrant members of the news media.

By maintaining total control over the press, Hitler was able to turn the newspapers into vehicles of propaganda that printed atrocious lies about the Jews, whom Hitler had long hated and was using as a scapegoat. Since the press was totally controlled, there was no way that the people could gain access to information that would allow them to see into this widespread printing of falsehoods. From Hitler's point of view, this was a good effect achieved from the control of the press because it allowed him to turn thousands of Germans against the Jews.

It was crucial for Hitler to maintain control of the press because his philosophies and ideas about the road that Germany should take in the future could cause deep divisions in the country if opposing views were given a chance to be aired in the public. Hitler realized that the only way to promote hatred and racial prejudice against the Jews was to present only one side of the issue. He knew that if no voice could be raised in opposition in the newspapers, the presentation of insidious information about the Jews could slide as deeply into slander as the

Nazi writers wanted. He knew that by falsifying battle losses and by presenting pictures only of well-fed German soldiers on the battlefronts, he could keep the people who were working in the factories and munition plants on a high plain of productivity and optimism about the German war machine and effort.

Conclusion

What happened to the press in Germany points the way for a repeat performance by any leadership so inclined, given a fairly plausible set of circumstances. Any governmental restraint upon freedom of the press enhances the possibilities of hiding vital facts from the public.

Hitler knew this. By assuming total control of the press, Hitler achieved a pinnacle of power that would have been impossible if any free editorial voices existed. He made himself into a God-like identity which made criticisms of him akin to sinful acts and blasphemy against the Diet.

Hitler, as does any dictator, needed this control over the German press. When a leader of a nation espouses such truculent philosophies, there is no room for an exchange of ideas or different philosophies. Hitler knew this and he knew that, to stay in power, he had to control the press.

The German people knew early in Hitler's political career that he espoused deep beliefs against allowing

a free press to exist in the country. But, when Hitler began his steps toward taking over the government of the country, Germany was a nation beset with a myriad of deep seated problems.

The nation was wracked with inflation that ran past one thousand percent. The unemployment rolls were in the millions. The people were fearful, not so much of the possibility of an authoritarian figure taking over the government, but of the frightening and almost certain possibility that their tomorrows would bring days without food and ways to purchase the basic necessities of life.

Before Hitler gained power, the German constitution provided for the existence of a free press, and the German press had a powerful association that called for the maintenance of a free press. Even so, Hitler had warned Germany and the world, in his book Mein Kampf, that he planned to take over the nation's press. He even outlined the procedures and explained why the takeover was necessary.

Fortunately for him and his goals, Germany was a country whose history for hundreds of years was flavored heavily with a philosophy that called for a strong, almost brutal, authoritarian figure to rule. Hitler was such a man; he fitted the role almost perfectly.

During his early days, Hitler not only made promises, he fulfilled them. He promised a strict reign; he

promised to heal the deep wounds of unemployment by providing every able-bodied person a job; he promised to halt and reverse inflation so Germans would again find power in their money and no longer need a wheelbarrow-full of marks to buy a loaf of bread: and he promised to make Germany a world power to be reckoned with.

Hitler was a powerful and charismatic speaker. His audiences were large. When he spoke and made his promises about solving the problems of unemployment and inflation, the people saw a savior standing before them. At many of the places where Hitler spoke, food and drink were given to the spectators. Suddenly, the people were enjoying full stomachs and listening to a man who said he could make a better life for them if he had total power. Just as suddenly, the philosophy he had long advocated about total control of the press did not sound or seem so bad. The people thought that if their stomachs were full and they had jobs to go to at the beginning of each week, then why not let this man have control of the press.

Once Hitler became Führer, he took immediate steps to solve the unemployment and inflation problems. People who had been out of work for years were suddenly finding jobs. Pantries that had been bare were now full. With these accomplishments, the road to claiming total power over the press was made much smoother. Hitler had total power over the government so there was no way to curb his elimination of press freedoms.

Since so much of Hitler's philosophy was wrapped in violence, he had to maintain the control over the press by creating a blanket of fear in the minds of the news media. He accomplished this by ordering executions and beatings of members of the press who disobeyed the laws and regulations. This practice made it much harder for the development of an underground press or any kind of press which tried to give opposing views. Men, when given a clear message that to disobey an order means death, no matter how distasteful that order or how deeply it cuts into their beliefs, find it almost impossible to disobey.

Hitler's success in total control of a nation's press is unique in history, particularly since he provided ample warning of his intentions. Thus, it seems that simply being warned is insufficient. Instead, every nation must maintain eternal vigilance against usurpation of the free press. Without a free press, no society can long endure.

Adlai E. Stevenson, United States ambassador to the United Nations, told a convention of the United States newspaper publishers and editors in 1962: "Your typewriter is a public trust. Its sound may be the most beautiful noise you know. But it has meaning and justification only if it's part of the gloriously discordant symphony of a free society" (1, p. 236).

Recommendations for Further Study

Several topics in the area of control of the news media offer themselves as potential topics for further study: Hitler's control of broadcasting; analysis of news media control in any of the latter-day dictatorships around the world; and press laws enacted in nations that enjoy a free press.

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