B. Leonard 165

STUDENT REBELLION AND THE NAZIS

Two lectures
given by

Beate Ruhm von Oppen

at St. John's College, Annapolis,
on 18 and 25 February 1972

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I. The Rise and Rule of Hitler

If someone were to ask why I am giving two lectures in a row instead of the traditional single lecture, I might give as reason an experience I had about a couple of years ago. It was at a university specializing in theology -- one that had theology as one of its three main divisions. It was in May 1970, just after the American incursion into Cambodia. There was student unrest all over the country and talk of "revolution." There was something like that going on at that university on the day I spoke there. My subject was the relationship of the Nazis and the churches, a subject, I had been told, of special interest to the people there.

But perhaps not on that disturbed day. The question period was dismal, discussion impossible. One questioner got up and asked: "What about student protest?" It was not a sly question; it was quite innocent and proceeded from pure ignorance, such ignorance as I was totally unprepared for in a middle-aged questioner. So I gave a brief and brutal answer on the history of student protest in Germany: that loud and massive and effective protest existed in the period <u>before</u> the Nazis came to power and the protesters were <u>Nazis</u>, or at any rate militant nationalists, who exercised considerable pressure on the academic establishment of the Weimar Republic -- and even more, incidentally, in the Austrian Republic; that

once the Nazis were in power, there was hardly any open protest; and that the first three of the famous group of Munich students who protested in public against the Nazi regime and its war, were dead within a few days of being caught, in 1943; the rest following a few months later.

A helpful colleague, a theologian and church historian, then jumped into the breach and explained that Nazi Germany was a police state and what that meant. I must confess I had taken that as read. But the incident showed me that one cannot take it as read any longer and that any description of resistance must start with that which is resisted.

Also it could be that a term like "police state," being misused too much, has lost its meaning and like other such terms -- "genocide," for instance, or "fascism" or "totalitarianism," no longer conveys anything precise or distinct. But meanings and distinctions have to be kept clear, or, if they have been blurred, have to be made clear again, not just for love of pedantry, but for the sake of liberty, indeed of life itself.

Lies work best when there is a grain of truth in them. The best precaution against being taken in, is the cultivation of the habit of looking for that grain of truth and trying to see what has been done with it. Denying or ignoring the grain of truth or the facts of a matter may be magnificent ideology and rousing rhetoric, but it is no defense against the better liar. Hitler was probably the best liar there ever was.

That is one reason why we are having two lectures, the

first on the police state or whatever other name we may find more proper for Nazi Germany, and the second on a group of students who opposed it and a professor who opposed and died with them.

Two lectures are a risk, on two counts. Firstly because St. John's does not do "history." It is not one of our liberal arts. We read Homer and Herodotus and Thucydides; Vergil and Tacitus; Plutarch and Gibbon; Toqueville and Marx and Tolstoi We read quite a lot of political philosophy. We read much that made history, from the Bible to the church fathers to the reformers to the debunkers; from Aristotle to Rousseau and Kant to Hegel and Darwin to the Documents of American political history. Yet we do not have "history" as a subject, or a discipline.

The second risk is rather peculiar to our moment in history, now; but it is probably the leaser of the two risks here, at St. John's. The temper of many of the more vocal, more audible and visible of our contemporaries is a-historical or anti-historical. There is no patience with history. It is regarded as "irrelevant" -- unless, of course, disjointed bits of it can be used, torn from their context, as ammunition in some campaign.

The two risks may, to some extent, cancel each other out. We cultivate, perhaps over-cultivate, rationality here. By "over-cultivate" I mean a development of the reasoning faculty at the expense of other faculties. The temper of our time is, increasingly, anti-rational -- and one can see what has brought

about this reaction: the rebellion against the shallow, "functional" rationalism of the mechanised, mass-educating, manipulative age. Our rationalism here, at St. John's, is different -- more comprehensive -- and therefore few of us are driven into this reactive irrationalism, in fact most of us are quite good at resisting it.

But I often sense a divorce from reality, human reality, psychological, political, historical reality. For instance, seminar discussions of Thucydides on the revolution in Corcyra and the attendant linguistic revolution in which "words had to change their usual meanings" tend to be perfunctory: a few contemporary examples of the misuse of words by lying politicians or commercial salesmen will be mentioned, but the discussion lacks feeling, passion, lacks, apparently, experience; I mean: lacks the <u>quality</u> of talk about something one has really experienced; it lacks the conviction that this is something <u>really</u> evil and dangerous -- and should be resisted or counteracted to the best of our ability. The raw material of experience abounds. But the mental, including the emotional, engagement rarely seems to take place. I cannot here go into the question of what the reasons for this inattention may be. <u>Quantity</u> of comment on the phenomenon of misused language proves nothing -- certainly does not prove a realization of the seriousness of the matter.

Neither does a concern for the purity and impeccability of language necessarily ensure the best politics and the most just and decent polity. But certain peccabilities are more

dangerous, some more insidious in their effects, than others. The more serious linguistic sins seem to me to be very closely related to the subject at the core of these two lectures: slavery and freedom, the manipulation of men (and women, and children) and the resistance to manipulation -- a resistance that is needed at all times and is always fraught with risks and renunciations, but which in bad times may involve the readiness to stake one's life.

Does that sound somewhat exaggerated? I do not think it is -- but perhaps we can discuss that later.

Now I must try and describe the indescribable and explain the inexplicable. The simplest procedure may be to mention the ways in which politics began to impinge on me at the time when times were bad and getting worse. The students I am going to talk about next week were roughly my vintage, or belonged to the same "cohort," as, I believe, the trade now calls it.[1] They grew up at the same time in more or less the same country. But I left when I was 16.

I was born in Switzerland at the end of the first world war and grew up, or started to grow up, in Germany. I cannot think back to a time when politics was <u>not</u> in the air. I remember the evidence of food shortages in my kindergarten and elementary school days. I remember the feeling of insecurity communicated by all around me when the currency collapsed, that is, when there was not just the sort of inflation we have now, but something that galloped away in geometric or exponential progression, so that, for instance, a lawyer's or doc-

tor's earnings of one day might not be enough to buy a loaf of bread the next day.

Not long ago you could see, in the window of an antique shop in our Main Street, an old German 50,000 Mark note, said to have been "used in Hitler's Germany." Perhaps it was used as wall-paper. It might be more accurate to say that it was used -- as money -- in pre-Hitler Germany, though I'd hate to refer to the Weimar Republic as just that. It was a specimen of the kind of money that helped to bring about Hitler's Germany.

50,000 Marks now would be worth about $13,000. In "normal" times, -- the dollar has recently been devalued a bit -- 4 Marks were a dollar. The date of issue on that 50,000 Mark note was 19 November 1922. The very fact that such a note was printed and put into circulation was, of course, a sign that inflation had got out of hand. In the summer of 1922 the dollar was worth not 4 Marks, but over 400. The next summer it was over 4 million. And by 15 November 1923 it was 4 trillion (4,000,000,000,000). If my reckoning is right -- but you'd better check it -- that 50,000 Mark note issued in November 1922 was worth one-eighty-millionth of a dollar a year later: $\$\frac{1}{80,000,000}$ or $\frac{1}{800,000}$ of a cent. That was very cheap wall-paper. But expensive, too.

What it all meant, among other things, was the pauperization and demoralization of the middle class and the partial destruction of the social fabric.

It was in that month, November 1923, that Hitler, the

leader of a tiny party, staged his abortive putsch or coup d'état in Munich, when he tried for the first time, and failed, to seize power. That year had also seen communist attempts to seize power, in central Germany; they too were foiled. Hitler was sent to a comfortable prison for a while and used his leisure to write his book, Mein Kampf. When he got out again, he adopted a policy of legality and with that he eventually prevailed.

By the time I entered elementary school, in 1924, a new currency had been established and money once more was money, though scarce. But I noticed that my teachers were not enthusiastic about the political system, though we dutifully and decorously celebrated the 80th birthday of our President. His name was Hindenburg and he had been a famous field marshal in the world war, halting the Russian advance in East Prussia. Being, as it were, a personal link between the old, pre-war empire and the new, post-war republic, and loyal to the new constitution, he was a national figure acceptable to the moderate right and moderate left and lasted a decade as head of state, while chancellors, or heads of government, succeeded each other at a breathtaking rate. The country had many political parties and an election system based on proportional representation, so that votes were distributed across a wide spectrum and large number of parties, and governments had to be formed out of coalitions of several of them and were correspondingly shaky and shortlived. I also remember many elections during my school days and reports of violent rhetoric

from left and right, as well as physical violence, street fights, murders, assassinations.

Then, after the Wall Street crash of 1929 with its world-wide repercussions, there was another economic crisis a mere six years after the beginning of the recovery from the earlier one, with a growing, an intolerable, rate of unemployment. It grew from 1.3 million in September 1929 to 3 million a year later, to over 6 million in 1931. With a total population of about 65 million, this meant that one in every two families was hit. It was not only working class families that were so affected. There was for instance, much unemployment among academics too. The extremist parties, the communists and Nazis, made great gains and finally occupied more than half the seats in the national parliament, where they were now able to paralyze the democratic process. They also joined, for instance, in a strike to paralyze the transport system of Berlin. Otherwise they could fight each other to the death, and did, with casualties on both sides, despite the general strategy of the communists at that time to treat the Social Democrats as their enemy No. 1 -- whom they called "social fascists" for the purpose -- and to flirt with the possibility of a Nazi victory as a promising prelude to a communist takeover. All this impinged of course, on a Berlin school child: the transport strike, the posters, the polarization, the combination of both extremes against the middle, and the weakness and apparent helplessness of the middle.

When President Hindenburg appointed Hitler Reich Chancellor

on 30 January 1933, he was acting in accordance with the letter and perhaps even the spirit of the constitution. Hitler's party, the National Socialist German Workers' Party (or "Nazis" for short, to distinguish them from the "Sozis," or Social Democrats), was by then the strongest party in the country, with about one-third of the vote; the Social Democrats had only one-fifth; the communists one-sixth; the Catholic Genter Party, together with its Bavarian affiliate, about the same. And there were many others, but all of them had less than 10% of the vote, the largest of them the Nationalists, 8.8% Hitler became the head of a coalition government. I still remember seeing the faces of these gentlemen in an evening paper that carried the announcement.

No-one knew what it meant. I was somewhat scared, for I had read Hitler's book. I had had to do it secretly, at night, with a flashlight under the bedclothes, for my parents, like many other respectable people, regarded it as pornographic -- which indeed in a manner of speaking it was. Also it was very long; and that was probably why very few people read it, though once its author had become the ruler of the land, it was widely and compulsorily distributed, for instance, as present to newly-weds, bound like a bible. But that did not, of course, ensure its perusal.

Before saying anything about what I had found in that book, let me, quickly, give you an account of the rest of my Berlin schooldays, to show how life at school changed in the 17 months before I left. There was much talk of national

solidarity and the Community of the People. There were changes in personnel and in the curriculum. And there was a dramatic rate of attrition. My own class was reduced by more than half -- probably because girls (it was a girls' school I went to) or their parents thought that since the new regime had set its face against too much academic education for women (who were not to exceed 10% of university enrolment), it was hardly worth struggling through more Latin and trigonometry and the rest, up to the rather stiff school leaving exam which was normally taken at 18.

The teaching personnel changed in two ways: there were a few dismissals, of Jews -- we had very few Jews at my school; and our English teacher, who was a Jew, was at first said not to be subject to dismissal because he had not only served in the war but had even been shot in the head; but eventually he left all the same and the next English teacher was less good; and that one was in due course replaced by an even worse one, a teacher trainee. The other change among the teachers was a change of tone and colour. A very few revealed themselves as Nazis which, they said, they had been all along but could only now, at last, openly avow to be. (On the whole the school had been vaguely nationalistic, but far from Nazi.) Others toed the new line as best they could and exhibited varying degrees of cravenness or caution or dignity, enthusiasm or moderation or reserve. Many new things were <u>required</u>; the Hitler salute at the beginning of classes, attendance at new national celebrations that proliferated and at which you had, of course,

to stand at attention (with upraised arm) when the new national anthem was played and sung, the old marching song of the Nazi movement, with text by one Horst Wessel, saying: "Raise the flag, close the ranks, we stormtroopers march in firm and steady tread. Comrades shot by the Reds and Reactionaries are marching on with us." It was the battle song of the new revolution.

So there was all that. And there were changes in such subjects as history and science. Let me take biology, for that is where I had my brief hour of glory. I had not done well with the dissection of tulips and the like. But I shone once biology was converted into race biology. Not only was there Mendel's law, about which my father had told me before (only that its implications and application were now rather different from what I had gathered from him) -- but, and this is where the real fun came in, we now learnt about the German races -- "Aryan," of course, all of them. There were six, if I remember correctly, ranging in excellence from the Nordic to the East Baltic. Nordic was best because Nordic man had created almost all the culture there was and he had qualities of leadership. The Mediterranean race was also quite good (for after all there had been ancient Greeks and Romans and there were modern Italians, good fascists, full of leadership.) The Mediterranean race could most easily be memorized as a smaller, lightweight, and darker version of the Nordic: what they had in common were the proportions of their skulls and faces (long, narrow skull, long face) and the characteristic

way of standing on one leg, with no weight on the other; one standing and one playing leg, as a literal translation of the German names for them would have it. Such legs could be seen in Greek statues and such were the legs of Nordic man. Now the Falic race was the next best. It shared many of the sterling qualities of the Nordic -- highmindedness and the rest -- but could be distinguished from it by the fact that it stood, squarely, on two legs. No playleg there. Also its face was a bit broader. That race lacked, somewhat, the fire of Nordic man, or let us say the thumos, but made up for it by solidity and staying power. The colour scheme was fairly nordic, blond hair, blue eyes. So was that of the East Baltic race whose virtues were less marked that those of the Nordic and the Falic and whose features were less distinguished, including a broader skull and a broadish nose. I could not quite make out the use of this race, unless it was, perhaps, territorial, to keep the Slavs out. The Slavs were not a German race. Then there was a German race that looked, one might say, a bit Jewish, or perhaps Armenian, but it was neither. It was Dinaric and seemed to be much the same as what earlier classifications had called Alpine. Indeed this race dwelt in the mountains. It looked sturdy enough, but not as prepossessing as the Nordic; and its head had awkward measurements: Dinaric man had a prominent nose and not much back to his head. But he had a redeeming feature: he was musical.

Now all this, of course, was good clean fun and easy to

visualize and memorize. Indeed there were visual aids: pictures of well-known personages to help recognition and memorization: Hindenburg for the Falic race, somebody like Haydn for the Dinaric, Caesar for the Mediterranean. Then there was a picture of Martin Luther, the great German Reformer, and I forget now what race he was said to represent. To me he looked Slavic. But that, of course, could not be. I suppose he was declared a darker type of East Baltic or Falic. All this was child's play, and this child played it with zest and success.

History was harder. You could not inwardly laugh that off and outwardly play it as a parlor game. You had to learn, or appear to learn, appear to make your own -- to some extent, in some way, at least -- you had to read, say, and write the things that had been neglected or "falsified" in the Weimar Republic of evil memory, under "the System" ("in der Systemzeit," as the Nazis referred to it). New textbooks could not be brought out overnight. So we were all given a short brochure on contemporary history, the recent and most "relevant" period of German and European and world history. It started with the German surrender at the end of the world war (there was only one then, so it needed no number), a surrender brought about by trickery abroad and treason at home, by President Wilson's 14-point peace proposal and the stab in the back of the undefeated German army, a piece of treachery committed by Jews, Marxists, and Catholics -- feckless folk, with international ties. These traitors then set up their system of abject sur-

render abroad and iniquity and immorality at home. They accepted the shameful peace treaty of Versailles which not only saddled Germany with sole responsibility for the war (in Article 231, which Germans called the "war guilt clause" or "war guilt lie")[2] but also provided for the payment -- virtually in perpetuity -- of quite crippling reparations. Germany was unilaterally disarmed (whereas Wilson had envisaged universal disarmament) and was first blockaded by the British -- after the cessation of hostilities -- to enforce submission, and then, in 1923, invaded by the French, who marched into the Ruhr valley to seize German coal and steel production as reparation payments were in arrears. It was reparations that caused the economic misery during the republican 14 years of shame. Attempts to revise the reparations schedule to make it more tolerable were fruitless and fraudulent. The last revision provided for the spreading of payments until 1988 and the country was dying in the attempt to do the victors' bidding. The nation would have to stand together and rally round the Fuehrer -- or the "People's Chancellor," as he was then still called -- to throw off the shackles of Versailles. The cover of this brochure had a muscular worker on it, stripped to the waist and bursting his chains.

We also learnt about the parts of Germany that had been taken away by the Treaty of Versailles, that dictated peace, and about the Germans that languished under foreign domination. We learnt that German defencelessness was further aggravated by the geographic position of the country: surrounded by hos-

tile powers. Thus a bombing plane could take off from France and fly right across Germany and land in Czechoslovakia, without refuelling. The lesson was brought home by air raid exercises. They were not very realistic, but they were educative. I still remember leading my little troop of classmates to their several homes, staying close to the houses, as instructed, to avoid exposure to imagined falling shrapnell and flying glass. That was in the first year or so of Hitler's power, five or six years before his war. It was useless, of course, as an exercise in air raid precautions; but it was useful for fomenting fear and a spirit of national defence. It also showed that the Czechoslovak Republic, even if militarily it amounted to no more than an aircraft base, was the power that enabled France -- or planes based in France -- to bomb the <u>whole</u> of Germany. And in addition -- but this point was not given too much prominence until four years later, in the crisis leading up to the Munich settlement that dismembered the Czechoslovak Republic -- in addition the country was a political entity in which six-and-a-half million Czechs held over 3 million Germans in subjection, as second-class citizens. Clearly the Sudetan region had to be united with Germany.

So much for what was taught in class and done in extramural exercises under the responsibility of the school. But there was one other thing I should mention. Schools were obliged to take their pupils to certain films, propaganda films that were being shown commercially. So, obediently, our class went to see the movie "Hitlerjunge Quex," the story of a Hit-

ler Youth of the working class whose father was a communist and whose mother was long-suffering and tried to cope with conditions and her husband, but in the end attempted suicide, by gas, from misery and despair. Quex (who was a very idealized version of an actual Hitler Youth who had been killed) first belonged to a communist youth group, as was natural in view of his home background. But on one occasion, one excursion, he was so revolted by their beastly ways, that he ran away, ran through the woods, and came upon the camp of a Nazi youth group which instantly and deeply impressed him as his own and the country's salvation. (It was a sunrise scene, to make sure we all got the point.) Here were shining faces, clean limbs, real comradeship, purpose, discipline, dedication, and hope. So he joined the Hitler Youth and was active, devotedly active in the distribution of leaflets and all that. He continued, of course to live with his parents in the working class district of Berlin. And one day, at dawn, the communists took their revenge and his particular personal enemy, a brute of a man, pursued him through the deserted streets -- also through the maze of an amusement park, a very effective, macabre, cinematic touch that, and long before The Third Man -- and finally caught up with him and knifed him. But Quex died for the cause, and when his friends found him, on the point of death, and propped him up, he raised his right arm in a salute to the German future and the camera swung up to the clouds and the sound track into the marching song of Hitler Youth, with the lines "the flag leads us into eternity,

the flag is more than death."

The trouble was twofold: that the film was most effective and affecting (however corny it may sound as I now tell it) and it was made with terrific competence and with the participation of some very good actors; and secondly that the school was under an obligation not only to take us to it, but also to discuss it with us. So we had our class discussion. I do not remember much about it except for the fact that I decided to play the part of aesthetic and dramatic critic, arguing that, powerful though the movie was, it could have been even better if it had been less black and white (metaphorically speaking), if it had had more nuances, more human diversity and verisimilitude. Why did I take that line? In order not to embarrass or endanger our teacher who was leading the discussion, who, I had reason to believe, was very unhappy about the Nazis, and who was a widow with two children for whom she had to provide.

Then there was a film about Joan of Arc, replete with horrors of the Hundred Years' War. It exposed the sadism of the British and the brutality of the Catholic clergy. On that occasion I objected to the screening of atrocities; and that was about as far as one could go and get away with it.

Soon after, I got out of the country and cannot speak any further from personal experience about what subsequently became possible and impossible.

Now "impossible" is a term that strictly speaking brooks no comparison. So let us look at some of the laws that

existed and were passed later, which limited the freedom of expression and of assembly and of organization and action. Whatever laws may exist, and be enforced, it is, of course, still possible to do some of the things that are forbidden; but it becomes less likely that people will do them, because the penalties are painful. In a police state they really <u>are</u> inflicted. Actually, Nazi Germany became something even worse than a police state; because Hitler's shock troops, the SS, not only permeated and took charge of the police, but came to have a whole empire and fields of activity to themselves, outside the reach and control of the police, and the army. It was the SS that ran the concentration camps and extermination camps and the campaign to improve the health of the nation (or the national economy) by killing the incurable. They were not hampered by the law but acted directly on Fuehrer's Orders, something beyond the law.

But I am anticipating. Let me mention some of the laws that were passed and enforced.

The first and most fundamental of them was the Decree of the Reich President for the Protection of the People and the State. It was promulgated on 28 February 1933, four weeks after Hitler had become Chancellor and the day after the burning of the Reichstag building by arson. A young Dutch anarchist boasted of the deed and was eventually sentenced to death by the Supreme Court. Ostensibly the decree was directed against communist acts of violence. In fact it was used against all who could be said to be endangering the State,

including, for instance, members of the clergy who made bold to continue to preach and practise Christianity. It not only tightened up provisions or increased penalties under the criminal code for such offences as treason, arson, the use of explosives, and the taking of hostages. But it also suspended "until further notice" a number of basic rights -- and it remained in effect until the end of Hitler's rule.

Three weeks later, on 21 March 1933, there was a Decree "for the defence of the government of national resurgence against malicious attacks." (It is the word Erhebung I am translating here as "resurgence." The word can also mean uprising, but also uplift and elevation. T. S. Eliot found it untranslatable or chose to treat it as such in "Burnt Norton," the first of the Four Quartets, published, I think, in 1935, and showing an amazing remoteness from or insensitivity to the world and language of politics. I am sure he neither meant harm nor intended a sinister joke when he wrote the passage about

> Erhebung without motion, concentration
> without elimination...[3]

and this at a time when the strongest connotation of Erhebung was not elation or elevation, but the revolution enacted by the Nazi Movement; and when concentration camps had been instituted by that Movement -- the first of them in March 1933 -- precisely for the elimination of undesirables. The London Times had a very good correspondent in Germany and Mr. Eliot must surely have read that paper occasionally.)

So the Decree of 21 March 1933 was to protect the government "of national resurgence;" and what the word Erhebung in the title meant and the text of the decree spelt out was that this protection of the law was not only for the government but also for the "organizations supporting it." It was the protection of government and party organizations against "malice" -- and "malice" was construed to include factual statements that were false or badly distorted. This decree was very effective in silencing criticism.

The Nazis even tried to silence foreign criticism -- and to some extent succeeded. They had means of pressure and persuasion even abroad. They had hostages at home -- for instance the half million German Jews. The one-day boycott of Jewish shops and businesses on 1 April 1933 was presented as an act of retaliation and warning against Jewish-instigated atrocity propaganda abroad. (Where sensationalism had, indeed, occasionally got the better of factual reporting.)

On 24 March 1933 there was the Enabling Bill, passed by parliament and limiting its rights in favor of the executive. This was the "Law to alleviate the sufferings of the People and State." I am translating the title of the law as best I can -- though the word "Not," here rendered as "sufferings," or perhaps I should say "plight?", is another of those many-facetted and multi-level German words, with meanings ranging from "misery" to "emergency." (I won't here go into Wagner's use of the word.) This Behebung (literally: lifting; or alleviation) Behebung der Not von Volk und Staat demanded

strong measures and the government's hand was to be strengthened against potential paralysis by parliament. There were still parties in that parliament, though the communists, after having done quite well in the elections of 5 March, were prevented from taking their seats. These elections, now far from free though they were, still only gave the Nazis 44% of the vote. But by mid-July all other parties were abolished and it may have had symbolic significance that the "Law against the formation of new parties," the law instituting the one-party state, was promulgated on 14 July 1933. On the same day there was a law on plebiscites, which could now be coupled with elections. The one-party rule was further buttressed by a law, of 1 December 1933, "to safeguard the unity of party and State.

Meanwhile there were also certain administrative measures and reorganizations. There was something called Gleichschaltung -- a term taken from mechanics and meaning synchronization or co-ordination, or bringing into line. Gleichschaltung was applied to constitutional and administrative streamlining, as in the laws of March and April 1933, for the Gleichschaltung der Laender mit dem Reich, that is, the co-ordination of the Laender, or States, with the Reich, or national government and administration. It was aimed at centralization and the weakening or abolition of powers enjoyed by the states constituting Bismarck's Reich and the Weimar Republic.

Perhaps I should add another word to our glossary: Reich. It means realm or kingdom or empire. The Holy Roman

Empire was, in German, Das Heilige Roemische Reich. It was finally and officially abolished by Napoleon, in 1806. When Bismarck united Germany in 1871, he founded the second German Reich, or empire. The official name of the Weimar Republic was also Deutsches Reich, but the Nazis did not count that and adopted the name Third Reich to describe their own -- though not officially, not in international discourse.

But Reich, as I said, could also mean "kingdom," as in Reich Gottes "the kingdom of God" -- and it was this overtone that Hitler played on when he ended a long speech at his first big public appearance after his inauguration as Reich Chancellor with a long sentence affirming his faith in the German people and the resurrection of the nation and "the new German Reich of greatness and honour and power and glory and righteousness. Amen."[4] Yes, he said: "Amen." It was an allusion to, and a secular usurpation of, the Protestant ending of the Lord's prayer. Compare this tastelessness and blasphemy with the editing of a sentence in John Kennedy's inaugural address, which went through many drafts. The first draft had a sentence that ran: "We celebrate today not a victory of party, but the sacrament of democracy." In the final text this became: "We observe today not a victory of party but a celebration of freedom."[5] The blasphemy was edited out. Hitler, unlike Kennedy a lapsed Catholic, probably thought references to national resurrection and invocations of power and glory (of the German Reich, not the Reich Gottes) would appeal to the Protestant majority of the

country -- which was much more nationalist than the Catholics - and whose support he needed.

But to return to Gleichschaltung for a moment: it was not only Laender that were being co-ordinated with the Reich, but other organizations were also brought into line, and the term was also used for the change of orientation or thinking, certainly of all expression of thinking (though this meaning was not in official use, only inofficial; it often cropped up in private comment by critics of the regime). Not only were laws passed for the rigid control of all cultural activities and the press and radio, not only was there a law against "malice," but all language bacame subject to "regulation" -- explicit in the ministries and in instructions to editors, but conveyed quite clearly by implication to the general public too. This Sprachregelung was extremely effective and of a thoroughness now almost unimaginable. Even George Orwell can hardly give one an idea of the pervasiveness of it or of the feel of a linguistic universe in which things could no longer be called by their proper names. This was why all forms of non-verbal communication became so very important. Let me give you two examples to illustrate this.

Let us take the word "murder." It was taboo for actions of the government. When, in the bloody purge of the summer of 1934, the Nazis murdered Erich Klausener, the head of the Catholic Action, they announced it as suicide. Mr. Klein recently gave me the issue of the paper of the Diocese of Berlin reporting Klausener's death.[6] The front cover is oc-

cupied by his picture under the title of the paper and its emblem, a lamb with the inscription "Behold the Lamb of God," in Latin. On the next page there is the announcement of his unexpected death on 30 June 1934 (and everyone knew the meaning of that date), the requiem mass for him in the presence of the Bishop and all the members of the chapter of the Cathedral of St. Hedwig, an address by the Bishop, and the burial of the ashes -- (ashes) --, with all liturgical observances, in consecrated ground. The page after that carries the Bishop's last salute to the deceased, and then there are five more pages of obituaries. Not a word about murder. Not a word about suicide. But the fact that the ashes -- the Nazis had evidently thought it wiser to cremate the body -- were given Christian burial and that the funeral was a great event in the Catholic diaspora of Berlin, gave the lie to the Nazi version of his death. But such publicity was not to be possible much longer.

Ten years later, after the failure of the attempt of 20 July 1944 to kill Hitler and oust the Nazis, there were series of secret show trials of the conspirators. This may be a contradiction in terms, but I can explain: admission to the trials and reports on them were completely controlled. The "show" aspect is harder to explain, but it was real enough: those trials were filmed and the film was intended to be shown after suitable editing. Very little of it survives after editing by Goebbels and the Allies. The most moving moment in what those two sets of censors and the vicissitudes

of war spared, comes in a sequence when one of the defendants, in order to explain why he took part in the conspiracy, referred to "the many murders" -- only to be instantly interrupted by the presiding judge, yelling, with pretended incredulity (or perhaps he could really not believe his ears): "Murders?" He then subjected the defendant to screaming abuse and asked him whether he was not breaking down under the weight of his villainy. The accused, as far as I could tell from the film, wanted to treat this as a rhetorical question; but when the judge insisted on an answer, yes or no, paused for a moment and then, quietly, said: "No." After which there was further loud invective from the judge.[7] The defendant was sentenced to death and hanged. Many were sentenced to death and hanged in those trials. But very few were able to say anything so clear and unsettling to the regime as this man with his explicit mention of murders and his final No.

So there was this careful regulation of language and there were laws circumscribing people's freedom of action and of expression. All the laws I mentioned before were enacted in Hitler's first year of power. I shall just mention a few that came later. President Hindenburg finally died, having been very doddery before, in early August 1934. On 1 August 1934 there was a law on the office of Head of State and it united the offices of President and Chancellor. Hitler now had them both. On the next day a new oath was administered to the armed forces, sworn personally to the new Commander-in-Chief, "the Fuehrer of the German Reich and People, Adolf

Hitler." In March 1935 there was an armed forces law, introducing conscription. The Treaty of Versailles had limited the size of the German army to 100,000 men and stipulated long periods of service in order to prevent the training of large numbers of short-term recruits. It was that small and highly professional army that now served as nucleus of the new.

In September of that same year, 1935, the so-called Nuernberg Laws were passed by the Reichstag which was meeting not in Berlin but in the city where the annual party rallies were held. These laws, one relating to citizenship and one to the protection of German blood and honour (this was the wording of the title) deprived Jews of certain civil and social rights, including the right to marry anyone but Jews or to have extramarital intercourse with gentiles. Jews (and other undesirables) had already been eliminated from the civil service by the law for the "restoration of the professional civil service" passed in April 1933. By the way: in 1935 it was still possible for Jews to leave the country. But there was the problem of where to go and how to find a livelihood. This may illustrate it: the American immigration quota for Germany was not fully taken up until 1938. After the pogrom of November 1938, that German quota had a waiting list. Professional discrimination and economic disabilities had been increasing before, but it was only the excesses of November 1938 -- staged after the fatal shooting of a German diplomat in Paris by a young Polish Jew -- that made it clear

that worse might be in store. There was a policy of mounting discrimination, then of segregation, finally, during the war, of deportation to the East, and of extermination. But that was not promulgated in a law. On the contrary, it was a state secret and carried out administratively. Most of the victims of that last phase were not German Jews, but Polish, Russian, and other Jews from all over Hitler's Europe.

The expansion of the Reich began with the annexation of Austria in March 1938 and the law bearing the curious title "Law on the reunification of Austria with the Reich." What was being united was the country of Hitler's birth and the country he adopted and which adopted him with such catastrophic consequences for itself and for the world. Hitler actually became a German citizen less than a year before he became German Chancellor. The dodge to get him naturalized was his appointment by some of his sympathizers and purely on paper, of course, as a civil servant of the little state of Brunswick, in order to enable him to run in the Presidential election of March 1932, a few days later. The American constitution seems a bit more careful in that respect.

There were many Austrians and many Germans who wanted the Anschluss, the joining of the two countries. But the peace treaties after the world war forbade it. Many liberals had wanted it; but perhaps the conditions of 1938 were not the most propitious. Propitious or no, they brought about the Greater German Reich (as distinct from Bismarck's Lesser Germany that had excluded Austria) and a flanking threat to

Czechoslovakia. That country was dismembered a few months after.

All this happened in a state of peace. The state of war did not come about until September 1939 when Hitler, having made a pact with Stalin, marched into Poland, without a declaration of war, but "returning (Polish) fire," as the official German communiqué had it. Poland was subdued and partitioned between the Germans and the Russians. France fell the following summer, after neutral Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg. That was the stage at which Hitler's ally Mussolini joined in. Hitler failed to invade Britain but instead invaded Russia in June 1941. Japan and America entered the war in December of that year, over two years after its beginning. It did not end in Europe until the Americans and the Russians met in the middle of Germany in May 1945, and in Asia until two atom bombs had been dropped on Japan, in August 1945.

Did all this happen because people had not taken the precaution of reading Hitler's book? Not solely; though it might have helped with some of their decisions if they had done so.

Hitler's strongest card was the Treaty of Versailles. His initial strength and his support in the period of consolidation of power came from the German sense of national injury and the real grievances. So long as he was just seen as the man who was working, by hook or by crook, for the revision or abolition of that treaty, he had support for his

foreign policy far beyond the ranks of his own party. People were willing to swallow some of the more distasteful components of his domestic policy for the sake of the liberation of the country from the shackles of Versailles.

The first move in that direction came during Hitler's first year in power, in October 1933, when he took Germany out of the League of Nations as a protest against continued discrimination against Germany in the disarmament negotiations. He got this step endorsed by a plebiscite combined with new elections (only one party now to choose from) -- and the result was indeed more favourable than the 44% of the previous March, more than twice as good. Before the voting, to show the people and the world that Hitler had the backing of the greatest sages in the land and of the academic establishment, there were declarations of support (entitled, "Bekenntnisse," or confessions of faith) from representatives of that establishment, including, for instance, the theologian Hirsch at Goettingen and the philosopher Heidegger at Freiburg, both Rectors of their universities.[8] The declarations were enthusiastic, bombastic, and nauseating. The language in which they were couched was very German and virtually untranslatable. The "official" translations appended for foreign readers cannot have impressed the world with the efficiency of the German translation industry. I shall not try now to improve on them but content myself with saying that when I made Miss Brann read the German text to me while I checked the official translation, she lost her customary

composure and delicacy forbids mention of the number of letters in the word she used to give utterance to her reaction. Actually I did not think the word either appropriate or adequate and shall refer to the matter as the Hirsch-Heidegger syndrome. By that I denote the abdication of political responsibility and the intoxication with high-sounding and meaningless words; the use of language not in an attempt to get at the truth of a political matter, but to glorify the winds of change or the march of history or the peoplehood of a people or the leadership of such a leader. When this is done by a Heidegger in somewhat substandard heideggerian German, it is a very, very bad thing.

He soon relented, of course; he may even have repented. As Ernst Nolte, one of his students, later turned historian and a great authority on fascism, put it in an essay on the types of behaviour among academic teachers in the Third Reich: "It was not long before Heidegger, with his turn to Hoelderlin, joined the widespread tendency to retreat from the National Socialist reality..."[9] Nolte, incidentally, does not think that Heidegger was so lamentably subject to the prevailing mental climate because of his philosophy. He does not consider the possibility, which I regard as a probability, that Heidegger's lack of mental resistance may have been due to his relationship with language. It is my feeling that it must have been his linguistic tin ear that failed to warn him of people who spoke Hitler's language.

And the students? One must not and one cannot general-

ize -- but they were, on the whole, well ahead of the general development, in the vanguard. Nazi students took the lead and won the votes in the elections to student organizations long before Hitler seized power and Professor Heidegger said: "Let not theses and ideas be the rules of your being! The Fuehrer himself and he alone is the German reality and law, today and in the future."[10] To some extent it <u>is</u> true to say that "National Socialism came to power as the party of youth."[11] But it is not the whole truth. I shall try to go into that a little more next time.

I am sorry to end on such a negative note today. But the Hirsch-Heidegger syndrome was, unfortunately, significant and fairly widespread, and Nazi student activism not only followed and accompanied, but <u>preceded</u> it. Youth was in the vanguard of the Nazi movement and revolution. Also the average age of the representatives and leaders of that party was well below that of other parties, a fact from which the Social Democrats, in particular, suffered acutely. They lacked dynamism; the Nazis had it.

Next Friday I shall try to show how six members of the university of Munich, five students and one professor, thought and felt and acted in the midst of that dynamism.

II. The Case of the White Rose

The negative note I finished on last Friday concerned the German universities, whose student organizations were captured by Nazi activists long before Hitler and his party captured the chancellorship and command posts of the country and established a police state, or rather something even beyond a police state. There was also that rather appalling phenomenon I called the "Hirsch-Heidegger syndrome," an intoxication, a passing intoxication, perhaps, certainly in the case of Heidegger, but none the less real and productive of real consequences at the time. In Heidegger's case I suggested that the loss of sobriety may have been due to the patient's relationship with language, that is, not with his philosophy, but with his failure to test words used in the political context for their meaning and implications.

The appeals by prominent representatives of the academic establishment to the German electorate to vote for Hitler after his first significant step in foreign affairs, leaving the League of Nations, were, as I mentioned, printed and translated and also disseminated abroad, as "Bekenntnisse," confessions of faith, in the new Germany and its leader Adolf Hitler.

Let me quote you the official preface to this collection of "confessions" by leading academics. I shall quote it in the official translation, for that, after all, was what the wider world read. It is a bit funny, but I shall then say roughly what it meant. It was headed "An Appeal to the Intelligentsia of the World" and ran:

> All science is inextricably linked with the mental character of the nation whence it arises. The stipulation for the successful scientific work, is, therefore, an unlimited scope of mental development and the cultural freedom of the nations. Only from the co-operation of the scientific culture of all nations -- such as is born from and peculiar to each individual nation -- there will spring the nation-uniting power of science. Unlimited mental development and cultural freedom of the nations can only thrive on the basis of equal rights, equal honour, equal political freedom, that is to say, in an atmosphere of genuine, universal peace. On the basis of this conviction German science appeals to the intelligentsia of the whole world to cede their understanding to the striving German nation -- united by Adolf Hitler -- for freedom, honour, justice and peace, to the same extent as they would for their own.[12]

There are troubles with the translation of this document, of course. It is not very English. For "science," for instance, read scholarship, or learning. For other words it is harder to substitute English equivalents, for in some cases there <u>are none</u>. The German original of what became the "mental character of the nation" was something called "geistige Art des Volkes," and that bristles with difficulties and booby-traps. Not only because the word "<u>Volk</u>" had on the one hand its denotation of "people" (and there was and is no other word for <u>that</u>), on the other hand it had connotations of "race." But also a once harmless word like "<u>Art</u>," meaning "kind" (or perhaps even "character" as the official translation put it) had ceased being harmless and now had a racial overtone as well, a matter later made quite clear in racial legislation which used the term "<u>artfremd</u>," or alien, to refer to alien <u>blood</u>.

But the gentle reader abroad could not know this and was

probably no more than slightly bemused by the language served up to him in this document and others. What did get across, though, was the plea for equal rights, equal honour, equal freedom -- that is: the plea for an end to discrimination against Germany. (It was over the matter of persistent discrimination in the disarmament negotiations that Hitler had taken Germany out of the League of Nations.) This plea for "equality" had a tremendous effect abroad. It really did seem no more than fair, and perhaps even aiming at a more properly balanced international stability (the "genuine, universal peace" of the translation).

But also equal rights, honour, and freedom meant allowing Germany to conduct her domestic affairs her own way. That, too, could be presented and seen as no more than the right that either was or should be the right of any country. The nation state was, after all -- and it still is -- the effective political unit. And it was only a country constituted or re-constituted after the first world war, like Poland, that had special clauses on the protection of minorities, notably Jews, written into its peace treaty.[13] But then Poland was a country with a large Jewish population and a bad history of anti-Semitism. Germany's Jewish population was small and German anti-Semitism no worse than anybody else's -- indeed until the 1920s Germany attracted Jews from Poland and Russia, because it was such a civilised country.

Let me here interpolate something that is in a curious, a mysterious way both central and peripheral to the story of

Nazi Germany: the part the Jews played in that story. That it should have been peripheral may strike you as odd. But on the practical plane it really was: the other nations did not go to war with Hitler or fight the Germans to save the Jews. And it is a mistake, a serious mistake, to concentrate on the fate of the Jews in that drama to the exclusion of all else. It is an understandable mistake, because regarded as a people the Jews did have the heaviest losses proportionately to their number. The Poles were only decimated, that is, they lost about one-tenth of their population. The Russians, even by their own accounts, only lost 20 million people. But of the roughly 11 million European Jews between four-and-a-half and 6 million -- about half -- were done to death by the Nazis.[14] The exact figure is hard to establish. And it is not the thing that matters most. What does is the Jewish experience of forsakenness -- and that can never be brought home to non-Jews by numbers.

But neither must it be allowed to perpetuate Hitler's heresy. What was that heresy? That genealogy is the only true theology: that it is by the blood of a "race" that we are saved or damned.

That whole sad chapter of history has been vulgarized in a number of ways. The saddest of them is the vulgarization that falls into Hitler's own trap, his own way of publicly presenting or misrepresenting what he was really after: the vulgarization that sees that conflict as one of Jews and gentiles, or "Aryans" as the Nazis called them; or as one of

Jews and Christians. That last mistake even the Nazis did not make: on the contrary, they were so concerned to de-Christianize the gentiles -- with Hitler, of course, as the saviour of the gentiles -- that one of the forms their attack on Christianity took was to treat it as a Jewish thing and therefore to be rejected by the Germans.

One can even take this further. Hitler, the great liberator, once said to one of his followers who later left him, perhaps <u>because</u> of this dictum and all it stood for: "Conscience is a Jewish invention."[15] Hitler was out to remove the invention and its inventors.

This makes it clear, or at least strongly suggests, that behind the "racial" struggle stood a more fundamental one: a war of religion: not of Christianity versus Judaism, but of a new heathenism against the Jewish <u>and</u> Christian faith and tradition.

<u>That</u> was the central significance of the Jews in that drama, as central as that of the relationship of Jews and Christians; and of Christians -- the nominal and the other kind -- to Christianity and to humanity.

But now I must get down to the White Rose, the rose that bloomed despite the dynamism of the destroyers to which I referred last week. The Nazis undoubtedly were dynamic.

"The White Rose" was the name chosen by a group of Munich students and a professor and friend of theirs when they launched a campaign of leaflets against the Nazis. They called them "Leaves -- or leaflets -- of the White Rose."

Its blooming was brief, its preparation long. As for its after-effects -- who is to say what they were or may be?

The one woman among them, a girl of 21, her name was Sophie Scholl, had a dream the night before her execution and told it to her cell-mate:

> It was a sunny day, and I was carrying a little child, dressed in a long white gown to be baptized. The path to the church led up a steep hill. But I was holding the child safely and surely in my arms. All of a sudden I found myself at the brink of a crevasse. I had just enough time to set the child down on the other side before I plunged into the abyss.[16]

Willi Graf was the last of the six to die.[17] His sister says that he "was not a dynamic person." That is probably what makes him the most impressive of the six to me. Let me give you her phrase in its context, and in her words:

> Willi was not a political type of person in the superficial sense. He had no natural inclination to revolutionary action. But when intellectual freedom of choice is not guaranteed, or development in accordance with his own inner law, or simply being human; when a regime on the contrary negates all this and enforces forms of thinking and of life which keep violating human dignity most deeply: then a young person with sound instincts and a sense of watchfulness and faith will rebel. If he is moreover plucky and prepared for sacrifice and is confirmed and encouraged by likeminded friends, then he must actively resist such enslavement and finally become an antagonist of the spirit of the times. Thus Willi was driven to the role of having to rebel quite against his own disposition.

And then she quotes the sentence which stands as motto over the whole short memoir of her brother. It is taken from the First Epistle of James, verse 22. She found it in a diary her brother had kept in 1933 -- the first year of Hitler's power, when Willi was 15 -- where it stood suddenly, all by

itself, in the midst of boyish descriptions of group meetings and excursions: It was this sentence: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only."

She then goes on:

> Ever since 1934 the conflict with National Socialism had been a burning problem for Willi and his friends. The question 'What should we do against it?' became the cardinal point of their thinking. Even the question of tyrannicide was discussed one night at their Easter meeting in 1934...The friends were agreed that it was not enough to be indignant in small closed circles. ("They discuss," she quotes Willi on a visit by relatives, "the usual stuff, see the dangers, but think they have to stick it out;" and she then continues:) He wrestled with these problems, just because he inclined far more to a contemplative life and habitually subordinated politics to metaphysical values. He was not a dynamic person; on the contrary, he liked to keep his reserve and loved order. But the constant occupation of his thoughts with "our situation" (as he called the definition of his own and his friends' attitude to their time) finally put him on the path that seemed to him inevitable. The determination to let his immer attitude become deed grew slowly but steadily. When the war started, Willi said from the outset that it must and that it would be lost. This conviction separated him from many people, even from some of the friends of his youth who believed they had to defend their fatherland at all costs. His inner loneliness increased more and more, and especially when he was drafted in January 1940 and started training in a medical unit in Munich.[18]

After his final arrest, Graf himself was asked by the Gestapo, the secret police, to give them an account of his life. And this is what he told them:

He was born in 1918, in the Rhineland. In 1922 his family moved to the Saar. His father became a manager in a firm of wine wholesalers. Willi had two sisters. The family led a comfortable, though frugal, life.

Religion was the center of the children's education and

they were taught to respect parents and superiors. Willi's father was a man of probity in his professional and private life and demanded the same of his children. He was severe when Willy showed signs of dishonesty or disobedience. Willy's mother was affectionate and totally dedicated to her children and the welfare of her family. Willy was initiated into the observances and life of the church at an early age, and the seasons were filled with the spirit of religion. (By that, I suppose, he meant that he experienced the seasons consciously as parts of the church year.)

At the age of 10 Willi was sent to what the Germans call a humanistisches Gymnasium, that is, a high school teaching Greek and Latin. His special interests were German literature, religion, and later Greek and music; also geography and history. He liked to construct things in his free time, worked on light and bell systems, and tried to understand the mysteries of radio.

He liked to go walking, especially in the summer vacations, came to know and love his country and became a lover of nature. During his last years at school, he had a chance to visit faraway places in Germany, Italy, and Yugoslavia, and he relished the experience of distant lands and of different people with other customs. The precious memories of these walking tours sustained him throughout the rest of the year.

His mother opened the eyes of her children, when they were still quite young, to the social and economic sufferings of others. He was taught to do without certain things so

that a poorer child could benefit. He occasionally accompanied his mother on charitable missions.[19]

The actual phrase Graf used in his draft autobiography for the Gestapo was: "Thus I learnt the significance of personal charity." He was clearly trying to stress the contrast to the welfare state approach of the Nazis. The document -- his police autobiography -- is characterized throughout by two things: the judicious omission of certain incriminating features of his biography of which I shall speak later; and the equally judicious inclusion of statements intended to educate his enemies or at least to put on record the convictions that animated him. By "omissions" I mean, for instance, the discretion observed on the precise nature and circumstances of those walking tours: they were undertaken -- at some risk -- by a very close-knit illegal youth group. By the attempt to educate his enemies I mean references to "personal charity," or religion -- even the appreciation of strange peoples and their ways.

This brief life then continues: Willi said of himself that he always had a great need for attachment and had close friendships with playmates and schoolmates. This was the way that led him to the Catholic youth organizations to which he belonged for many years and where his interest in religious and literary questions was further developed by likeminded companions. His religious and "ideological" development was fairly unproblematic. He grew from the childlike notions formed at home and in his first religious instruction into

the big world of faith, in whose doctrines he felt secure and protected. Even violent and long discussions with boys who thought differently could only endanger this security temporarily, but not in the long run.[20]

Let me here mention something not altogether irrelevant. His friends' nickname for Willi was "Nurmi." Nurmi was a famous Finnish long-distance runner -- actually he ran what would now be called middle distances -- and a hero of the Olympic games of 1920, 1924, and 1928 especially Amsterdam, 1928, where he won 3 medals. Clearly Willi's friends picked on this name because of Willi's tenacity and his capacity for independence, even loneliness. Mr. Crockett says that one of the most interesting things about Nurmi was that he would warm up for two hours before a run. He was a thinking runner.

Willi's (police) autobiography continues: In November 1937 he went to the university of Bonn to study medicine. Since the summer of 1935 he had been determined to become a doctor, because, he said, he thought that would give him the best opportunity to help others. "This seemed to me," I am quoting him verbatim now, "the most beautiful task, giving, as it does, a chance to put into practice the commandment which to me is the most compelling of all, to love my neighbour. But I also worked on philosophical and literary questions in order to continue my intellectual education and to make firmer the structure of my religious views."[21]

(Actually his sister says that if it had not been for

the Nazis, Willi would have gone into philosophy or theology, not into medicine; and that he only chose that subject of study because it was relatively free from ideological interference; yet that does not make Willi's statement to the Gestapo a lie; it was merely less than the whole truth; and it gave him a chance to remind his captors of a commandment they also learnt as children, only perhaps less well. Even the mention of the year 1935 as the year in which he decided to study medicine in order to help his fellow-men may have been deliberate: that was the year in which the Saar territory, detached from Germany by the Treaty of Versailles, had the plebiscite envisaged by that treaty and voted to rejoin Germany. Willi and his friends had observed developments in Germany with growing alarm; but until 1935 they had been free from the pressures to which the inhabitants, not to say the inmates, of the Reich were subjected.)

He read a lot, Willi continued his official autobiography, especially modern German writers and theological and philosophical works. He had time for active sports and the enjoyment of music.

I shall quote the end verbatim too: "During these years I experienced the smaller and larger conflicts between the church and offices of the state and party and could not understand them, because no state can have permanence without religion...All order is from God, be it the family, the state, or the people."[22]

This young man of 25 knew more clearly and firmly what

even the boy of 15 had known when Hitler began to destroy the old order to build his own New Order, an order without God -- but with the new idols of race and people, and with the divine Fuehrer himself something between prophet and deity.

Lutherans had greater trouble discerning and opposing the ungodly nature of this new civil authority. They did not discuss tyrannicide in 1934, and very few of them even later.

Incidentally: I did not mean to advocate tyrannicide in the discussion the other day. I merely meant that it was a thing that might be considered in the face of murderous fanaticism.

However, let us have a few more facts of Willi Graf's life. They come from his surviving sister, from friends, from letters and diaries. He belonged to a Catholic youth organization until it was suppressed, and then he belonged to an illegal successor organization. He made not concessions to associates he considered faithless. When he was 15, in 1933, he struck off from his address book names of boys who had belonged to his group and who were now in the Hitler Youth. He refused to join the Hitler Youth, although he was threateded with non-admission to the school leaving exam, the precondition of university entrance, unless he became a member. An early arrest in January 1938 -- there were numbers of arrests for activities in illegal youth groups -- was terminated by an amnesty to celebrate the annexation of Austria.[23]

The autobiography he wrote for the Gestapo after his later arrest was, of course, not only aimed at not incriminating himself, but also at not incriminating family and friends. Those years of semi-illegality were a good training in careful formulation. And his circumspection was combined with fortitude. Although he was kept alive for months after the execution of the others, because the investigating authorities hoped to get more facts and names and leads from him, with all kinds of threats, he did not oblige. So in the end they cut off his head too, on 12 October 1943.

He had also been a careful reader and given to writing things down that impressed him. With friends he trusted he loved to discuss the most serious questions passionately and thoroughly, and preferably by night.

The legal and later illegal youth groups also gave their members much training in the endurance of physical hardship and developed their resourcefulness and stamina. In fact Willi became exactly what Hitler wanted his boys, the Hitler Youth, to be; and he had put it in a winged word that Nazi youth leaders were forever quoting: "Tough as leather, swift as greyhounds, hard as steel." (Well -- Hitler actually said "Krupp steel.") But there was one vital difference: that Willi Graf combined these qualities with a mind of his own and an unshakable faith.

A greyhound actually is a dog, though a very noble kind of dog. You can condition the reflexes of a dog. You can condition the reflexes of human beings too. But you should

not try to make men into nothing but conditioned reflexes. And these are the chief lessons of the Nazi period to me: how terribly manipulable people are, especially in our twentieth century; but also that there are limits to this manipulability. And there is a rider: we must help to set the limits and defend them.

Back to Willi Graf, though. He began his medical studies in 1937. In January 1940 he was called up and trained in a medical unit in Munich. This transfer separated him from his old friends. He served in Germany, on the Channel Coast, in Belgium and France, Croatia and Serbia; finally in Poland and Russia.

In April 1942 he got study leave and returned to Munich. Apart from his medical studies, he worked in philosophy and theology and took an increasing interest in liturgical questions and in psychology. When there was time, he did some fencing. He joined the Bach Choir and went to concerts whenever he could.

It was then, looking for new friends, that he got to know a brother and sister, Hans and Sophie Scholl, and their friends Christoph Probst and Alexander Schmorell. With them -- the men were all medical students on leave from the army and Sophie a student of biology and philosophy and musical psychology. They were all agreed in their opposition to the Nazis and shared many interests, chiefly in writing that mattered and -- despite their different denominations, they were united by shared Christian convictions. Jointly they came to

the conclusion that they ought to engage in active propaganda against the Nazis and that this should now take the form of leaflets.[24]

This may be the moment to describe the very different route by which Hans Scholl reached that point. If the group had a ringleader, it was Hans Scholl. He was what is described as a "dynamic" person.

Born in 1918, the same year as Willi Graf, he was the son of a small town mayor. But later the family moved to a bigger town, Ulm. They had three daughters and two sons, of whom Hans was the elder. They were Protestants, the mother probably more pious than the father.

I am not sure what their politics were, only that the father was opposed to the Nazis from the outset. Later he also spent time in jail for this opposition. I do not know what form this opposition took. I only know that he called Hitler "the scourge of God." That may have been what did it.

But it was long before, at the very beginning, that Hans Scholl, finding his father's disapproval of this great new Movement reactionary, decided to join the Hitler Youth, and his brother and sisters followed him.[25]

Ten years after Hitler had come to power, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Protestant theologian opposed to the Nazis -- he later died on the gallows -- wrote of the great masquerade of evil. He said: "For evil to appear disguised as light, beneficence, historical necessity, and social justice, is simply bewildering to anyone brought up in the world of our

traditional ethical concepts; but for the Christian who bases his life on the Bible, it precisely confirms the radical malice of evil."[26]

It may seem strange now. But the masquerade was very effective. And the younger Scholls were swept away by the idea of a real people's community, the social justice and equality promised by Hitler, and they joined the march of history. In doing that, Hans Scholl was not unlike many of other young Germans opposing their hidebound parents.

It was not the Bible that showed Hans Scholl the error of his way. To that he only came much later. What first put him off was the fact that the fellowship of the Hitler Youth had an element of regimentation -- something of the Gleichschaltung I mentioned last time.

His surviving elder sister mentions an incident that gave her -- momentarily -- to think; but the moment passed. She writes:

> We were taken seriously -- taken seriously in a quite remarkable way -- and that aroused our enthusiasm. We felt we belonged to a large, well-organised body that honoured and embraced everyone, from the ten year old to the grown man. We sensed that there was a role for us in the historic process, in a movement that was transforming the masses into a Volk. We believed that whatever bored us or gave us a feeling of distaste, would disappear of itself. Once a fifteen year old girl, after we had gone to lie down under the wide, starry sky at the end of a long cycling tour, said in our tent, quite suddenly and out of the blue, "Everything would be fine, but this thing about the Jews I just can't swallow." The troop leader assured us that Hitler knew what he was doing and for the sake of the greater good we would have to accept certain difficult and incomprehensible things. But the girl was not satisfied with this answer.

> Others took her side, and suddenly the attitudes in our varying home backgrounds were reflected in the conversation. I spent a restless night in that tent, but in the end we were just too tired, and the next day was inexpressively splendid and filled with new experiences. The conversation of the night before was for the moment forgotten. In our group there developed a sense of belonging that carried us safely through the difficulties and loneliness of adolescence, or at least gave us that illusion.

The maddening thing about Inge Scholl's book, if I may say so, is that she hardly ever gives a <u>date</u> for anything. But this sounds like an early incident to me, earlier than the Nuernberg Laws even -- let alone the pogrom of 1938 or the deportations that started in the war. It probably took place about the time when nothing much was being <u>done</u> yet about the Jews, apart from verbal and pictorial vilification and the removal from the civil service.

But it is another matter she mentions as an early cause of her brother's discontent. He liked to sing and he sang to his troop, accompanying himself on the guitar. What did he sing? The songs of the Hitler Youth -- and I have studied their official song book (edition of 1941) and was amazed to find many good songs in it. But Hans also sang <u>foreign</u> songs -- Norwegian or Russian, or something like that. His leaders forbade it. He disregarded the prohibition. They threatened punishment. He got depressed.

But there was a great experience in store for him. He was to be the flag bearer for his troop at the big annual Party Rally in Nuernberg. He went with high hopes, and came back disillusioned. The full implications of the regimentation -- not only of the Hitler Youth, but of the whole show, all

of German life as the Party clearly intended to form it in its own image -- all this had now come home to him.

And there was the odd book his leaders would not let him read, because the author was a Jew, or a pacifist.

But the final break came after a promotion: Hans now had the rank of Fähnleinführer (which meant being in charge of 150 or so boys.) His troop had designed and made a banner for itself and showed up with it at a parade before some higher-ups of the Hitler Youth. A boy of twelve carried it. A superior Hitler Youth leader demanded its surrender. There were to be no private flags or emblems. The boy stood firm. He stood a bit less firm when the surrender order was given for the third time. Hans intervened. He stepped forward and slapped the Hitler Youth superior. That was the end of his career in the Hitler Youth. His subsequent membership in an illegal youth group ended in arrest and some weeks in jail. But he too, like Willi Graf, benefited from the post-Anschluss amnesty.

Gradually all the young Scholls heard of disturbing events things that happened to people they knew. They now asked thei father about the meaning of some of this and it seems that old Scholl did call things by their proper names and even disabused his offspring of the notion -- very widespread in all those dreadful twelve years -- that whatever horrible things might be happening, they were the doing of wild or mean or sadistic subordinates or local potentates or tough men -- and that the Führer did not know about them.

Father Scholl explained to his children that this really was unlikely. Hitler knew. Father Scholl also tried to explain how such a man could come to power. (I don't suppose he found it any easier than I do.) Finally it seems that he told his children that he wanted them to be free and upstanding, whatever the difficulties.

That, at last, bridged the generation gap which -- like many another gap -- Hitler had exploited so skillfully.

It also sent Hans back to the sources, the foundations. Rilke was not much help, neither was Stefan George, or another poet, Hoelderlin; nor was Nietzsche. Hans finally found Plato and Socrates, the early Christian authors, Augustine, and Pascal; and the Bible, whose words, as his sister says, now acquired for him a new and surprising significance, an overwhelming relevance and immediacy, and an undreamt of splendour.

He was a student of medicine now. And the war came. After a while he was drafted for a medical unit and served in the French campaign. Then he was sent to Munich as a soldier-student, a member of a military student unit. It was a strange life, commuting between barracks and the university and the clinic. And all this in a steadily worsening political climate, with oppression growing harsher every day and more and more becoming known -- piecemeal and not always reliably -- about the crimes of the regime.

It was mimeographed copies of a sermon of the Bishop of Muenster against euthanasia, the secret killing of incurables

-- which, however, could not be kept altogether secret, since it was carried on inside Germany -- it was Bishop Galen's public sermon about this crime, his denunciation of it as not only immoral but also illegal, a sermon preached in a remote part of Germany, but disseminated throughout Germany in mimeographed copies -- secretly, of course -- that made Hans Scholl think of leaflets as a possibility. He was relieved that someone, at last, had spoken, openly. And, it seemed, such open speech could be spread.

He was not alone. In particular, he had a fatherly friend and mentor, Carl Muth, the former editor of a Catholic monthly, Hochland, now suppressed -- whom he had met in an almost accidental way and whom he thenceforth saw almost daily, learning all the while, and growing clearer and stronger. There were others too. The underground intellectuals of Munich -- middle-aged or older men most of them, whom the Nazis had eliminated from public life -- were an impressive bunch. They included such people as Theodor Haecker, translator and exponent of Newman and Kierkegaard.[27]

And there were friends among the students, especially among the military-medical students. The closest among them was was Alexander Schmorell, son of a Russian mother whom he lost as an infant and who was brought up by a Russian nurse after the family's flight to Germany, where his father married again and became a well-known physician. Alex had a great and romantic love for Russia, which he shared with his friends. Then there was Christoph Probst, the only one of

them to be married, a very young father of two children, with a third on the way. And finally there was Willi Graf.

Sophie Scholl came to Munich to study biology and philosophy in the spring of 1942, when she had just turned 21. She was three years younger than her brother Hans. She had had to do her labor and war service before being allowed to become a student. Her philosophy professor was a man called Kurt Huber. He was a somewhat strange man, but, as far as the Scholls and their friends were concerned, the best man in the university. They all went to his lectures on Leibniz and his Theodicy. And they got to know him better outside the university.too. And he introduced them to other people. They met for readings and discussions.

In the early summer of 1942 the first leaflets turned up. Hans Scholl had started them, and he had been so discreet that even his sister at first did not know he was connected with them until she saw a marked passage in a book he had. It was a passage in Schiller's essay on the legislation of Lycurgus and Solon and was clearly the source of the first leaflet. This had had long quotations from the essay:

> Considered in the light of what he wished to accomplish, the legislation of Lycurgus is a masterpiece of political science and human psychology. He wanted to establish a powerful, self-sustaining, indestructible state. Political strength and durability were his aim, and this aim he accomplished insofar as circumstances permitted. The admiration aroused by a superficial glance at his achievement must give way to strong condemnation when his aims are compared with those of humanity. Everything may be sacrificed to the best interests of the state except the end which the state itself is designed to serve. The state is not an end in itself. It is

important only as a means to the realization of an end which is no other than the development of all the faculties of man and cultural progress. If a constitution hinders this development, if it hinders intellectual progress, it is harmful and worthless, no matter how ingeniously it is conceived and how perfectly it may function in its own way. Its durability is to be regretted rather than admired. It is only a prolongation of evil. The longer such a state exists, the more detrimental it becomes...

Political service was achieved and the ability to perform it was developed by sacrificing all moral sensibilities. Sparta knew nothing of conjugal love, maternal affection, filial piety, friendship. It recognized only citizens and civil virtues...

A state law required the inhuman treatment of slaves. In these hapless victims mankind itself was insulted and maltreated. In the Spartan code the dangerous principle was laid down that men were to be considered as a means, not as an end, thus abolishing by law the foundations of natural rights and morality. All morality was sacrificed to achieve an end which can be valuable only as a means to the establishment of this morality...

How much more beautiful is the spectacle of the rough warrior, Caius Marius, in his camp before Rome who sacrifices vengeance and victory because he cannot bear the sight of a mother's tears...

The republic of Lycurgus could endure only if the mental development of the people was arrested, and thus it could maintain its existence only if it failed to fulfill the highest and only true purpose of political government.

This first leaflet had begun with the words:

Nothing is so unworthy of a civilized nation as allowing itself to be "governed" without opposition by an irresponsible clique subject to base instincts. It is surely a fact that to-day every honest German is ashamed of his government. Who among us has any conception of the dimensions of the shame that will befall us and our children when one day the veil has fallen from our eyes and the most horrible of crimes -- crimes that infinitely exceed all measure -- reach the light of day? If the German people are already so corrupted and decayed in their inmost being that they do not raise a hand and, frivolously trusting in a questionable law of history, yield up

> man's highest possession, that which raises man above allother creatures, if they surrender free will, the freedom of man to seize and turn the wheel of history in accordance with rational decisions; if they are so devoid of all individuality, have already gove so far along the road toward becoming a spiritless and cowardly mass -- then, then indeed they deserve their downfall...[28]

To anticipate, let me say that there were six leaflets in all, in thousands of copies. They were distributed anonymously and secretly. Those, many of them, that were sent through the mails, were mostly posted in the cities to which they were sent, in order to avoid any hint to the police that Munich was the headquarters of this activity. Risky train journeys were undertaken by several members of the group to take leaflets to cities like Stuttgart, Augsburg, Vienna, Salzburg. Willy Graf even took a duplicating machine to a friend in the West and recruited friends and sympathizers and collaborators where he could. Recipients were assured that their names had simply been taken from telephone directories -- to free them of the fear that they might be on some list and thus exposed to punishment.

The leaflets usually had quotations towards the end of their text, as this first one used Schiller on the lawgivers. The second leaflet began:

> It is impossible to engage in intellectual discussion with National Socialism because there is nothing intellectual about it. It is false to speak of a National Socialist philosophy (Weltanschauung) for if there were such a thing, one world have to try by means of analysis and discussion either to prove its validity or to fight it. In reality, however, we have a totally different picture: even in its first beginnings this movement depended on the deception of one's fellowman; even then it was

> rotten to the core and could save itself only by constant lies. After all, Hitler states in an early edition of "his" book (a book written in the worst German I have ever read, and yet it has been elevated to the rank of a Bible in this nation of poets and thinkers): 'It is unbelievable to what extent one must deceive a people in order to rule it.' If at the start this cancerous growth in the nation was not too noticeable, it was only because there were still enough forces at work that operated for the good, so that it was kept at bay. As it grew larger, however, and finally attained power... the tumor broke open, as it were...The majority of former opponents went into hiding, the German intelligentsia fled to a dark cellar, there, like night-shades away from light and sun, gradually to choke to death. Now the end is at hand. Now it is our task to find one another again, to enlighten each other, never to forget and never to rest until even the last man is persuaded of the urgent need of his struggle against this system. When thus a wave of rebellion goes through the land, when 'it is in the air,' when many join the cause, then in a last mighty effort this system can be shaken off. After all an end in terror is preferable to an endless terror.

The leaflet went on to speak of the murder of Jews -- 300,000 in Poland -- and of Poles, and of the need for more than compassion. Doing nothing constituted complicity. If they tolerated these things, Germans were <u>guilty</u>. Now that they had recognised the Nazis in their true colours, Germans had the duty to destroy them. This leaflet ended with quotations from Lao-Tse.[29]

The third discussed forms of government and utopias -- the highest of them, it said, being the City of God. The present state was a dictatorship of evil. Something had to be done about it and cowardice must not hide behind a cloak of prudence. Only passive resistance could be offered, but that must be offered wherever possible. Military victory over Bolshevism must not be the prime concern of Germans, but

on the contrary the defeat of the Nazis. There were suggestions for various forms of sabotage, though no blueprint for general action could be given and everyone should use what opportunities offered in whatever way seemed best. This leaflet concluded with a quotation from Aristotle's Politics, a passage on tyranny.[30]

The fourth leaflet had an appeal to Christians to attack evil where it was strongest. It was strongest in the power of Hitler. It had a quotation from Ecclesiastes and one from the German poet Novalis on Christianity as the foundation of peace. It also had a postscript, assuring the reader that The White Rose was not in the pay of any foreign power, adding; "Though we know that National Socialist power must be broken by military means, we are trying to achieve a renewal from within."[31]

Then there was a long hiatus; for the men were sent to Russia during the long vacations between semesters. What they saw in the East confirmed them in their resolve. Hans saw Jews in labor gangs. All saw the miserable conditions prevailing in Poland. All fell in love with the Russians.

When they returned to Munich in November, they resumed their secret work with redoubled energy and it became quite feverish. There were two more leaflets, the last a special appeal to students and it began with the shock produced by the staggering German defeat at Stalingrad. The students, the "intellectual workers," should not allow themselves to become the tools of the regime, but put an end to it. A re-

cent incident at Munich university had shown that the students could stand up to the Party. The nation was looking to the students. It ended "Our people are rising up against the National Socialist enslavement of Europe in a fervent new breakthrough of freedom and honor."[32]

The incident referred to had in fact been spectacular and encouraging; but it had also been unique. The Nazis saw to it that it remained unique.

At the 470th anniversary celebrations of the university, the Bavarian Gauleiter had addressed a crowd of about 3000 students, many of them in uniform, on the meaning of the event and of the place of students in the German struggle. As for women students, he had no objection to their occupying places at the university, but he did not see why they should not present the Fuehrer with children, for instance a son for every year at the university; if they were not attractive enough to get a man by their own efforts, he'd be glad to send one of his adjutants to each one of them and they could be assured of an enjoyable experience.

At this there was unrest in the auditorium. Women students in the gallery stood up, prepared to leave. They were stopped. The other students, especially those in uniform on the ground floor booed so much that the Gauleiter had to interrupt his speech. Later he did speak on, but the spell was broken and he kept being interrupted. He was furious and gave the order for the women students to be held in custody. The leader of the Nazi student organization demanded a volun-

tary identification of the women protesters upstairs. 24 identified themselves and were arrested at once. The SS pushed the other students out of the auditorium. When they emerged from the building they found all the rest of the men students standing outside, like a wall, and giving them an ovation. They had stood there for over an hour. In groups they broke through the cordon, got inside, seized the Nazi student leader, beat him up and held him as hostage until the women were set free. At that moment the police arrived. The students also turned on the police and fought their way through into the city. But some of them were arrested. The atmosphere, however, was electric. Students of the most diverse disciplines suddenly found themselves acting together. And suddenly all were friends; and the population of Munich was on their side.

The Gauleiter called another meeting a couple of weeks later and threatened to close the university if peace and order were not restored. The men would be sent to the front, the women into the factories. But he also apologized for his earlier speech. Those who had been arrested had been set free. Clearly the students had won, this round. But it was to be the only round.

It may even have led to the end of the White Rose. The Scholls and their friends were, of course, immensely heartened by this experience of spontaneous solidarity against a foulmouthed party functionary. But they may have overestimated the permanent potential that could be mobilized against

the Party. In any case they now became bolder. They wrote things on the walls of Munich in the night: "Down with Hitler," and "Freedom." They managed not to get caught doing this. They were armed to shoot their way out if necessary.[33]

But on 18 February 1943 Hans and Sophie took a suitcase full of copies of the last leaflet to the university, spread them about in corridors and on the stairs while lectures were in progress and doors closed, and finally threw the rest down the central lightshaft from an upper floor. The janitor saw them and took instant action to apprehend them. They were arrested and taken away.

That was on a Thursday. Their trial, together with Christoph Probst, was on the following Monday. It was conducted by the People's Court and they were sentenced to death and beheaded the same day.[34] There was less than a week between their being caught and being dead.

Graf, Schmorell and Huber were also arrested and tried, together with eleven other defendants, in mid-April. The sentences ranged from acquittal to death. Three women students, for instance, got prison sentences for failing to report treasonable activities.[35]

Graf, Huber, and Schmorell were sentenced to death, Huber having already been expelled from the Faculty of the university by his colleagues. He had also been deprived of his doctorate.[36] In the case of the first three, incidentally, the Scholls and Probst, there had been an assembly of the student body, called by the Nazi student organization, in the

evening of the day on which the three were executed, to denounce them and to declare the loyalty of the student body to the Fuehrer and the National Socialist Movement. Attendance, again, at least according to the report of the District Student Leader, was about 3000.[37]

The parents of Graf and Schmorell asked for clemency. Hitler personally turned down the request.[38] Huber's publisher asked for a stay of execution, to enable his author to finish his book on Leibniz, arguing that it would redound to the greater glory of German culture. He was allowed to work on it in his prison cell until July, but he did not finish his book before they took him to the guillotine.[39] There were about twenty of them in use in Germany at that time.

Willi Graf died last, in October of that year, 1943.

Before asking for your permission to add a postlude and a postscript to our discussion on rhetoric in politics and the difference between manipulation and persuasion, I should like to sum up in two sentences what the story of these students seems to me to show: In order to recognize manipulation and to think not only analytically but also constructively about politics, they needed Plato and Aristotle and suchlike authors. To find the courage and strength needed to stand up to the power of the manipulators, they needed faith.

But here is a postlude, on a matter closely connected with the subject of rhetoric and persuasion.

The five students of the White Rose all sang in the Munich Bach Choir, until the end. One day I hope to be able to find out what they sang. But I can imagine what kind of thing it was. It was not all Bach but it was all serious music, I am sure, music whose words mattered.

What you let out of your mouth always matters, of course. At a time when language has become debased, corrupted, meaningless or prohibited, what you sing matters even more. It would be interesting to know what the Nazis allowed to be sung (and perhaps I shall have a chance to find out some time). I know that Haendel was censored -- some of Haendel. Willi Graf went to two performances of the Messiah in December 1942, his last advent season. After the first occasion he wrote in his diary that it was an indescribable experience. What impressed him were the faith and piety behind the work. He went again, though the second time there was standing room only. Again he was deeply impressed, especially by the aria "I know that my Redeemer liveth." He mentioned it again in a letter to his sister -- they had heard it together -- his last letter, dictated to the prison chaplain before his execution.[40]

But Bach is much more powerful with his words than Haendel and I just wonder what the Nazis did with cantatas and motets, or, for that matter, with the Magnificat -- music that, for instance, mentions God's son or servant Israel. Could they allow it to be sung when they had decided to force every male Jew to have the middle name "Israel" on his papers?

This was for purposes of identification and segregation, like the later edict forcing all Jews to wear the yellow Star of David on their clothes. Could the Nazis allow choirs to sing "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King...?" That is Psalm 149, verse 1 and 2, which Bach set in his motet "Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied." Or could they permit, even in Latin, the singing of Luke 1, v. 54-55: "He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever," seeing how Bach hammers home the "Abraham" in his Magnificat and spreads the seed throughout the ages? Could the Nazis allow such words to be sung, especially when they were set in such persuasive and memorable ways? Or did they insist that only songs to the new lord or idol should be sung and those that did not too explicitly conflict with the new idolatry?

I do not know all the relevant deliberations of the Ministry of Propaganda or the Ministry of Education or the Reich Chamber of Music. They were the controlling bodies for that kind of thing. But I know, for instance, that at one of his staff conferences in April 1942, Dr. Joseph Goebbels, the Minister of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, explained that he prohibited a broadcast of the Mozart Requiem the previous December because, and I quote, "its very sombre and world-negating text would have had a bad effect on morale in the exceptionally serious situation then prevailing;" adding

that this was, however, an exceptional case. One could not, he said, "destroy or regard as non-existent the earlier cultural achievements of a people just because the content of these cultural achievements" ran "counter to a new ideology" and he explained "that a distinction must be made between a historical approach and enjoyment of the cultural achievements of earlier periods on the one side and the development of one's own ideology on the other."[41]

The bodies charged with ideological control must have weighed the risk of dangerous Christian indoctrination on the one side against the risk, on the other side, not only of jettisoning the German cultural heritage, but also of making the anti-Christian character of the regime too clear.

With the churches under pressure and severely circumscribed in what they were permitted to do and say, and persecuted, and prosecuted, when they exceeded those limits, concert halls and choral societies were obvious places where the old creed might still be fostered surreptitiously.

Lest you think that I overestimate this factor, let me give you three examples, two on the Christian side, one on the Nazi side. A brother of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, not a particularly churchy man, was in a Berlin jail under sentence of death. When the only surviving brother who was still at liberty (Dietrich, too, was in prison) visited his brother Klaus and said how nice it was that Klaus could hear, in his mind's ear, the music of the Matthew Passion when he read the score he had in his prison cell, Klaus said: "But the words

also! The words!"[42]

Willi Graf recorded in his diary on 7 December 1942 (the day, incidentally, after that first Messiah) that he spent the first part of the evening singing in the Bach Choir. He thought it went quite well and added: "The words of the Christmas songs and of the Schuetz motet have their special meaning. It is good to be able to do such things."[43] Another thing he did right up to the end was to prepare and perform church liturgies with his friends.[44] Despite the soldiering and the medical studies and the secret political work, he found time and clearly felt a need for it.

The Nazis, on the other hand, made children, and grown-ups, sing songs for their Movement and for Germany, and dinned into all the doctrine that there was and would be no Germany but Hitler's Germany. And the boys who had innumerable times sung the words "Germany, here we are; we consecrate our death to thee as our smallest deed; when death comes to our ranks, we shall be the great seed." were, of course, singing something plagiarized from Tertullian, a perversion of Tertullian, who said that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christians. These child martyrs were sacrificed, and sacrificed themselves, for the fatherland up to the last minutes of the war, manning the anti-aircraft guns and fighting the Russians at the approaches and in the streets of Berlin -- 15 and 16 year olds formed into local battalions. As a surviving female Hitler Youth leader put it: "They wanted to make true the vows of their songs."[45]

However relaxed Goebbels may have sounded in that Propaganda Ministry conference in 1942, the internal intelligence network of the SS never relaxed its vigilance where the churches were concerned and kept complaining about "church music as a means of denominational propaganda." "Denominational" meant roughly what in America is sometimes called Sectarian." The word was used instead of "Christian," which was what was <u>really</u> meant. The fiction, which was very strenuously maintained, was that the Nazi Party and Movement -- which in its official Party Program, promulgated in 1922 and never carried out, had subscribed to something nebulous called "Positive Christianity"[46] (a matter I shall be glad to enlarge upon if asked) -- the fiction was that the Nazis wanted above all to <u>unite</u> all Germans and therefore had to fight the divisive activities of the Protestant and Catholic "denominations." But in this Security Service report from which I have quoted, as in others, it is crystal clear that what they were in fact fighting was the Christian faith itself, and any attempt to foster it. This report, in October 1940, complained of the systematic expansion of performances of church music all over the Reich, both in churches and in concert halls. These events, the report said, were of high quality and very popular, made most effective propaganda for the churches, and were apt to call forth ovations from the audiences that amounted to demonstrations.[47]

In April 1943, a long report on church influence on the young had a special section on the dastardly use the churches

were making of singing as a vehicle of Christian education.[48] In January 1944, another long report on liturgical reform and the extra-mural promotion of church music, mentioned the fact that in Alsace, for instance, the Protestant church was systematically replacing sentimental hymns of the 19th century by musically more valuable chorales of the time of the Reformation. Even brass music was being revived in the reform movement.[49]

All this caused great and, I think, justified concern to the watchdogs of the regime. What they did not say, perhaps did not even realize (like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear)[50] was that brass in church music did not just add to the fun (or, as we might say here, enjoyment, as of cheese cake with cherries) but has a rousing and invigorating effect; they may not have known that the chorales of the time of the Reformation were not just musically superior to the soppy stuff of the Romantic era, but textually too.

The Germans had begun before any other people to sing hymns in their own language. When Luther came, he not only translated the Bible, creating something that is worthy to stand beside the English Authorized Version (the American "King James Bible") but also, being very musical, made the chorale into a most important and powerful vehicle of the new persuasion, making congregations sing. He put a lot of Catholic Latin hymns into German and wrote more himself. Since then the Protestants in Germany have always had the better hymns than the Catholics -- until both declined in the cen-

tury of Beethoven, Schubert, and Wagner. When the crucial conflict with the neo-pagan movement approached and during the crisis itself, most musical Christians, but especially the Protestants, realized they needed more to sustain them than the spineless songs of the 19th century, the needed words and music that really meant something. And whereas the Catholics were largely preserved from apostasy by the clarity of their doctrine and the prescribed observances of their faith, Protestants may be said, I think, to have been pulled out of their initial confusion not only by some of the more clearheaded and courageous parsons and laymen and laywomen, but also by a return to the truths proclaimed in Bible and Hymnal.

And perhaps even wordless music, provided it is pure, has some such power.[51]

Kurt Huber, this professor of philosophy, also taught -- and wrote on -- music, both the physiology and psychology of hearing and music, and, his special love, folk music, the real rooted stuff -- that was in fact being rooted out, trampled underfoot, by "the march of history," by this mass movement that called itself "voelkisch." Though physically somewhat handicapped -- he had had infantile paralysis -- he went to great lengths to hear and preserve what still existed of such music. A companion he once took on a musical mountain trip to a rather inaccessible part of the Bavarian Alps, to hear the yodelling of the dairymaids there, reports that

when they left and had already gone a certain distance, these women sent a kind of farewell yodel after them. Huber stopped in his tracks, asked his companion for writing material, and jotted down the yodel in figured bass notation. As he did so, tears of emotion streamed down his face.[52] I think I know what that emotion was. It was the emotion that made Victor Zuckerkandl speak of "the miracle of the octave" and on which, if I understand him aright, St. Thomas (Aquinas) bases one of his proofs of God, the one from "governance." That may be an odd one to think of when the world was -- and still is -- so visibly out of joint. All the more moving, I would say, to hear or see an example, a representation, or symbol of that governance. To hear the pre-established harmony.

Notes

1. See, for instance, Peter Loewenberg, "The psychohistorical origins of the Nazi youth cohort," The American Historical Review, volume 76, No. 5 (December 1971), pp. 1457-1502.

2. The Treaty of Peace Between the Allied and Associated Powers and Germany (with amendments) and Other Treaty Engagements, signed at Versailles, June 28, 1919.... Part VIII was on Reparation. Its Section I (General Provisions) started with Article 231 which read: "The Allied and Associated Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies."

3. T.S. Eliot, Four Quartets (London 1944), p. 9.

4. Max Domarus, ed., Hitler. Reden und Proklamationen 1932-1945. Kommentiert von einem deutschen Zeitgenossen... (Munich 1965), p. 208.

5. Theodore C. Sorensen, Kennedy (New York 1966), p. 271.

6. Katholisches Kirchenblatt für das Bistum Berlin, XXX, No. 28 (15 July 1934).

7. A copy of the film, what remains of it, can be seen and heard at the National Archives in Washington. A partial transcript of the trial also survived. For one relevant fragment see Volksgerichtshofs-Prozesse zum 20. Juli 1944, Transkripte von Tonbandfunden. Herausgegeben vom Lautarchiv des Deutschen Rundfunks (April 1961), p. 122; for another see Gert Buchheit, Richter in roter Robe, Freisler, Präsident des Volksgerichtshofes (Munich 1968), p. 247.

8. Bekenntnis der Professoren an den deutschen Universitäten und Hochschulen zu Adolf Hitler und dem nationalsozialistischen Staat. Überreicht vom Nationalsozialistischen Lehrerbund Deutschland / Sachsen (Dresden, n.d.), pp. 13-14 and 36-37 (Heidegger) and 15-17 and 38-40 (Hirsch).

9. Ernst Nolte, "Zur Typologie des Verhaltens der Hochschullehrer im Dritten Reich," Aus Politik und Geschichte, Beilage zur Wochenzeitung "Das Parlament," B 46/65 (17 November 1965), p. 11. For a series of lectures on the subject of the German universities in the Third Reich,

given at the University of Munich, see Die deutsche Universität im Dritten Reich. Acht Beiträge (Munich 1966). Fritz Leist, one of the contributors, who discusses possibilities and limits of resistance at universities, knew Willi Graf well and helped him and the White Rose group.

10. Karl Dietrich Bracher, The German Dictatorship. The origins, structure, and effects of National Socialism. Translated from the German by Jean Steinberg...(New York 1970), p. 268; it is a quotation from Heidegger's Rectoral Address, Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität (Breslau 1934), pp. 22 ff.

11. Walter Z. Laqueur, Young Germany. A history of the German youth movement (New York 1962), p. 191.

12. Bekenntnis der Professoren (see note 8), p. 29, and for the original "Ein Ruf an die Gebildeten der Welt," p. 5.

13. Treaty of Peace between the United States of America, the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan, and Poland, signed at Versailles, June 28, 1919 -- especially Articles 2,3, and 7-12. Also the letter, dated June 24, 1919, addressed to M. Paderewski by the President of the Conference transmitting to him the Treaty to be signed by Poland under Article 93 of the Treaty of Peace with Germany.

14. For the most comprehensive treatment of the subject see Raul Hilberg, The Destruction of the European Jews (Chicago 1961).

15. Hermann Rauschning, Hitler Speaks. A series of Conversations with Adolf Hitler on his Real Aims (London 1939), p. 220. The quotation went on: "It is a blemish, like circumcision."

16. Inge Scholl, Die Weisse Rose (Frankfurt 1955), pp. 101-102. For an American version see Inge Scholl, Students Against Tyranny: The Resistance of the White Rose, Munich, 1942-1943. Translated...by Arthur R. Schultz (Middletown, Connecticut 1970).

17. This account of his life is largely based on Gewalt und Gewissen. Willi Graf und die "Weisse Rose." Eine Dokumentation von Klaus Vielhaber in Zusammenarbeit mit Hubert Hanisch und Anneliese Knoop-Graf (Freiburg 1964).

18. Ibid., pp. 24-25.

19. Ibid., pp. 37-38.

20. Ibid., p. 38.

21. Ibid., pp. 38-39.

22. Ibid., p. 39.

23. Ibid., pp. 18-19.

24. Ibid., pp. 25-27.

25. What follows is largely based on the book by his surviving sister, Inge Scholl, Die Weisse Rose (see note 16).

26. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Widerstand und Ergebung. Aufzeichnungen aus der Haft. Herausgegeben von Eberhard Bethge (Munich 1964), p. 10. cf. Letters and Papers from Prison. Revised edition. Edited by Eberhard Bethge (New York 1967), p. 2.

27. Christian Petry, Studenten aufs Schafott. Die Weisse Rose und ihr Scheitern (Munich 1968), pp. 36-42.

28. Ibid., pp. 153-155. Translation of Schiller taken from Frederick Ungar, ed., Friedrich Schiller. An Anthology for our Time. In new English translations and the original German... (New York 1959), pp. 213-219.

29. Ibid., pp. 156-158.

30. Ibid., pp. 159-161.

31. Ibid., pp. 162-164.

32. Ibid., pp. 164-167.

33. Ibid., pp. 98-101.

34. Ibid., pp. 175-183 for text of indictment and press notice about trial and execution. Also Students against Tyranny (see note 16), pp. 105-118 and 148, for translation of indictment, sentence, and press notice.

35. Ibid., pp. 119-137 and Petry (note 27), pp. 195-211. for text of sentence.

36. Ibid., pp. 219-220.

37. Ibid., pp. 220-221.

38. Ibid., p. 211.

39. Clara Huber, ed., Kurt Huber zum Gedächtnis. Bildnis eines Menschen, Denkers und Forschers, dargestellt von seinen Freunden (Regensburg 1947), pp. 30-32.

40. Gewalt und Gewissen (see note 17), pp. 87, 89, and 123.

41. Willi A. Boelcke, ed., The Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels. The Nazi Propaganda War 1939-1943. Translated...by Ewald Osers (New York 1970), p. 234.

42. Eberhard Bethge, Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Man of Vision. Man of Courage. Translated from the German by Eric Mosbacher, Peter and Betty Ross, Frank Clarke, William Glen-Doepel. Under the editorship of Edwin Robertson (New York 1970), p. 832.

43. Gewalt und Gewissen (see note 17), p. 87.

44. Ibid., pp. 89-93 and 95.

45. Melita Maschmann, Fazit. Kein Rechtfertigungsversuch... (Stuttgart 1963), p. 159.

46. Walther Hofer, ed., Der Nationalsozialismus. Dokumente 1933-1945. (Frankfurt 1960), pp. 30-31.

47. Heinz Boberach, ed., Berichte des SD und der Gestapo über Kirchen und Kirchenvolk in Deutschland 1934-1944 (Mainz 1971), pp. 466-468.

48. Ibid., p. 801.

49. Ibid., pp. 877-880.

50. Psalm 58 (57), verse 4.

51. Willi Graf clearly felt something of the sort when he made the following entry in his diary, on 21 January 1943, after hearing two cello suites by Bach: "This music has a tremendous seriousness and with it a structure of a kind rarely encountered elsewhere. It tells of an order of which at one time a man was capable. We can only receive it for a future which is going to be quite different." (Gewalt und Gewissen -- see note 17 -- p. 94.) Compare what Stravinsky wrote when he attacked the notion of music as "expression:" "The phenomenon of music is given to us with the sole purpose of establishing an order in things, including, and particularly, the coordination between man and time. To be put into practice, its indispensable and single requirement is construction. Construction once completed, this order has been attained, and there is nothing more to be said. It would be futile to look for, or expect anything else from it. It is precisely this construction, this achieved order, which produces in us a unique emotion having nothing in common with our ordinary sensations and our responses to the impressions of daily life." (Igor Stravinsky, An Autobiography -- New York 1962 -- p. 54.)

52. Kurt Huber (see note 39), p. 113.