

The Truth About Nazi Germany!

The Story of the Price of Dictatorship

(Continued from page one.)

and responsibilities as we know them. The consequences of a lost war, the inflation, and the world depression hit Germany at the time when democratic laws prevailed and discredited them. Now vast circles accept all government regimentation without a murmur so long as the government is able to present them with dazzling successes.

An undercurrent of grumbling did exist, but it subsided after Hitler compelled England, France, and the whole of Europe to bow to his wishes.

When I asked literally scores of Germans how they felt about the question of individual liberties they admitted they found them desirable. Glowing Nazis, who pride themselves on being "superior to democratic rot," tried to assert:

"We don't feel our personal freedom is restricted by the activities of the G. S. P., because whatever restrictions exist have been imposed for the good of the nation."

Quite a few Nazis did express the wish that they need not always feel that the G. S. P. might be listening to their telephone and other conversations, "because we would never say or do anything dangerous to the state anyhow."

Germans with a liberal, Catholic, nationalistic, socialistic, monarchistic, or possibly even communistic past—and there are millions—who are all liable to extra supervision, declared their main anxiety was the absence of a hard and fast rule to which they can cling, because the average man may not always know exactly what the G. S. P. will consider an act "endangering the state."

Laws, decrees, and regulations have been issued in vast numbers. To start with, the average citizen does not know them all, and if he did that would not help him much. The G. S. P. authorities decide what is to be considered dangerous to the state according to their own interpretation.

The G. S. P. can disregard the decisions of regular courts, as it did in the case of Pastor Martin Niemöller, who was arrested and thrown into a concentration camp by the Gestapo after a regular court ordered his release. In most cases the relatives are afraid to speak of the arrests of those close to them, being warned that if they speak they, too, will be arrested.

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Let us compare the individual liberties as laid down in the American constitution with individual rights as they are curtailed or nonexistent in Germany.

I. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

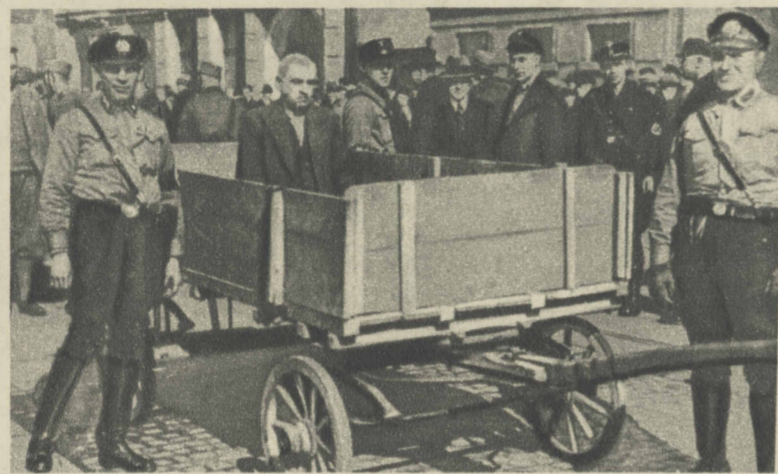
As regards the church, the German government controls it, since it collects the church tax and pays priests and persons out of its proceeds. Priests and pastors who criticize the government or meet with the disapproval of the Gestapo or other Nazi bodies may be arrested, tried, suspended, or deprived of their livelihood. The feud between the Confessional church—a Protestant group which rejects state control of its religious teachings—and the Nazi government continues unabated, despite the detention of its leaders in a concentration camp and the official threats hanging over the heads of its sympathizers.

The freedom of speech and of the press and the right of assembly have been suspended officially in Germany. The right to petition the government has not been formally denounced, because it was not listed separately in Germany's old republican constitution. Nevertheless very few Germans dare sign petitions "for a redress of grievances," fearing such action might be

"misinterpreted as action against the state" by the Gestapo.

II. A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

Military service is compulsory in Germany. Every male citizen must serve his country for six months in the labor service and for at least two years in the regular army. Furthermore, he is compelled to be ready to attend a military training course whenever the government calls upon him. He must serve in the anti-air raid protection organiza-



(Acme photo.)

A Jew who refused to submit to humiliating orders of Nazi police is hauled through a German town in a refuse cart.

tion, and he must be ready to do labor service wherever and whenever called upon.

III. No soldier shall in time of peace be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

A special law rules that civilians must quarter soldiers in time of peace or war and turn over equipment and goods for the army whenever authorities deem this necessary.

IV. The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched and the persons or things to be seized.

The Gestapo needs no warrant to make arrests, raid homes, or seize property.

V. No person shall be held to answer for a capital or otherwise infamous crime unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces or in the militia when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb, nor shall he be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.

The Gestapo can hold prisoners without trial as long as it pleases. No trial by jury is guaranteed.

VI. In all criminal prosecutions the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation, to be confronted with the witnesses against him, to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

Many trials in Germany today are held secretly. According to the new Nazi ideology, not the text of the law counts, but its interpretation. The judge must not consider the rights of the individual, but of the people as a whole. Nazis hold "what is good for the nation is right"—whether or not this conflicts with what we consider the fun-

damental rights of an individual. The individual is of secondary importance; only the people count.

VII. In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise re-examined in any court of the United States than according to the rules of the common law.

Persons may be tried several times for the same crime or accusation. This was done with "enemies of the Nazi state" years after they had been tried and finished their sentences.

VIII. Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Ruthlessness is considered a powerful weapon in the hands



Germans in Berlin line up to cast their "ja" for a Hitler plan.

(Acme photo.)

to their homes three months after their arrest, because some unidentified person in the village had reported their anti-Nazi utterances and they were branded as dangerous to the state. In most cases the vote is secret and free—but the presence of the fear that it might not be cannot be denied.

Four sets of laws, decrees, and regulations enable the Nazi government to control every action of a German citizen. They are political, racial, social, and economic.

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The political restrictions were all issued within a few months after Hitler assumed power. They had been worked out by him and his men in 1932 when they organized the skeleton government which was to take over the supreme power in their country at a moment's notice. Similar skeleton governments were organized by the Nazis in Austria and Sudetenland before those countries were taken over by Germany.

In a decree issued on Feb. 6, 1933, entitled "for the protection of the German people," the Hitler government restricted the freedom of the press and of assembly. The press gag law provided that no reasons need be given for suppression of a paper or magazine. Its application has been so rigorous and effective that the anti-Nazi press disappeared within less than a year and the non-Nazi press is nonexistent today. A few newspapers are still labeled as non-Nazi, but only Nazis and their friends are allowed in the German newspaper guilds and business. Those who are not officially Nazi are even more careful than their Nazi colleagues in their effort not to displease the authorities. It is interesting to note that in February, 1933, the German supreme court ruled that the suppression of newspapers was illegal in a number of cases. This supreme court decision failed to prevent the Nazification of the German press.

Today if an average German feels that he would like to read some non-Nazi publications, he can't. None is printed in Germany. Foreign papers and publications can enter the country only if approved by the government. Police officials make the rounds of all news stands daily, armed with a long list of banned publications and seize those considered detrimental to the Nazi state. A number of cases which came up in court revealed that the reading of "subversive literature" can be dangerous for the German citizen or for the foreigner living in Germany. This has led to interesting results. Quite a number of people are actually scared of reading foreign publications. A few weeks ago, when motoring to a small town near Berlin, we took along a few American and English magazines which some of the people we planned to visit used to enjoy. Though we pointed out they had come into Germany quite openly and consequently they could not be contraband, the Germans were afraid that one or the other number might have slipped by the postal censor and that they could get into trouble for reading something the authorities did not want them to read.

If the average German who subscribes to an official Nazi publication finds it uninteresting and wants to cancel his subscrip-

tion, that is not a simple matter. The subscriber is told his cancellation must be reported to higher offices and they will decide whether or not he can do so.

To strengthen the position of the police Goering on Feb. 19, 1933, issued an order guaranteeing his special protection to any policeman who "makes ruthless use of revolvers," and threatened punishment for those who showed "false restraint." A few days later Goering empowered the Schutzstaffel and storm troopers to act as auxiliary police.

On Feb. 28, 1933, a new decree openly canceled all civilian liberties, abolishing postal, telephonic, and telegraphic secrecy, authorizing raids on homes and confiscations of private property. It suspended paragraphs 114, 115, 117, 118, 123, 124, and 153 of the old Weimar constitution. They guaranteed the inviolability of personal freedom, the inviolability of the home of a German citizen, the secrecy of mails, telegraph, and telephone, freedom of expression of opinion, freedom of assembly, the right to form clubs and religious associations, ownership privileges. These liberties no longer exist in Germany.

In recent months new decrees further restricted a German's rights in his own home and private activities, providing that soldiers may be quartered in his home and that his goods may

be seized for the needs of the army.

All political parties have been abolished in Germany for the sake of "national unity." Those who for some reason or other are opposed to National Socialism must remain silent. They don't have the satisfaction of joining the "other party," because no other party is allowed.

Only persons considered "politically reliable" may obtain driving licenses.

Students who have studied two years at a university must prove that they belong to a Nazi organization, otherwise they cannot continue their studies. Thus the state makes sure that only its followers get the benefit of higher education. German universities used to enjoy a great deal of freedom for the sake of science. Today the Nazi minister of education picks and appoints the deans and the professors, naturally giving preference to those imbued with Nazi ideology.

Many means are at the disposal of the government to make sure that its citizens "are not lured into dangerous enterprises by enemies of the Nazi state." The secret police, the state police, the criminal police, the security service, the Schutzstaffel, and to a great extent the storm troops see to it that everybody heeds Nazi orders.

The cell wardens of the labor front

supervise what happens in the homes and lend their helping hand to guide their countrymen on a truly Nazi course, while the Werkscharen attend to similar duties in the factory.

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In recent weeks the block wardens received new instructions. They were ordered to become more active and to cross-examine those of their countrymen who fail to give the Nazi salute or hoist the Nazi flag voluntarily when a general order to that effect is issued, or who fail to donate adequately to the numerous Nazi collections, winter relief, Nazi Welfare association, roastless Sundays, pound donations. In small shops, customers who complain that they get only a scant six ounces of butter weekly, and that the quality of the butter is bad, are warned by their tradesmen to remain silent, "because those who criticize the government and conditions are liable to arrest."

• NEXT SUNDAY — Mr. Dickson will discuss further the regimentation of the German people, taking up the discrimination against the Jews, the Nazi campaign for an increased birth rate, labor conscription, governmental domination of business and industry, compulsory donations for social welfare, government-supervised vacations, and numerous other abuses under Hitler's rule.



The Rev. Martin Niemöller

By allowing the nation to go to the polls once a year and to cast a vote in a plebiscite the government gives the people a chance to express their opinions, and thus the Nazi form of government is truly democratic, Nazis will tell you.

The Nazi government so far has only asked the German people questions to which they were bound to answer with "yes." Unanimity could also be achieved in America if similar questions were asked. Take just one example: The average American would vote "yes" if he were asked whether he approved of the incorporation of a state that he had considered American since his childhood and that was bound to provide economic advantages—as was the case in the last German plebiscite of April 10, when the Germans were asked to approve of the incorporation of Austria.

The vote in a plebiscite is supposed to be free and secret. Foreigners who occasionally doubted this have been properly lambasted. The Catholic bishop of Rottenburg in Württemberg, Ludwig Spörrl, was attacked bodily, his home ransacked by Nazis, for his failure to vote for the incorporation of Austria. He was officially expelled from his diocese by Nazi authorities.

Americans visiting in small Bavarian villages were told confidentially that citizens who refused to go to the polls were arrested, and had not returned

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