

Hitler's

BLOOD

PURGE



(Acme photo.)
Frau Elizabeth von
Schleicher



(Acme photo.)
Gen. Kurt von Schleicher

By Kurt G. W. Ludecke
(Adapted from the book "I Knew Hitler,"
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THE BLOODY Saturday of June 30, 1934, will go down in history as the most baleful chapter of Adolf Hitler's life. Developments leading up to the blood purge are entangled in a hopeless snarl of lies, intrigues, and contradictions; it is still impossible to unravel the full truth, for dead men are silent. To one familiar with the external facts and the psychology of the persons involved, however, the background is sufficiently clear to allow a competent interpretation, not exact as to detail, but probably correct.

• The precise historian who in some distant future seeks to analyze the purge is likely to have to deal entirely with opinions laid down for propaganda by Hitler's contemporary foes and by the admiring beneficiaries of his rights. The archives of the Gestapo or other agencies will be careful not to offer unfavorable documentary evidence. The

Germany's Day of Terror Five Years Ago

Foreword Five years ago next Saturday the world was stunned by what it read in its morning paper (it was Sunday morning). All the whole day and the night before the red hand of death had fallen heavily on Germany. Adolf Hitler had consolidated his power by means of a blood purge in which 800 to 1,200 persons lost their lives. Here is the inside story of what happened in Germany on June 30, 1934, as told by a man who once was high in the circles of the National Socialist party—the party of Hitler.

Hitler's speech* at Bad Reichenhall on July 2, 1933, had not banished the specter of the "second revolution" that had hovered over the nation since March of that year. The general discon-

*Addressing S. A. and S. S. leaders, Hitler declared: "I will crush brutally and ruthlessly every attempt to overthrow the present order. Whoever rises in opposition to the Nationalist-Socialist state will be hit hard, wherever he is."

chief assassins undoubtedly have not confided compromising and incriminating data to paper. Hitler alone knows both sides of the story. When he, Hermann Goering, Paul Joseph Goebbels, Franz von Papen, and Werner von Blomberg write their memoirs their explanations of the massacre will all have to be taken with more than a grain of salt. History has not always succeeded in probing obscurity to the bottom, and perhaps never will sound this pit.

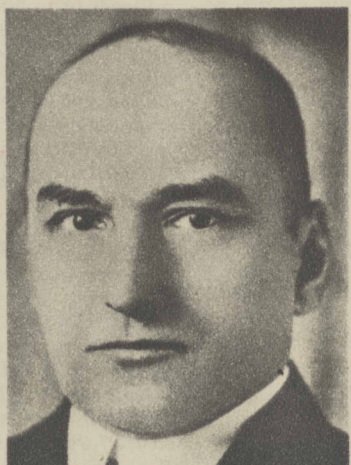
• The interpretation of the blood purge offered here is based on intimate knowledge of the natures of Hitler and his tools.

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(Continued on page three.)



(Acme photo.)
Dr. Gustav von Kahr



(Acme photo.)
Dr. Eric Klausener



(Associated Press photo.)
Karl Ernst



(Acme photo.)
Gen. Ferdinand von Bredow



(Acme photo.)
Capt. Ernst Roehm



(Associated Press photo.)
Gregor Strasser