

Epilogue



Judgement

The final collapse of the Nazi regime came so swiftly that masses of top secret Nazi documents were not destroyed. Horrified by what they found—both in the documentation and at the sites of the camps—the Allies were determined to see justice done. The Allies captured those Nazis who could be identified as being responsible for the atrocities of the Holocaust. Some Nazi leaders, like Hitler, had committed suicide, and many others managed to escape arrest. Twenty-two Nazi leaders were charged with war crimes, crimes against peace, and crimes against humanity, and were put on trial at Nuremberg in Germany. Nuremberg was chosen because this was where the Nazis had announced their anti-Semitic laws and where they had held their parades and demonstrations.

This was the first such trial known in history. Hundreds of witnesses and sworn statements were heard, and the accused were given the best lawyers possible. The prosecution's case at Nuremberg was strengthened by the testimony of some of the survivors of the Nazi slave-labour, concentration, and death camps. The testimony of the survivors detailed the starvation, brutality, torture, and murder of millions of defenceless men, women, and children.

Many of the defendants claimed that they had simply followed the orders of their superiors and had no choice but to obey the orders. The International Military Tribunal of judges disagreed. Nineteen of the accused were found guilty, three were acquitted. Of those found guilty, twelve

were sentenced to death. Hermann Göring, who acted as spokesman for the Nazis, committed suicide in his cell before his execution could be carried out.

Thousands of other Nazis were tried in military courts by the Allies. Today, West German courts are still trying Germans accused of criminally aiding the Nazi cause. However, thousands of Nazis escaped prosecution. Those who feared arrest took refuge in foreign countries, and in some cases changed their identities. These war criminals are still being tracked down by West German and Jewish authorities. Many governments, including Canada's, have only made half-hearted efforts to assist the authorities.

Witnesses

The survivors of the Holocaust call themselves witnesses. They believe that it is important that we never forget what happened in Nazi-occupied Europe. They know, however, that those of us who did not experience the gruesome events cannot fully comprehend the horror. The witnesses therefore give seminars on the Holocaust. In these seminars they tell us that the Holocaust was the end result of a gradual process. People gradually became used to the idea that some people were less human and that it was acceptable and even right to treat them differently.

The witnesses tell us that the Holocaust was not the fault solely of the Nazis. The indifference and thoughtlessness of German civilians, Allied governments and, indeed, of all humanity were responsible. They warn us that the Holocaust could happen again if we do not continually examine ourselves and our society's treatment of those we deem to be different.

Under British surveillance, SS women guards bury corpses at Belsen (April 15, 1945).

American Congressman John C. Kunkel and Leonard W. Hall examine some of the corpses left outside the Buchenwald crematorium.



DOCUMENTS

Judgement: Nuremberg and After

THE NUREMBERG TRIALS

The following acts, or any of them, are crimes coming within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal for which there shall be individual responsibility:

- (a) CRIMES AGAINST PEACE: namely, planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression, or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances, or participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the foregoing;
- (b) WAR CRIMES: namely, violations of the laws or customs of war. Such violations shall include, but shall not be limited to, murder, ill-treatment or deportation to slave labor or for any other pur-

pose of civilian population of or in occupied territory, murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war or persons on the seas, killing of hostages, plunder of public or private property, wanton destruction of cities, towns, or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity;

- (c) CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY: namely, murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and any other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, before or during the war; or persecutions on political, racial or religious grounds in execution of or in connection with any crime within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, whether or not in violation of domestic law of the country where perpetrated.

Leaders, organizers, instigators and accomplices participating in the formulation or execution of a common plan or conspiracy to commit any of the foregoing crimes are responsible for all acts performed by any persons in execution of such plan.

from *The Holocaust Years: Society on Trial* (Roselle Chartook and Jack Spencer)

Rudolf Hess, the Commandant at Auschwitz, was asked if he had ever considered whether the Jews whom he had murdered were guilty or had in any way deserved such a fate. In this reading he explains.

Don't you see, we SS men were not supposed to think about these things; it never even occurred to us. —And besides, it was something already taken for granted that the Jews were to blame for everything. . . . We just never heard anything else. It was not just newspapers like the *Stuermer* but it was everything we had ever heard. Even our military and ideological training took for granted that we had to protect Germany from the Jews. . . . It only started to occur to me after the collapse that maybe it was not quite right, after I heard what everybody was saying. . . . We were all so trained to obey orders without even thinking that the thought of disobeying an order would simply never have occurred to anybody and somebody else would have done just as well if I hadn't. . . . You can be sure that it was not always a pleasure to see those mountains of corpses and smell the continual burning. —But Himmler had ordered it and had even explained the necessity and I really never gave much thought to whether it was wrong. It just seemed a necessity. . . .

I must emphasize here that I have never been personally against the Jews. It is true that I looked upon them as the enemies of our people. But just because of this I saw no difference between them and the other prisoners, and I treated them all in the same way. I never drew any distinctions. In any event the emotion of hatred is foreign to my nature. But I know what hate is, and what it looks like. I have seen it and I have suffered it myself. . . .

When in the summer of 1941 Himmler gave me the order to prepare installations at Auschwitz where mass exterminations could take place, and personally to carry out these exterminations I did not have the slightest idea of their scale or consequences. It was certainly an extraordinary and monstrous order. Nevertheless the reasons behind the extermination program seemed to me right. I did not reflect on it at the time. I had been given an order, and I had to carry it out. Whether this mass extermination of the Jews was necessary or not was something on which I could not allow myself to form an opinion, for I lacked the necessary breadth of view.

from *Commandant at Auschwitz* (Rudolf Hoess)

JUDGEMENT AT NUREMBERG

The judgment [at Nuremberg] underscores the systematic persecution of Germany's Jews as official state policy.

The judgment says:

The persecution of the Jews at the hands of the Nazi Government has been proved in the greatest detail before the Tribunal. It is a record of consistent and systematic inhumanity on the greatest scale.

The International Military Tribunal went on to find Germany's leadership guilty of crimes against peace:

To initiate a war of aggression is therefore not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime, differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole.

Those who plan and wage such a war, with its inevitable and terrible consequences, are committing a crime in so doing.

from *Facing History and Ourselves* (Margot Strom and William Parsons)

THE TRIALS AT NUREMBERG

The judges of the International Tribunal made a connection between the antisemitic policies and the aggressive war in Germany.

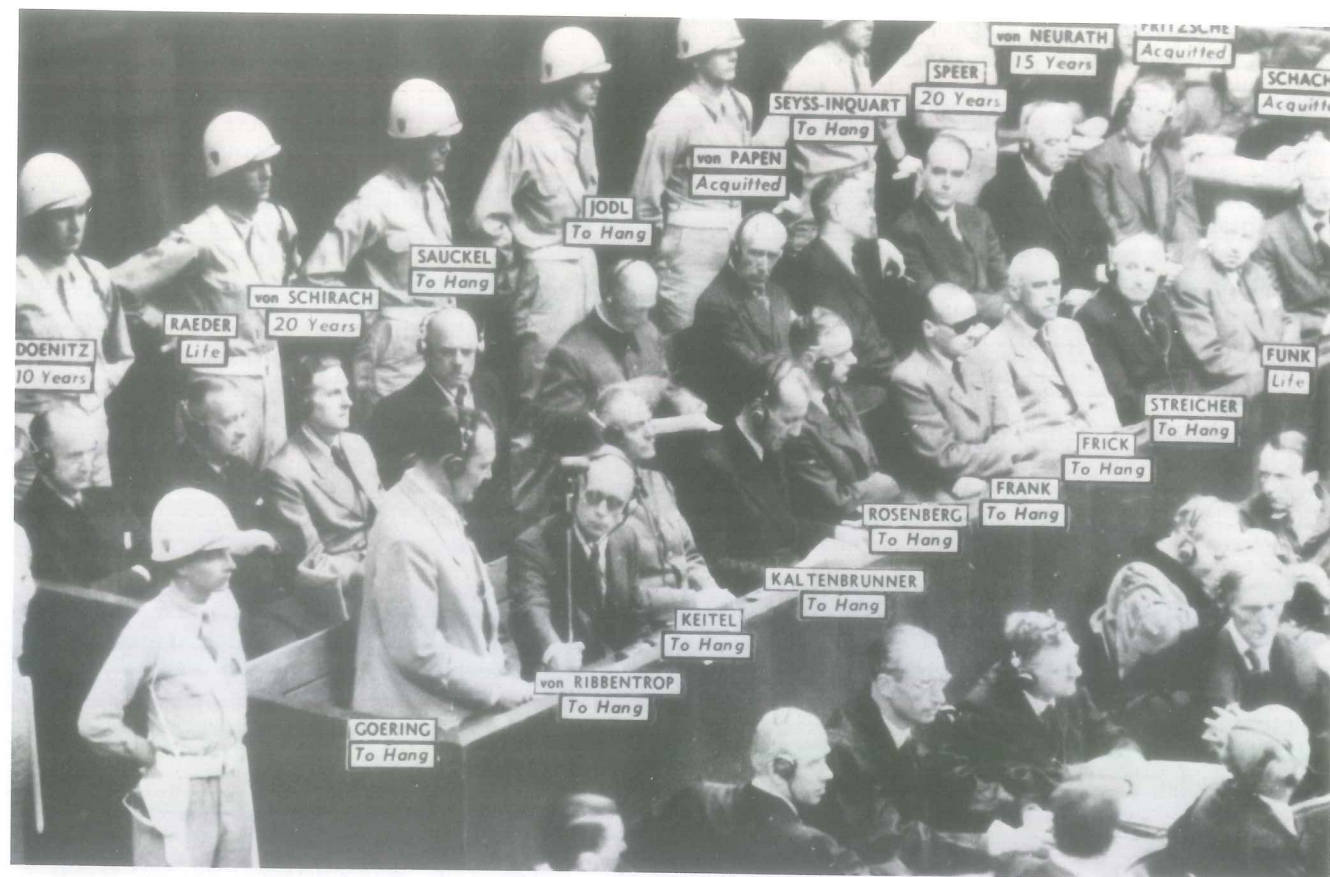
Indeed, the Nuremberg documentation and trials showed that the planners were fully aware of the monstrously evil character of the program. And yet, many of them and many of the executioners maintained that it was not criminal, but was required as the "final solution" of the Jewish problem in the interest of German or Aryan race purity, or for the reordering of Europe, or for the Third Reich's future position in the world. Germany, as a sovereign nation—so the argument went—had established a regime based on the leadership (Fuehrer) principle; the Supreme Leader was the absolute lawgiver; he had ordered the Holocaust, and his loyal followers had to carry it out.

Why, then, is the argument so absurd? Is it not true that Nazi law ordered the Holocaust, just as it ordered other mass atrocities and, above all, enabled the regime to unleash history's worst war so far—of which the Holocaust was but one, though unique, horrendous aspect?

The argument is absurd because it overlooks a crucial fact: namely that even after the Hitler regime's abolition of all democratic and parliamentary safeguards, Germany was still bound by the international rules that determine the permissibility of any country's behaviour. According to those rules (in short, under international law) no dictatorship, and no democracy either, may, for example, attack another country and then establish there an Auschwitz camp (as Hitler did in Poland).

from *Facing History and Ourselves* (Margot Strom and William Parsons)

The sentences imposed on the accused by the International Tribunal at Nuremberg, October 1, 1946. Hess, obscured in this photo by Göring, was sentenced to life imprisonment.



THE SENTENCES IMPOSED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL

Hermann Göring—death
Rudolph Hess—life imprisonment
Hans Frank—death
Wilhelm Frick—death
Julius Streicher—death
Walther Funk—life imprisonment
Fritz Sauckel—death
Alfred Jodl—death
Martin Bormann—death (in absentia)
Franz von Papen—acquittal
Joachim von Ribbentrop—death
Wilhelm Keitel—death
Ernst Kaltenbrunner—death
Alfred Rosenberg—death
Hjalmar Schacht—acquittal
Karl Dönitz—10 years imprisonment
Erich Räder—life imprisonment
Baldur von Schirach—20 years imprisonment
Artur Seyss-Inquart—death
Albert Speer—20 years imprisonment
Constantin von Neurath—15 years imprisonment
Hans Fritzsche—acquittal

JUDGEMENT

Abram Sachar comments on some of the Nazis who escaped punishment.

Some of the Nazi criminals were tried and punished. Most of them, however, faded into the anonymity of the postwar climate of reconciliation, and these included men who had been an integral part of the extermination machine. For example, during the war, tens of thousands of slave laborers were used by the Krupp works, the huge armaments combine. After the war, the head of the firm was judged to be too ill to stand trial. The son, Alfred, was sentenced to twelve years in prison. In less than three years he was amnestied. The giant armaments corporation was returned to the family, as well as the personal fortune of ten million dollars. Albert Speer, Hitler's Minister of Armaments and War Production, who planned and supervised the slave labor battalions for the war machine, escaped hanging and was given a long prison sentence.

from The Course of Our Times (Abram Sachar)

Justice Robert Jackson summed up the Nuremberg trials this way: "The wrongs which we seek to punish have been so calculated, so malignant and so devastating, that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored, because it cannot survive being repeated. That four great nations, flushed with victory and stung with injury, stay the hand of vengeance and voluntarily submit their captive enemies to the judgment of the law, is one of the most significant tributes that Power has ever paid to Reason."

from The Globe and Mail, November 21, 1985

Assignment 23



Keeping a Record

After reviewing the trials of the leading Nazis at Nuremberg, consider in your journal what is meant by "crimes against humanity." Who was responsible for the war and the Holocaust? Are there appropriate and adequate punishments for such crimes? More important, based on your study of the German experience, how may these crimes be prevented in the future?

Witnesses

Even when Jews did know they toned down their appeals to the Allies, fearing—correctly—that the full truth would be taken as exaggeration, as another bit of Jewish or Zionist propaganda to be filed and dismissed.

What is amazing is the amount of information available, how fast it came in, and how many different sources supplied it. It came by word of mouth, by personal letter, by coincidence and accident; it arrived by way of underground organizations, journalists, survivors who escaped, agencies in neutral countries, official diplomatic channels and clandestine contacts, and finally through individuals with nothing at stake beyond private conscience. Until the Nazis caught them, for example, the Swiss colony in Warsaw conducted a covert courier service that delivered written reports (and even film footage) to London via Sweden. The Polish underground sent regular radio messages to the Polish government-in-exile in London, including carefully documented statements prepared by Emmanuel Ringelblum and his circle in the Warsaw Ghetto. Thus, in December 1941, when the first of the death camps, Chelmno, began to gas victims in moving

vans, dumping them into mass graves, three gravediggers escaped to Warsaw and told their story to Ringelblum, who wrote a detailed description of operations at Chelmno. It reached London in June and appeared in American newspapers in July 1942. . . .

The Jews denied reality out of fear and helplessness, the Germans denied it out of guilt, the Allies denied it out of shame, but also for reasons of expediency and a limited but steady strain of antisemitism.

from The Terrible Secret (Walter Laqueur)

"How did I survive the physical and mental dehumanization? I believe through a fortuitous constellation of an originally healthy body, accidental luck, and above all a strong will, that constructive force that rules emotions and guides intuition and imagination, and channels sentiments and temperament into a disciplined personality. Those who despaired did not last long. Broken spirits could not protect abused bodies. Will power, determination, even hatred, positive thinking and mental energy were the life lines of endurance, hence of existence itself. . . .

"... [The Holocaust did] not break me; it made me stronger. While the black lace of sorrow will forever be draped over my heart, paradoxically I am capable of enjoying happiness more than those who did not savor the wages of fear. I gained the gift of knowing how to live life to the fullest, body and soul. I carry in me constantly the awareness that I want to see and hear and know as much and as many people as possible, for knowledge is power and knowledge is happiness. Those who resist partaking in knowledge are the beggars of the world, cheating themselves of their share of humanity's bounties and undeserving of the gift of life."

from Women in the Resistance and Holocaust (Vera Laska)

I weep for all those who died in the camps, because no one has ever understood or ever will understand what they suffered. For their sakes, I hope that their death is a total death. That they have no memory left. That even if they are among the Blessed, they cannot look back on those memories, those realities which remain real. I weep for all these too because they have been forgotten, or replaced, or maligned. And even when they have not been forgotten, there is nothing that can be done for them, since nothing can undo the horror of their life and of their death.

A crime against humanity, a crime that never will and never can be avenged. It is of no avail to punish a few men who were only the tools. It is of no avail to punish an entire nation; other nations have done the same and others would do it. It is of no avail to punish; the harm is done. The camps did and do exist.

Helen Klein, Polish citizen, testified as a witness for the prosecution at the trial of the Belsen Commandant Josef Kramer. She spent six months in Belsen. She points to her tattoo, the number 66892 and the Jewish sign underneath, which she received at Auschwitz.



And who should answer for so horrible a destruction of all human life, who should answer for it, if not God himself?

from *An Ordinary Camp* (Michelle Mauriel)

"The first year after liberation was very hard. I kept having the most torturous nightmares about my days in the various camps and the hunger march. Gradually, however, with the loving care of my family, I started believing in the philosophy of buried memories. I made an effort not to think back, to relegate to oblivion all that had been painful. While this has never been totally possible, I concentrated my thinking on positive events and on people who had a kind word or a piece of bread for their fellow sufferers. I tried to erase from my memory hatred, for life with hatred in your heart is a life of misery.

"Perhaps that is the reason why my tale does not even approximate the horrors I have been through."—Vera Keršovan, "A Mistaken Deportation"

from *Women in the Resistance and Holocaust* (Vera Laska)

Assignment 24



Keeping a Record

You have just read the stories of several survivors of the Holocaust and the Second World War. How do you feel? What did you learn? Where may we find hope and security in the future? You might like to find out about some present-day organizations that work to assist survivors of political violence and genocide, such as Amnesty International and the United Nations High Commission on Refugees.

Reasons for the Rise of Nazism

CAUSES OF THE NAZIS' RISE TO POWER

... defeat in war, the shame of Versailles and rampant inflation were the fundamental causes of Nazism.

from *Hitler: A Study in Personality and Politics* (W. Carr)

Without his experience in the Great War of 1914, it is also unlikely that he would ever have been anything more than this: a crank frequenting the beer halls of Munich to rail out against Jews and the Austrian Empire.

from *Hitler Over Germany* (O.C. Mitchell)

It is nonsense to explain Hitler's triumph by age-old German tendencies or trends in German intellectual thought. World War I was the major turning point in German political development; its consequences doomed the Weimar Republic and set the stage for the success of Adolf Hitler.

from *The Making of a Storm Trooper* (Peter Merkl)

In sum, for a radical movement like Nazism, the immediate postwar years, filled with chaos, foreign policy humiliations, violence and misery, provided an excellent climate in which to prosper.

from *Hitler Over Germany* (O.C. Mitchell)

Looked at in this way, it is resurgence of deep-seated cultural and political disquiet and the terrible impact of the Depression that led to the Nazi Revolution and the consequent police state.

from *Hitler Over Germany* (O.C. Mitchell)

NATURE OF ADOLF HITLER

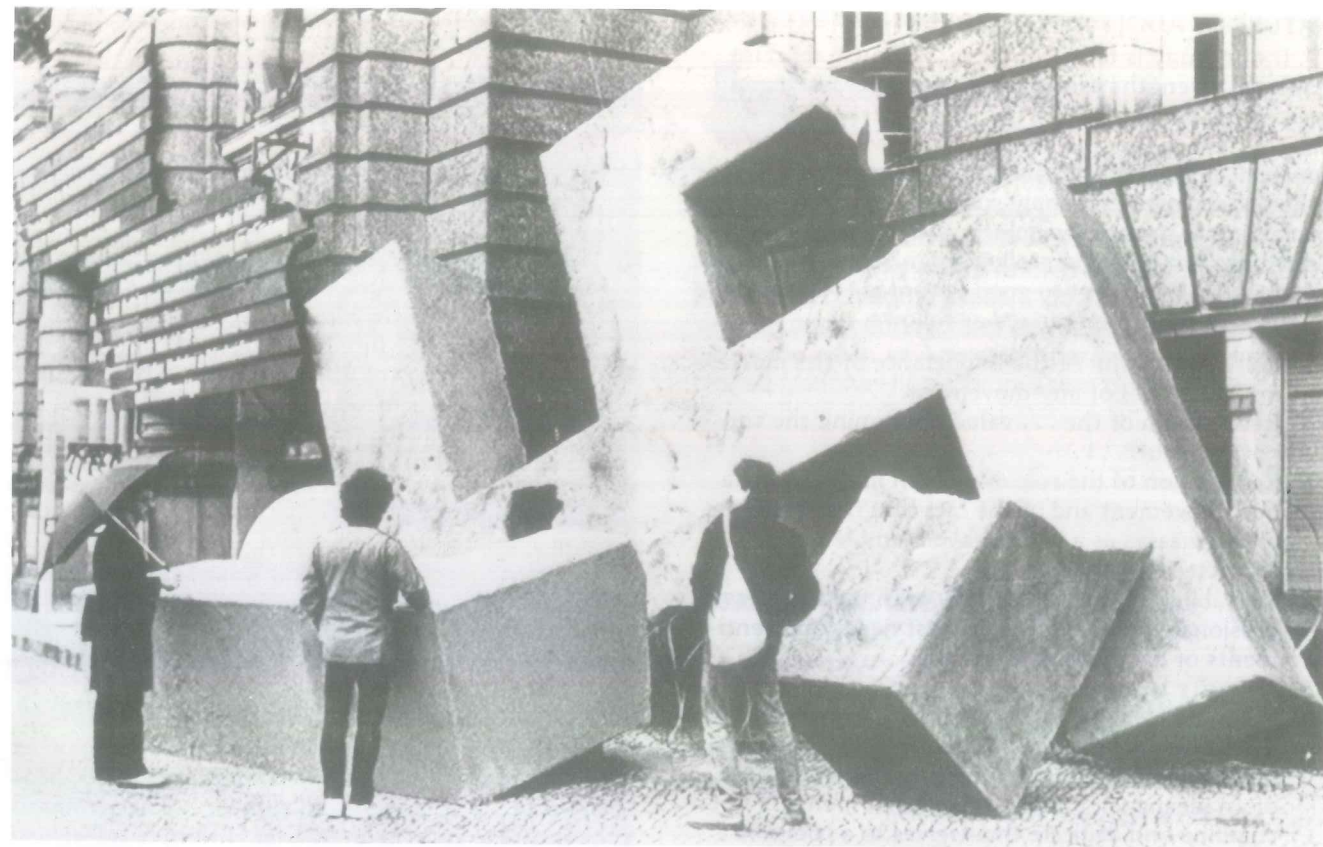
... If our study is to be complete, we must appraise [Hitler's] strengths as well as his weaknesses. It can scarcely be denied that he has some extraordinary abilities where the psychology of the average man is concerned. He has been able, in some manner or other, to unearth and apply successfully many factors pertaining to group psychology, the importance of which has not been generally recognized and some of which we might adopt to good advantage. These might be briefly summarized as follows:

1. Full appreciation of the importance of the masses in the success of any movement. . . .
2. Recognition of the . . . value of winning the support of youth. . . .
3. Recognition of the role of women in advancing a new movement and of the fact that the reactions of the masses as a whole have many feminine characteristics. . . .
4. The ability to feel, to identify with, and express in passionate language the deepest needs and sentiments of the average German. . . .
5. Capacity to appeal to the most primitive, as well as the most ideal inclinations in man, to arouse the basest instincts and yet cloak them with nobility, justifying all actions as means to the attainment of an ideal goal. Hitler realized that men will not combine and dedicate themselves to a common purpose unless this purpose be an ideal one capable of survival beyond their generation. . . .
6. Appreciation of the fact that the masses are as hungry for a sustaining ideology in political action as they are for daily bread. . . .
7. The ability to portray conflicting human forces in vivid, concrete imagery that is understandable and moving to the ordinary man. . . .
8. The faculty of drawing on the traditions of the people and . . . evoking the deepest unconscious emotions of the audience. . . .
9. Realization that enthusiastic political action does not take place if the emotions are not deeply involved.
10. Appreciation of the willingness, almost desire, of the masses to sacrifice themselves on the altar of social improvement or spiritual values.
11. Realization of the importance of artistry and dramatic intensity in conducting large meetings, rallies, and festivals. . . . [and of] the leader's . . . participation in the total dramatic effect as chief character and hero. . . .
12. A keen appreciation of the value of slogans, catchwords, dramatic phrases, and happy epigrams in penetrating the deeper levels of the psyche. . . .
13. Realization of a fundamental loneliness and feeling

of isolation in people living under modern conditions and a craving to "belong" to an active group that carries a certain status, provides cohesiveness, and gives the individual a feeling of personal worth and belongingness.

14. Appreciation of the value underlying a hierarchical political organization that affords direct contact with each individual.
15. Ability to surround himself with and maintain the allegiance of a group of devoted aides whose talents complement his own.
16. Appreciation of winning confidence from the people by a show of efficiency within the organization and government. . . .
17. Appreciation of the important role played by little things that affect everyday life of the ordinary man in building up and maintaining the morale of the people.
18. Full recognition of the fact that the overwhelming majority of the people want to be led and are ready and willing to submit if the leader can win their respect and confidence. . . .
19. . . . [Hitler] is naturally a tactical genius. His timing of decisions and actions has almost been uncanny. . . .
20. Hitler's strongest point is, perhaps, his firm belief in his mission and, in public, the complete dedication of his life to its fulfillment. . . . This demands a fanatical stubbornness that Hitler possesses to a high degree. . . .
21. . . . [Hitler is able to] appeal to and arouse the sympathetic concern and protectiveness of his people, to represent himself as the bearer of their burdens and their future. . . .
22. Hitler's ability to repudiate his own conscience in arriving at political decisions has eliminated the force that usually checks and complicates the forward-going thoughts and resolutions of most socially responsible statesmen. . . .
23. Equally important has been his ability to persuade others to repudiate their individual consciences and allow him to assume that role. He can then decree for the individual what is right and wrong. . . .
24. This has enabled Hitler to make full use of terror and mobilize the fears of the people, which he evaluated with an almost uncanny precision.
25. He has a capacity for learning from others even though he may be violently opposed to everything they believe and stand for. The use of terror, for example, he says he learned from the Communists, the use of slogans from the Catholic Church, the use of propaganda from the democracies, and so forth.
26. He is a master of the art of propaganda. . . . His

In 1983, to commemorate the Nazis' seizure of power fifty years earlier, West German art students assembled this huge sculpture. They called it "The Shattered Swastika."



primary rules were: never allow the public to cool off; never admit a fault or wrong; never concede that there may be some good in your enemy; concentrate on one enemy at a time and blame him for everything that goes wrong; people will believe a big lie sooner than a little one; and if you repeat it frequently enough people will sooner or later believe it.

27. He has the "never-say-die" spirit. . . .

from *The Mind of Adolf Hitler* (W.C. Langer)

The experience lies beyond our reach. Ask any survivor; he will tell you, he who has not lived the event will never know it. And he who went through it will not reveal it, not really, not entirely. Between his memory and his reflection there is a wall—and it cannot be pierced. The past belongs to the dead, and the

survivor does not recognize himself in the words linking him to them. . . . Only the survivor can—bear witness, transmit a spark of the flame, tell a fragment of the tale, a reflection of the truth.

from "Art and Culture After the Holocaust" (Elie Wiesel)

Assignment 25



Keeping a Record

You have studied Hitler and the Nazi movement. How do you explain their origins, success and savagery? What have you learned about racism, hatred and the power of the state?

Glossary of Names

Auschwitz (Pol. *Oswiecim*), a town in SE Poland. In World War II the Nazis organized a concentration camp system there, consisting of three main and thirty slave-labour camps. At the Birkenau extermination camp about 4 000 000 prisoners, mostly Jews, were annihilated. Other concentration camps built by the Nazis in Poland included Treblinka, Chelmo, Sobibor, Stutthof, Plaszow, Maidanek, and Belzec.

Bormann, Martin (1900-1945) met Adolf Hitler in 1924 and soon rose high in the ranks of the Nazi party. He succeeded Rudolf Hess in Hitler's inner circle in 1941 and became Hitler's personal secretary in 1942. In 1973, after identification of a skeleton unearthed in West Berlin, the West German government declared Bormann dead, a suicide on May 2, 1945.

Brüning, Heinrich (1885-1970), fiscal expert elected to the *Reichstag* in 1924 as leader of the Catholic Centre party; appointed Chancellor in 1930 to help rebuild the German economy. Lack of support for Brüning forced new elections (1930) which failed to produce a clear majority. Continuing to rule by decree, he introduced drastic deflationary measures that were very unpopular. He was forced to resign in 1932 by President Hindenburg, who appointed Franz von Papen as the new chancellor.

Buchenwald, a village in SW East Germany, near Weimar. It was the site of a concentration camp established by the Nazis. Other camps built by the Nazis in Germany included Dachau, Flossenber, Gross Rosen, Mittelbau Dora, Bergen-Belsen, Neuengamme, Ravensbrück, Sachsenhausen, Natzweiler (France), and Mauthausen (Austria).

Churchill, Sir Winston (1874-1965), elected to the British parliament as a Conservative in 1900 and was leader of the British people in World War II.

Ebert, Friedrich (1871-1925), first president (1919-25) of the Weimar republic. In 1913, he became the leader of the Social Democrats (SPD) and succeeded Prince Max von Baden

when the monarchy collapsed in 1918. **Enabling Act**, introduced by Hitler and the Nazi Party on March 23, 1933. The act suspended regular parliamentary proceedings and enabled Hitler to assume dictatorial powers.

Gestapo, the secret state police that originated in 1933 under Hermann Göring as the Prussian political police. Expanded and officially placed under Himmler in 1936, the Gestapo was effectively absorbed into the SS and was ultimately merged with the SD under Reinhard Heydrich. The crimes and atrocities of the Nazi authorities were largely carried out by the Gestapo and the SS, who controlled the concentration and extermination camps, and who set up their subsidiary agencies in every occupied country.

Goebbels, Paul Joseph (1897-1945), Nazi propaganda minister (1933-45). Goebbels began his career as a journalist and his ability to manipulate mob emotions and to exploit modern techniques of propaganda contributed significantly to Hitler's rise to power. His most virulent propaganda was against the Jews; in April 1945, he killed his family and himself while Berlin was falling to Soviet troops.

Göring, Hermann (1893-1946), Nazi leader who participated in the Munich *Putsch* in 1923. Elected to the *Reichstag* in 1928, Göring became president in 1932. When Hitler took power in 1933, Göring was appointed interior minister of Prussia and was in charge of the Prussian political police, the *Gestapo*, until 1936. In 1939, Hitler designated Göring as his successor. Hitler finally dismissed him shortly before the end of the war, when Göring attempted to claim his right of succession. He was the chief defendant at the Nuremberg trial for war crimes. Sentenced to death, Göring swallowed a fatal poison capsule two hours before he was to hang.

Hess, Rudolf (1894-1987), Nazi leader who was an ardent follower of Hitler; participated in the Munich *Putsch* and was sentenced to prison along with Hitler. He became deputy *Führer* in 1933 and was named second in line of succession after Göring in 1939. He was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Heydrich, Reinhard (1904-1942), German police official under the Nazi regime. In 1931, Hey-

drich joined the S.S. and soon became Himmler's confidant, the latter appointing him deputy chief of the *Gestapo* in 1934. He was deeply involved in planning the extermination of the Jews. His ruthless methods and his numerous executions earned him the name "the Hangman of Europe." In May 1942, he was shot by Czech partisans. Several days later the entire male population of the village of Lidice (in Bohemia) was murdered in retaliation.

Himmler, Heinrich (1900-1945), Nazi leader who joined the party early and took part in the Munich *Putsch* of 1923. In 1929, Hitler appointed him head of the S.S. When Hitler came to power, in 1933, he made Himmler head of police in Munich and then chief of political police throughout Bavaria. In 1936, Himmler assumed formal control of the *Gestapo*, the Prussian political police formerly under Göring. From his preeminent position Himmler terrorized his own party hierarchy as well as all German-held Europe, establishing and over-seeing concentration camps and ordering incarceration and death for millions particularly after the beginning of World War II. Himmler was arrested by British troops in May 1945 and committed suicide by swallowing poison.

Hindenburg, Paul von (1847-1934), German field-marshal who was persuaded by a coalition of conservative nationalists to run for office after the death of President Ebert. In 1932, he was re-elected with Chancellor Brüning, but soon after dismissed Brüning upon the instigation of his advisors. Finally, the near senile president gave in to his advisors and appointed Adolf Hitler as chancellor. Von Hindenburg died while in office.

Hitler, Adolf (1889-1945), German dictator and founder of National Socialism. Hitler's rise to power is described in detail in Chapter 2 of this book. In 1933, he became *Reich* Chancellor. After the death of Hindenburg in 1934, he became the *Führer* as well as commander-in-chief of the *Wehrmacht* (armed forces). Under his regime working class movements were ruthlessly destroyed; all opponents—communists, socialists, and Jews—were persecuted and murdered. By terrorism and propaganda the German state was welded into a

powerful machine for aggression. On the eve of final defeat, Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945.

Kristallnacht (Eng. crystal night), on November 9, 1938, thousands of Jewish synagogues and businesses were looted and destroyed upon Hitler's orders as retaliation for the shooting of a German embassy official in Paris by a young Jew. Between 30 000 and 40 000 Jews were taken to concentration camps.

Maximilian, prince von Baden (1867-1929), last chancellor of imperial Germany. Maximilian became chancellor near the end of World War I, forming a coalition cabinet of Centre, Progressive, and Socialist parties. When the November Revolution broke out, Prince Max tried unsuccessfully to save the monarchy by forcing Emperor William II to abdicate; shortly thereafter Prince Max handed the government over to Friedrich Ebert.

Munich Agreement (September 29, 1938), reached between Chamberlain (Britain), Daladier (France), Mussolini (Italy), and Hitler (Germany); the Allied powers acceded to Germany's claim to Czechoslovakian Sudetenland.

Munich Putsch (November 9, 1923) in the "beer hall *Putsch*" Hitler and other early members of the Nazi party plotted to overthrow the Weimar government. The *Putsch* failed and the conspirators, including Hitler, were put on trial and later sentenced to prison.

Mussolini, Benito (1883-1945), Fascist dictator of Italy 1922-1943. In June 1940, Mussolini entered the war on the side of Hitler. Defeat in North Africa and the invasion of Sicily caused the collapse of his government. He was shot dead by partisans while attempting to escape to Switzerland.

Night of the Long Knives (June 30, 1934), Hitler strengthened his hold on the Nazi party by ordering a "blood purge": during the night the S.S. surprised Ernst Röhm and other prominent members of the S.A. in Munich. Röhm and hundreds of suspected opponents were executed by firing squad.

Nuremberg Laws (September 15, 1935), racial legislation announced at the Nazi Party rally at Nuremberg. These laws drew a distinction between "Jews" and "Germans" and prohibited their inter-marriage; "Jewish" households were not to employ "German" women

under forty-five; and all German Jews were deprived of their rights as citizens.

Nuremberg Trial (November 21, 1945), trial of twenty-four Nazi leaders by an International Military Tribunal, consisting of one American, one British, one Soviet, and one French member. The Nazis were charged with crimes against humanity, war crimes, and wars of aggression.

Papen, Franz von (1879-1969), German politician who was a member of the Catholic Centre party and who was appointed by President Paul von Hindenburg to succeed Heinrich Brüning as Chancellor in June 1932. Von Papen failed to gain much support from the right, and in his eagerness to weaken the left he paved the way for the rise of the Nazis. In 1933, Von Papen was appointed vice-chancellor in Hitler's new cabinet, and helped to prepare the annexation of Austria. Von Papen was acquitted by the Nuremberg war crimes tribunal in 1946.

Ribbentrop, Joachim von (1893-1946), German foreign minister (1938-1945) influential in negotiating the Rome-Berlin Axis (1936), in the conclusion of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact (August 1939), and in planning the attack on Poland that set off World War II. He was convicted as a war criminal at the Nuremberg Trial and hanged.

Röhm, Ernst (1887-1934), a Nazi leader who helped to launch Hitler's political career and took part in the Munich *Putsch* in 1923. Röhm organized the S.A. or Storm Detachment. Hitler and Röhm continually disputed over the role of the S.A. Röhm developed the S.A. into a large army and became Hitler's principal rival for power in the party. In 1934, he was executed in Hitler's "blood purge"—the "Night of the Long Knives."

S.A. (*Sturmabteilung* or Storm Detachment), paramilitary wing of the Nazi party organized in 1921 to defend the party and protect its leaders. Eventually, when Hitler came to power in 1933, the S.A. represented a threat to his authority, and so he ordered the S.A. leadership purged on June 30, 1934.

Speer, Albert (1905-1981), Nazi leader and official Nazi architect who designed, among other things, the stadium at Nuremberg. In 1942, Speer became minister for armaments

and administered the *Organization Todt*, an organization using conscripted labour for the war effort. For the use of slave-labour, Speer was sentenced at the Nuremberg trial to prison for twenty years. He was released from Spandau war crimes prison in 1966.

Stalin, Joseph (1879-1953), leader of the Soviet Union. Though Stalin agreed to a non-aggression pact with Hitler in 1939, he personally took charge of the war effort after the Germans invaded the Soviet Union in 1941.

S.S. (*Schutzstaffel* [defence echelon]), created as Hitler's personal bodyguard until in 1929 it was taken over by Heinrich Himmler and its role vastly expanded—in time absorbing the *Gestapo* (formerly headed by Hermann Göring). In 1933, Himmler set up the first of the S.S. concentration camps in Dachau to house the victims of massive arrests by the S.S. During World War II, the S.S. were primarily responsible for carrying out Hitler's "final solution".

Treaty of Versailles (June 28, 1919), the peace treaty between the Allies and Germany which set the terms of the peace at the end of World War I.

Warsaw Ghetto Revolt (April and May 1943), uprising in the Warsaw ghetto when Jewish fighters held off crack German troops for several weeks against impossible odds. In reprisal for the revolt, the German troops killed an estimated 40 000 Jews who had survived the battle.

Weimar Republic (1919-1933), began with the November Revolution which brought about the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm or William II. The new republic signed the Treaty of Versailles and adopted a democratic and more centralized federal constitution in 1919.

William II (1859-1941) emperor of Germany and king of Prussia. He was intelligent but impetuous, and was committed to exploitation of military power. In 1914, his support of Austria helped to precipitate World War I, and the resulting defeat brought his abdication.

Wilson, Thomas Woodrow (1856-1924), U.S. president (1913-1921) who involved America in World War I and whose Fourteen Points drawn up at the end of the war gave rise to the establishment of the League of Nations.

Chronology of Events

- 1914 June 28** Archduke Ferdinand assassinated
July–August World War I begins: Austria–Hungary declares war against Serbia (July 28); Germany declares war against Russia (Aug. 1), against France (Aug. 3); Britain declares war against Germany (Aug. 4), against Austria–Hungary (Aug. 12)
1917 April 6 U.S.A. declares war on Germany
September 15 Russia declares a Republic
November 7 Bolshevik Revolution
December 15 Russo–German armistice signed
1918 March 3 Treaty of Brest–Litovsk
September Allied offensive in West begins
October 23 Germans accept Wilson's Fourteen Points
November 8 "November Revolution" begins in Kiel
November 9 Kaiser William II abdicates, escapes to Holland; Friedrich Ebert becomes Chancellor of Germany; Prince Max resigns
November 11 Armistice signed by Germany
1919 January Majority Socialists win election
June 28 Treaty of Versailles signed
July Weimar Constitution approved by National Assembly
1920 February 24 Newly-formed Nazi Party announces 25-point program by A. Drexler and new leader Adolf Hitler
June 6 Parties on the left (USPD: KPD) and of the right (DVP; DNVP) make significant gains in German elections
1921 August 3 Founding of the S.A. (Storm Detachment)
1922 June 24 German Foreign Minister Walther Rathenau (a Jew) assassinated
October 28 Mussolini's Fascist "March on Rome"
1923 January 11 French troops despatched to Ruhr
November 8 Hitler and other Nazi leaders stage a *Putsch* in Munich to overthrow Weimar Republic; the *Putsch* fails and the conspirators are imprisoned
1924 May One third of electorate in Germany support parties opposed to Weimar Republic

- August 16** Dawes Plan accepted; French agree to evacuate Ruhr
1925 Hitler forms elite bodyguard, the S.S.
March 26 Hindenburg elected President
1929 Slump in world economy; beginning of Great Depression
October Stock market "crashes" in U.S.A.
1930 September 14 Nazis win 18.3% of vote in *Reichstag* elections
1932 April 10 Hitler receives 36.8% of the vote in bid for presidency
June Hindenburg dismisses Chancellor Brüning; Von Papen made new chancellor
July 31 Von Papen calls new elections; Nazis receive 37.3% of the vote, making them the largest party in the *Reichstag*
December Von Papen dismissed and General Schleicher appointed chancellor
1933 January 30 Hindenburg appoints Adolf Hitler Chancellor of Germany
February 27 *Reichstag* building set on fire
March 5 Nazis receive 43.9% in elections and form coalition to weld a majority in the *Reichstag*
March 24 *Enabling Act* passed giving Hitler supreme control
March 28 Hitler proclaims boycott of Jewish businesses and shops
June 22 SPD (Socialist party) banned
March–June Beginning of construction of concentration camps throughout Germany; over 100 000 people interned
1934 June 30 Hitler orders "blood purge" of rivals in the S.A.—Röhm and other leaders executed in Munich during the "night of the long knives"; Hitler becomes *Führer*
1935 September 15 Nuremberg Laws discriminating against Jews announced at Nazi Party rally
1936 March 8 Germany remilitarizes Rhineland, contravening Treaty of Versailles
July 18 Outbreak of Spanish Civil War
1937 November Rome–Berlin–Tokyo Axis agreement signed
1938 March 13 Austria annexed by Germany
September 29 Munich Agreement signed by Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain (Great Britain), and Daladier (France)
November 9 *Kristallnacht*—thousands of Jewish synagogues and businesses looted and de-

- stroyed; 30 000 to 40 000 Jews interned in concentration camps
1939 January 30 Hitler renews attack on Jews
March 14 German troops occupy all of Czechoslovakia
August 23 Ribbentrop concludes Soviet–German non-aggression pact
April 1 Spanish Civil War ends
Autumn Jews forced to live in ghettos
September 1 German forces invade Poland
September 3 Britain and France declare war on Germany
September 17 Soviet troops cross into Poland
September 29 Soviets and Germans publicize earlier agreement to partition Poland
1940 June 8 German forces penetrate French territory and capture Paris by the 14th
June 21 France surrenders to Germany
July 10 Battle of Britain begins and lasts until September 15
1941 June 22 Germany attacks the Soviet Union
July 31 Göring orders Heydrich to prepare for "Final Solution" of the Jewish question; all frontiers are closed to Jews and mass executions begin
September 23 First experiments with gassing victims carried out at Auschwitz
October 6 Germans attack Moscow
October 14 Beginning of deportation of Jews from ghettos to concentration camps for extermination
December 4 Attack on Moscow halted
December 7 Japan attacks Pearl Harbor; U.S.A. enters war

- 1942 August** German forces surround Stalin-grad
November German forces in Northern Africa in retreat
1943 February 2 German troops outside Stalin-grad surrender
April 21 Warsaw Ghetto uprising
July Mussolini overthrown; Fascist party in Italy dissolved
August 2 Jews revolt at Treblinka death camp
1944 June 6 D-Day: Allied invasion of Europe begins
July 20 German generals plot to assassinate Hitler and are unsuccessful
Autumn Himmler suspends extermination of Jews
November 24 Himmler orders destruction of Auschwitz death camp, fearing the Allied advance
1945 April 12 President Roosevelt dies
April 25 Berlin surrounded by Soviet army
April 28 Mussolini shot by Italian partisans
April 30 Hitler commits suicide
May 8 Cease-fire announced in Europe
August 6 Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan; second bomb dropped on Nagasaki three days later
August 14 Japan surrenders; end of World War II
November 20 Trial of major war criminals opens at Nuremberg
1946 October 16 Nuremberg sentences carried out, Göring commits suicide
October 23 General Assembly of the United Nations opens in New York