The hitler-youth in the third reich

David Crawford Poteet

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THE HITLER-YOUTH
IN THE
THIRD REICH

A Thesis
Presented To
the Faculty of the Department of History
University of Richmond

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
David Crawford Poteet
June, 1965
Who mounted from the depths with pride -
An Iron Destiny may churn
The earth to crouch beneath his stride,
Yet to the depths he must return.
A nameless fear already broods,
In vain he tries to lift the pall,
And all his servile multitudes
Are bound to perish with his fall.

(Goethe: The Awakening of Epimenides, Act II, Scene 4)
Many pitfalls line the route of an attempt such as this one to write of events which, as history goes, happened only "yesterday". Not the least among them is the criticism by other historians who insist that by standing only twenty years removed from the events themselves, one can draw no more than tentative conclusions. To some degree this view is correct. Because it is, it must necessarily affect the reader's view toward this paper.

The reader needs to keep in mind that this work attempts to answer, at least in part, two specific questions: why did the Hitler-Youth arise, and what was it? Any judgement which this paper offers as to why the Hitler-Youth arose by all rights should be questioned. Probably it is too soon to attempt such an analysis. But if attempts were never made, then criticism, which almost invariably results in further thinking and perhaps firmer conclusions, would have no point at which to begin. For this reason alone, the attempt is worthwhile.

The second question, precisely what was the Hitler-Youth's nature, can at least partially skirt the "perspective" controversy. The facts about the organization are there, found in Nazi Party records, in books and speeches, training manuals and directives written by the participants themselves. Thus, a fairly clear picture can be had by simple recourse to the facts. These facts are in most cases, indisputable. The major pitfall in this second section, therefore, is prejudices the author may himself possess.
In every case — and there are many — where the temptation has arisen to present someone or some action in its worst possible light, as much restraint has been exercised as possible. Thus, nearly every time a song or speech excerpt is quoted, I have made certain that many more such songs or excerpts existed in which could be found the same degree of brutality, or deception, or incredibility.

If the reader feels that quotations have been too frequently included, I believe they are necessary. Often, it would be difficult to believe that a man's words had been paraphrased correctly; the reader might think no one capable of such utterances. Therefore, I have resolved, in many cases, to let the speaker stand or fall on his own words. I have also refrained from any "moralizing" that was not absolutely necessary. Again, the facts speak far too eloquently for moral judgements to be more than redundant.

The greater part of the research has been done at the National Archives and the Library of Congress. The microfilmed records of the Nazi Party, of numerous Hitler-Youth district offices, and especially of the S. S. have been helpful, particularly with the chapter on World War II. Most films pertaining directly to the Hitler-Youth fall within the period 1940 — 1945.

The Library of Congress has on deposit the entire Nazi Party Library, captured in Munich at the war's close. From this collection has come the most valuable material. Fairly complete holdings of all the Hitler-Youth periodicals, as well as most books published by the Reich Youth Leadership can be found on deposit there, many of which are list-
ed in my bibliography. By far the most important among them is the 
Hitler-Jugend 1933-1945, which provides a solid framework for any 
study of the Hitler-Youth of those years.

Of course, the testimony given at Nürnberg was used. This can be 
found in the multi-volume Trial of the Major War Criminals, and to 
some degree in Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression. Some problems arise with 
this testimony, in that the defendants naturally attempted to make the 
best possible case for themselves. To that end, they did not hesitate 
to employ outright lies. Lies, however, are very easily detectable in 
most cases. What is difficult to judge are the slight variations in em-
phasis, the mild alteration or omission of details, to present the st-
ory being told in its most acceptable light. Every effort has been 
made, therefore, to examine the reliability of these statements in 
light of speeches or writings by these same men during the Nazi era. 
Where doubt exists, it has been clearly noted.

The works in German used as source material were translated by 
the author who, of course, assumes full responsibility for any errors. 
Where the German word was run together into one long word, the English 
translation has been separated and hyphenated. Some difficulty was met 
with technical or specialized terms used by the Germans during the war, 
which have since lost their former significance. Again, such cases have 
been noted.

The system for footnoting, bibliography, etc., is that found in 
the Harvard Guide To American History, published in 1963 by the Harvard 
University Press.
I should like to gratefully acknowledge the assistance and time freely given by Mr. Frank E. Bridgers, archivist with the National Archives, as well as the forebearance and unceasing assistance of my wife.
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INTRODUCTION

Much has been written, in the twenty years since the end of the Second World War, about Nazi Germany. Recently too, the interest of the general public was given a boost by publication of William L. Shirer's *The Rise And Fall Of The Third Reich*. Even including that enormous volume, much remains to be done. One subject which has received only fragmentary treatment, from Shirer or anyone else, is that with which this paper is concerned, the Hitler-Youth.

Hitler's youth organization was no original creation of the Nazi leader. Neither did it suddenly appear after his accession to power in 1933. It grew up, as did the Nazi Party itself, out of the maelstrom that was Germany after World War I.

From its faint beginnings in 1922, the Nazi youth organization represented simply one wing of the overall German youth movement, which had begun in the late 1890's. But the wing it represented - that of political auxiliary - encompassed only a minute percentage of the total movement. The Hitler-Youth itself, at the very height of its pre-1933 power had only 108,000 members, less than two percent of all German youth groups. In this light, it seems incredible that in the short time of four years after Hitler came to power, it could have risen to complete ascendancy over all other groups. Simply to pass the Hitler-Youth's victory off as being the natural result of the support given it by the Nazi government is both oversimplified and deceptive. In a surprising number of cases, young people enlisted voluntarily in the Nazi youth.
Since the old youth movement had, for some time, been seeking a "way out" of its troubles through a sort of morbid romanticism, many youths were ready for a Hitler, and embraced him enthusiastically. Other groups were so bound up in traditional methods that when compared to the Hitler-Youth they seemed moribund. Moreover, nearly every association held firmly to the particularism which had riven the youth movement from the beginning. Everywhere, groups were interested in only their own survival. After coming to an agreement themselves with the Hitler-Youth, they simply stood by while their fellows were devoured piecemeal, trusting that the Nazis would for once be honorable and live up to the agreement not to attack them. When they suffered the same fate, they were incredulous, but nevertheless dissolved with all the rest.

Largely because opposition to the Hitler-Youth was of such a fragmented nature before the complete victory by Hitler's youth group in 1936, opposition after that date never grew beyond scattered, local attempts. With the aid of the police, the S.S. and the Gestapo, such attempts were easily put down. Opposition was never entirely eliminated, but it was effectively localized.

Before condemning the old youth groups for their sins, let us remember Winston Churchill's admonition that "We may all be thankful if our lives have not been rent by such dire problems and conflicting loyalties." 1 Although the old groups surrendered too easily in many cases,

we must not forget the atmosphere in which they surrendered. Terror, murder, blackmail, threats, physical injury and much else besides was their common share.

Many among them made no worse a mistake than trying to act honorably in spite of the opponent’s tactics.

Once the Hitler-Youth had established itself in power, parents had to face children come home filled with Nazi propaganda. They had to sit by and listen to “facts of life”, such as that unless their child joined the Nazi youth he or she could continue no longer in school; that the non-Hitler-Youth child would be shunned as a social outcast; that the most important jobs would be closed to all but Hitler-Youth members and ex-members. And many mothers and fathers had to contend with children who had become state informers, often against their own parents.

The story is incredibly complex. Unless one has lived under a totalitarian regime, it is virtually impossible to "imagine" oneself a part of it. Let us, with Mr. Churchill, be thankful we can simply read of it.

As for the underlying purpose in telling this story, I should say with Dr. Braun, "I feel the need for the thoughtful people in each nation to examine very carefully what it was in the experience and attitude of the younger generation in [Germany] which made it possible for Hitler to gain their fanatical devotion." 2

2. Ernestine Amy Buller, Darkness Over Germany (London, 1943), 125, quoting a Dr. Braun of Göttingen University.
Despite the hazards of so doing, the year 1890 is offered as being the terminal date in the history of "modern" German youth movements. No revolution of youthful patriots stormed Berlin barricades that year; nor was a single youth association born during its twelve months to attract the fleeting glance of history. Rather, at the beginning of that last decade of the 19th century, the outlooks and the frustrations which would shape the thinking of many among Germany's youth for the next thirty years had been firmly established.

The youth "revolt" having begun in Germany during the 1890's, obviously the answer to why it arose lies somewhere in the nature of German society in those years. While this paper does not pretend to be a history of late 19th century Germany, it does presume to single out two elements within the Germany of that time, which, perhaps more than any others, shared highest responsibility for youth's subsequent reaction. Both have to do with the example set for youth by adults.

First, German society by 1890, having had its traditions battered in the onrush of rapid industrialization and concomitant social upheaval, found itself in a state of "profound disorientation of established beliefs and habits of mind which led to mental and moral bewilderment." ¹

Second, and closely associated with the first, the German nation

¹ David Thomson, Europe Since Napoleon (N.Y., 1964), 409.
in general had failed in its historical attempts to develop individual freedoms. That failure is most commonly associated with the political realm and with the events of 1848 or 1870; but in reality it permeated the whole social fabric, down to the family itself. And, having ensconced itself within the family, it helped in later alienating many young people from their parents.

Because Germany had the relative advantage of stepping into the "industrial revolution" after others had done much of the groundwork, her industrialization came far more swiftly than to many other countries. As an example, in the year 1800, four-fifths of all Germans toiled in agriculture. By 1900, this same percentage - four-fifths - was engaged in non-agricultural work. The nation had been turned literally upside-down. Most of that change came during the three decades preceding 1900.

In brief, within thirty years, not even a generation, Germany had undergone unification (1871), industrialization (hastened by unification of the country), as well as felt the important and drastic social changes accompanying transformation from a rural-agricultural to an urban-industrial society.

The psychological impact alone of such swiftly-moving events stagers the imagination. Normally, when faced with drastic changes in his life, a person falls back upon those habits of life he has already developed, upon his ways of thinking, upon his moral habits and all the rest. But in the kind of situation facing the average German of 1890, this was no longer easily done. Lifetime habits which had fitted admirably into life in a village proved untransferable to urban living. Al-
most overnight the old ways had become "quaint" or "old-fashioned", or even "odd". Whereas a person could feel as though he belonged in the small village from whence he came, once he felt the peculiar impact of the city's impersonality, a void arose in his life which most were at a loss to fill. They simply had never experienced such needs before. Little recourse was available to them from those around them whose lives echoed needs similar to their own.

Neither would they likely seek solutions by political action. In this year of Bismarck's dismissal, the masses of Germans, politically speaking, had neither a particular consciousness of individual liberties, nor had they the machinery or unity, education or leaders with which to improve their lot. They had been weaned under Bismarck's strong hand and had been tantalized by the very success of his methods. They had witnessed, too, the failure of labor unions, of Socialism, and of the Catholic Center to achieve meaningful gains for them personally. It was, after all, Bismarck who had introduced the social legislation that had been providing some measure of relief. Having few individual political desires, the Germans had become

'A race that binds
Its body in chains and calls them Liberty,
And calls each fresh link Progress."  

The effect of the urban environment's impersonality on the lives of individual Germans varied greatly. In general, however, a certain moral disillusionment manifested itself, particularly among the middle

---

classes. The church, the arts, business, hardly a single aspect of German society escaped being affected in some way. In many social transactions, an artificial formality hid the deceit and hypocrisy which could be found not far beneath the surface. A zeal for precision or insistence upon conformity just as often disguised the insecurity hidden beneath it. Many of the problems raised by urban living had not been solved, rather covered over with a thin veneer to beautify their exterior.

All this was not without effect on young people. They experienced something of the general temper in many ways. Their schooling was rigidly compartmentalized, and the sexes carefully segregated, presumably to keep them from temptation. Many youths realized, however, that in the adult world which imposed such restrictions, the "relations of the sexes, in marriage or out, [wer] shot through with hypocrisy." 3

Within their families, young people often met the same formality and rigidity which they found outside the home. Naturally rebellious in their teen years, their rebellion only increased when they recognized the hypocrisy evident in a parent's orders. Father more often demanded than earned their children's respect. Too many parents "preached much and practiced not". It is no wonder then that many youths in the 1890's felt the frustrations of the era. The time of growing up was difficult enough for them without its being made even

3. Howard Becker, German Youth: Bond or Free (London, 1946), 51.
more so by inflexibility and pretence at home.

Had they simply been left with their frustrations, German youths might not have taken the route they subsequently chose. That they took the direction they did is due at least partly to certain writers whose works many urban youths felt satisfied their longings. These writers were part of a larger literary criticism of the whole era.

At first, critics of late 19th century German life joined ranks with others in a general intellectual revolt, or kulturkritik. Many contributed, as Rathenau, Lagarde and Wedekind, but only a few had appreciable effect on young people. Among the latter, Friedrich Nietzsche probably achieved the greatest influence. To Nietzsche, as to Ibsen, "the individual alone, the single one, mattered, his faithfulness to himself, his self-realization, his growth by overcoming and disciplining himself...." Nietzsche continually and uncompromisingly opposed the prostitution of the German soul to the vulgar mediocrity of the era. "It was this assault upon all the sham and...stuffiness in modern society that made Nietzsche the inspired prophet of the new youth ...." 7

4. Adults did "not offer youth the genuine ideals out of which alone the latent idealism of youth can grow...." Charlotte Lütkens, Die deutsche Jugendbewegung (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1925), 24. Miss Lütkens is here quoting Paul de Lagarde.

5. Henrik Ibsen, though Norwegian, also wrote in Germany at the time and enjoyed a certain influence among youth.


Finally, most

"of these currents of Kulturkritik merged at the end of the nineteenth century to foster a revived neo-romanticism in which anti-rationalism, anti-intellectualism, a reaction against science and materialism as well as against conventional morality, sought a way out of the mechanized, soulless, and rationalistically disenchanted mass society and mass culture of modern life...." 8

Dissatisfaction with the present, given impetus by critics and by such contemporary romanticists as Berthold Auerbach 9 and Sir Walter Scott, gradually transformed itself into a desire to return to nature, to the life of the "simple folk". It grew into a cloudy, mystical longing to rejoin the peasants of a younger Germany where liberalism and humanism flowered alongside poetic sympathy for life in forest and heather. It called to mind songs like the "Linden Tree" : "On the meadow out from the gate / there stands a Linden tree / in the shade of its branches / many sweet dreams I did dream."

Naturally, not all youths sought satisfaction for their needs and longings in the same manner. Those who sought escape in the "back to nature" trend just described seem to have been largely grade-school and

8. Ibid., 260, 261.

9. Auerbach, who was popular between 1848 and 1870, was the author of History of Black Forest Villages (Schwarzwälder Dorfsgeschichten). He wrote of a quaint, picturesque, extremely appealing "peasant" Germany which he described in glowing, romantic terms. Writers later in the century wrote of "this early nineteenth-century German world...in terms of sentimental homesickness, of longing for the 'dear dead days beyond recall', of a Golden Age of unspoiled, unaffected natural virtue...." Becker, op. cit., 18.

high-school students coming from the urban middle classes.

It was natural therefore that the most prominent early leader of what came to be termed the youth "revolt" should have been himself a student. He was Karl Fischer, a young student who had been profoundly stirred by a professor at his Berlin Gymnasium. 11 So moved was he by his professor's attacks against the prevailing educational system and against the mass mediocrity, Fischer began, in 1896, a youth group called the Wanderbund. 12

Two years later, in the same year that Baden-Powell began his Boy Scouts, the Wanderbund, still under Fischer's leadership, changed its name to Wandervogel. 13 The greatest strength of these "Roamers" lay naturally in the vicinities nearest Berlin, headquarters of the movement. Throughout Brandenburg, Prussia, Upper Saxony and Bavaria, numbers of students, generally still from the middle classes, joined the growing movement.

Under the absolute control of the egocentric Fischer, the Roamers delighted in wandering about the countryside free as they pleased. Their sprees were something of a cross between truancy and vagrancy, mixed with youthful zest for adventure. Their ideal was that romanticized ver-

11. His professor was Ludwig Gurlitt, whose attacks on the German educational system led to his dismissal from the Steglitz/Berlin Gymnasium faculty.

12. This earliest "modern" German youth group was formed essentially to hike around the countryside, much in the manner of Boy Scouts.

13. The word literally translates "Wander-bird", but in its "idea-context" in English, would more properly be rendered "Roamer".
sion of the medieval peasant they had learned from Auerbach and Scott and others. The countryside was their highway, and common experiences and communion with nature their goals. They wore no particular costume, and in fact had no clear-cut purpose. Reasons for doing what they did were unnecessary. All that mattered was the experience of roaming, which released them, albeit temporarily, from their role-bound bourgeois existence.

By the end of the Roamer's first decade, Fischer's iron control of the group began to produce dissension. The "rough-and-tumble conduct of some of the Roamers", 14 which Fischer did little to alleviate, drove one of his close friends, Siegfried Copalle, to attempt a "coup". It probably failed, for rather than reconcile himself to Fischer's leadership, Copalle in 1908 led a group which called itself "Roamers, Incorporated" 15 out of the "Original Roamers", the name by which Fischer's group was thenceforth known. Copalle's group directed its energies away from the primitivism that had infested the Original Roamers. "It turned out that on Copalle's trips the wealthier...gentlemen regaled themselves with roast meat and wine while the others, looking on enviously, gnawed at their hunks of hard sausage." 16 That Copalle's organization now contained "gentlemen" indicates that interest in roam-

15. Wandervogel, Aktiengesellschaft.
ing had spread upward from the middle to the wealthier classes.

Both the "Original" and "Incorporated" Roamers exercised what
seems to have been a loose hegemony over other kindred bands. Cameraderie among all grew out of their common purpose: to escape, to roam about unhindered. Although Fischer's and Copalle's leadership was firm, it was nevertheless based on the affable, voluntary loyalty of their fellow members. Since they were trying to avoid traces of adult society as much as possible, these early "free" groups avoided formal organization as long as they could. One member even boasted "Our strength is precisely our lack of program.... Where lively people are together no one needs a program.... Words and songs quelled out of the living present and out of the deep bonds which wove every participant into an internalized unity..." 17 were all the program needed. The smaller, more informal bands only slowly began to unite with the larger "free" groups such as the Wandervogel; and the tendency toward union didn't really catch fire until after the World War.

Not to be outdone by the rebellious Wandervogel, shortly after the turn of the century, a number of more organized associations were formed by others. Groups such as the "Union of Wanderers", the "Free Group for Action", and the "German Pathfinders Union" took on some of the external rebelliousness to be found in the Wandervogel, or Roamers, but they did so in a more acceptable way. This type of youth associa-

17. Wilhelm Stählin, Fieber und Hail in der Jugendbewegung (Hamburg, 1924), 59, 60.
tion came to be called "youth tutelage"; for groups of this sort were normally led, or advised, or controlled to some degree by adults. It was the "youth tutelage" associations which would, by 1914, have gained by far the more adherents. They were more successful due to superior organization and public "acceptability", both of which the Roamers lacked.

Invariably, however, the "free" groups - Wandervogel, etc. - were those that were most original and daring. It was they whom the other, more massive, adult-led associations imitated. But the imitation lost something in translation.

Even the "free" groups themselves suffered growing pains. By this time, around 1910, roaming had become somewhat more planned. Whereas in the early days of the movement trips lasted a day or at the most a weekend, now month-long "roams" became commonplace in the summers. During these trips, a camp was often established, at which many Roamers performed outdoor, voluntary labor for the sheer joy of physical activity. 18

Gradually, too, "nests" appeared here and there, to provide a meeting-place for each band, or to serve as crude stopover points for visiting Roamers. It was miraculous to witness an empty barn loft or unused room being transformed into a band's "secret place".

Finally, the youth tutelage organizations adopted the "nest" idea, when, shortly before the war, Rudolf Schirrmann founded the first

18. From these rude beginnings would emerge Hitler's labor-service corps, the Landjahr, and other Nazi programs.
few Jugendherbergen, youth hostels where roaming young people could spend the night for a small fee, or free. After the war, the Weimar government expanded the hostel system, and after 1933, it mushroomed into a gigantic network of stopovers. 19

Nearly all who have written on German youth agree that the youth movement emerged from a protest against the nature of German society. In the pre-war period, this youth movement took the form of a cultural expression of discontent, a renaissance as it were. "It was opposed to the bourgeoisie because it regarded them as the embodiment of everything that was warped, false, lifeless and somewhat ridiculous." 20 But the youth movement did not seek to destroy, rather to improve that which existed. After the war, when youthful ideals had been sorely shaken, the youth movement tended to become radical, to feel that only upon the ashes of the old could the new be constructed. Therein lies the essential difference between the pre-and-postwar German youth movement.

Not so easily ascertained are the latent motives behind the movement. 21 A history of the Roamers, written by one Hans Blüher in 1912, contained a scarcely veiled accusation that the "social bonds

19.These would be useful for far more than solely lodging-places, as will be seen farther on.


21.Friedbert Schulse, So lebst du deutsch! (Stuttgart, 1937), 670 discusses the different views about these latent motives. He quotes an early youth movement leader, O. Graf, as characterizing the Wandervogel as an "unconscious quest of the pure German juvenile soul after the lost Aryo-Teutonic Germanic divinity." Ibid.
were basically of sexual character even though an elaborate super-
structure oftentimes camouflaged the fact...." 22 Although what Hilg-
er reported might have been true of a portion of the youth, 23 it
would be unfair to extend such an accusation to all. For example, a
group formed in 1907 admitted girls to its membership.

As Veit Valentin has more realistically stated,

"Boys and girls came together in a natural, healthy, not too
delicate fashion that had never quite died out in country places
and that now became customary among the sophisticated children of
great cities.... All manner of romantic yearnings and deliberate
defiance were involved, but there was much that was simple and
genuine." 24

In the "Original Roamers" one certainly might find homosexuals,
but would just as likely find simple malcontents, dreamers, and not
just a little heroism. Motive depended on the individual, or, especial-
ly after the war, on the particular organization in question. 25

The "youth tutelage" associations, as mentioned above, had far
outgrown the "free" groups. It has been estimated that towering over


23. For example, in 1910, 1,550 Young Roamers formed a strongly
cliquish, all-male society, which smacked strongly of homosexuality.
Ibid., 64.


25. At "one pole clustered chastity, vegetarianism, espousal of
the folk community; at the other, full response to any deep affection,
"living dangerously", utter contempt for adult standards, back and
forth and in between were scattered anti-Semitism, pacifism, cloudy ex-
altation of nakedness, theosophy and anthroposophy, romantic Catholicism,
Lutheran communism, and almost anything else one cares to name." Becker,
op. cit., 198.
the approximately 50,000 in free groups by 1914 there were more than one-and-one-half to two millions enrolled in youth tutelage aggregations. According to Becker, "for every adherent of the [frees] youth movement sects there were at least twenty-five recipients of youth tutelage." 26 These larger tutelage groups had, by 1914, expanded into a number of different areas. 27

Largest in number of members were the tutelage groups which promoted physical development. Having their origins in the old Turnverein of "Father" Jahn, they had grown by 1914 to 750,000 members. Next, and about even, with approximately 300,000 members each, were youth associations connected with the Catholic and Evangelical churches. Catholic youth groups, led primarily by priests and laymen, varied from "mystic reconciliationists such as the Quickborn who tried to bridge the gap between French and German youth even before World War I, to the Catholic Crusaders who unwaveringly espoused the cause of Germany in all things." 28 Those connected with the Evangelical church were predominantly Lutheran, and were guided by pastors and devout military men. In opinion they ranged from a minority of Pietist associations to the far more numerous groups "which combined active nation-

26 Ibid., 95.

27 This section on youth tutelage groups and their approximate membership is taken from Hertha Siemerling, Die deutschen Jugendpflegeverbände (Berlin, 1918), passim.

28 Ibid., 64.
alism with stress on religiosity of 'private' character."

Nearly as large as Catholic and Evangelical youth groups combined were the various "boundary, enclave, colonial, and intranational youth agencies." Taken altogether, they numbered nearly 500,000, but of course this number was divided into many smaller groups. "Virtually all of these were in some way linked with Pan-Germanism and imperial expansion, and were frequently directed, sometimes under cover, sometimes openly, by trusted officials of Wilhelm II." The Boy and Girl Scouts in Germany, while having a membership of only about 11,000, are nonetheless worthy of special mention. "It is interesting to note that although Britishers and Americans, in particular, complained about the military character of the Scouts, Germans felt that their attitudes were much too civilian. Therefore the Scouts were in mild antagonism to the more martial bodies." The remaining tutelage types containing about 10,000 members each were divided into: auxiliary groups of Army and Navy brotherhoods; defence organisations of the "home guard" type; Jewish youth groups; those that were "socialistically inclined"; and various vocational assemblages.

The "free" bands had, in the meantime, broken up into increasingly numerous splinter-groups. Recognizing the fact that they were losing

29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
ground to the far larger tutelage organizations, leaders of the various "free" groups decided on a unity conference, to face the common enemy with greater strength. The occasion chosen was the Battle of the Nations centenary, October 1913, at the same time when the tutelage groups would be meeting at Leipzig in a gigantic display of national solidarity. Meeting on a hill called the Hohe Meissner, near Kassel, control of the "free" bands soon passed into the hands of one Gustav Wyneken. 33

Leaders of all the free groups united in drawing up the so-called "Meissner Confession", which was their statement of purpose, or, if you will, declaration of lack of purpose. In defiance it stated that "Free German Youth, on their own initiative, under their own responsibility, and with deep sincerity, are determined independently to shape their own lives. For the sake of this inner freedom they will under any and all circumstances take united action." 34

Written with hopes of unifying the free youth movement, the "Confession" actually proved to be a further source of disintegration. Aroused by a free youth publication called Beginnings, which under Wyneken's editorship revealed in open iconoclasm, the Catholic Center Party brought charges in the Bavarian Parliament to the effect that Wyneken's followers formed nothing less than a society for homosexuals.

33 He was founder of the "Free School Community of Wickersdorf." See Becker, op. cit., 100.

34 Ibid., 100. See also Baldur von Schirach, Die Hitler-Jugend: Idee und Gestalt (Berlin, 1934), 13-19.
A severe split followed in the wake of efforts to dissociate from Wyneken's "taint." The more moderate sections of the free youth added a conciliatory amendment to the "Heissner Confession" in May 1914: "We wish to add to the store of values which our elders have acquired and transmitted to us by developing our own powers under our own responsibility and with deep sincerity." 35 Internal dissension among the free youth associations, nonetheless, continued to intensify until nearly the hour of German mobilization on July 31, 1914.

Regardless, upon Germany's declaration of war, love for the Vaterland inundated lesser sentiments, and "as one man", youth took up arms for their country.

Kaiser Wilhelm was to recall, years later, "the enthusiasm with which the magnificent youth of 1914, without waiting for our artillery fire to take effect, joyfully charged on the enemy...." 36 Of all their exploits, the battle of Langemarck (Flanders) is most notable: of twelve thousand young men who moved to the attack, over seven thousand died within a few minutes' time. 37

During the "war to end war", Germany mobilized 11,000,000 men. Of this number, 1,700,000 were killed (or died from various causes). 4,216,058 suffered wounds. Prisoners and missing numbered 1,152,800. Thus Germany's total casualties amounted to 7,142,558, 38 the equivalent

35. Becker, op. cit., 103.
37. Becker, op. cit., 103.
of more than ten percent of her entire 1910 population. Never again would either society or youth movements be the same. Baldur von Schirach, most important of the Hitler-Youth leaders, accurately reflected that "Few leagues of the postwar time had a right to refer to the former youth movement.... They forgot that the time of a free and easy youth movement had undergone a break by the death of two million.... What was right up to 1 August 1914 was wrong after 9 November 1918." 39

During the war, youths who stayed behind on the "home front" tended to swing toward the political right. Such a tendency is natural enough; in wartime, one almost always supports his own country, becomes "nationalistic" as it were. 40 This patriotic outlook shared by nearly all youths in the war years tended to move "free" and "tutelage" groups closer together. Each took on some of the other's attributes, the "free" becoming more organized, and the "tutelage" adopting many practices formerly reserved to the "free" bands.

Beyond the generalization that the war changed the German people, little more can be said with any accuracy. The First World War had ground eleven million German fighting men in its iron and mud jaws, swallowed some forever, and spewed out the remaining eight-and-one-half


40. One middle class German boy, born in 1905, wrote, "We couldn't help but experience the war as a patriotic adventure. We were patriotic in the truest sense. Unconcerned by political considerations we believed in the "God With Us" theory, and, if we had been ordered, we would have marched for Germany with all the enthusiasm of a children's crusade." Edward Yarnell Hartshorne, German Youth And The Nazi Dream Of Victory (N.Y., 1941), 11.
million survivors. Those who returned home carried their wartime experiences with them for the remainder of their years. Neither, however, had members of the "home front" escaped the effects of war. Taken together, these ex-soldiers and civilians were destined to produce the fertile soil from which Hitler would reap a bountiful, if weed-ridden, harvest.

The youths who remained at home had given Germany their unconditional support, but now that the war had been lost, many experienced feelings similar to this young man's:

"...when [the war] suddenly ended with a defeat, it was a bitter anti-climax for our highly pitched feelings. We were wholly unprepared for this turn of fate for Germany....An innocent, youthful loyalty for everything represented by the Black-White-Red flag, which had waved so intoxicatingly over our heads, made us unconditional enemies of the Black-Red-Gold banner and what it stood for." 41

Some authors, however, had early perceived the facade behind which the young people hid themselves.

"In 1919 [Hermann] Hesse appealed to the German youth in his 'Zarathustras Wiederkehr: Ein Wort an die deutsche Jugend': 'Have you never considered how it has come about that the German is so little loved, that he is so much hated and feared? Did you not find it strange to see how in this war, which you started with so many soldiers and with such good prospects, slowly and irresistibly, one people after the other joined your enemies and decided against you? You did see it, with deep indignation, and you were proud to be so alone and so misunderstood. But you were not misunderstood! It was you yourselves who misunderstood. You young Germans have always boasted of the virtues you did not have, and blamed your enemies for vices which they learned from you....You were unfaithful to yourselves, and this brought the world's hatred upon you....You made out of the 'German virtues' with the help of your Emperor and of Richard Wagner, an operatic display which no one in the world took seriously but

41. Ibid.
yourselves. And behind this petty humbug of operatic splendor you allowed all your dark instincts, your servility and your swagger to proliferate. 42

Hesse's appeal was not, of course, directed at all German youth. But among those to whom his appeal was made, it fell upon deaf ears.

Returning soldiers carried with them many different viewpoints, all of which would have some effect on the postwar youth movement. Many returned as pacifists, attempting to retreat as far as possible from the hells of war. Such pacifism, when inserted into youth groups, translated itself into deeper subjugation to romantic expressionism. Other ex-soldiers came back universalists, feeling a common bond with soldiers of all nationalities who had suffered the same experiences. Those among this number who worked particularly with Catholic groups like the Quickborn, increased those groups' universalist activities tenfold in the postwar period.

Still other returned soldiers, like Corporal Hitler, found that fighting had become their sole raison d'existence. And they felt lost, the classic "captain without a command". Their presence among postwar youth is the most obvious of all, particularly in the period after 1929. Their activities resulted in the Hitler-Youth, in the Scharmhorst youth, the "Red Falcons" and others. 43 Eventually, these "political auxiliary" youth groups would subjugate all the others, but that would not come for more than a decade.

42. Kohn, op. cit., 260.

43. For a clearer picture of the various youth groups, see appendices I - IV.
Generally, the German youth movement, for about four years after the war ended, swung into a period of romantic expressionism characterized chiefly by an "overflowing vitality and the quest for novelty." Undoubtedly this return to the earlier romanticism was in part a desire to erase the stark reality of the war years. But it was an attempt destined to fail. The awakening came along with a start, when the inflation of 1922 and 1923 virtually eradicated middle-class security.

Underneath the external romanticism just after the war, however, lay deeper currents. The current bearing perhaps the greatest portent for the future of German youth was the newly-strengthened popularity of the bundische idea. This was, simply, the tendency to group together in bands, or associations, or organizations which became so characteristic of the youth movement after the mid-'20's. Behind that tendency to band together was carefully hid much that was insecure.

Edward Hartshorne gives one of the most perceptive analyses of the bundische trend:

"It relieves the German... 'to a certain degree, from personal responsibility, which he so deeply fears, and from the obligation to create order for himself out of the natural disorder of reality, out of that "chaos" which he senses with a deep feeling of terror. One cannot expect," Hartshorne maintains, "that the "German Idealist" will use his "Idealism" to solve the world's problems. He will only fight for his own Weltanschauung (philosophy of life), by means of which he believed the world's problems will solve them—
elves... And alas for those who do not bow to the command of his Weltanschauung! They touch the German Idealist at his weakest spot; they recall to his consciousness the suppressed realization that he is only the philosopher of his own weakness, the slave of his self-created ideology. 45

In the midst of this period when most youths sought romantic novelty, and the bändische man became the ideal, scarcely hiding the inner insecurity, a group was born with the deadly earnestness of an adder: the Nazi youth!

45. Hartshorne, op. cit., 13, 14. Another authority said "This was not a generation of leaders but they were driftwood ready to break dams if thrown into a stream. They could be material for any political revolution." Dr. Sigmund Neumann, "The Conflict of Generations in Contemporary Europe From Versailles To Munich," Vital Speeches of the Day, V (August 1, 1939), 625.
CHAPTER II

BAVARIA TO BERLIN

The years between 1922 and 1933 were difficult for the fledgling Nazi youth. Throughout these years it had to fight hard for sheer survival against overwhelming numbers. Even after Hitler came to power, it had a membership that numbered only two percent of the whole German youth movement. But, in being the youth group closest to the source of State power, its potential in 1933 would far outweigh its minute size.

In March 1922, more than a year before his abortive "Beer-Hall Putsch", Adolf Hitler founded the National Socialist Youth Bund. Formation of still another organization for young people, however, in a country fairly teeming with similar groups, can hardly have been considered important. Youth groups, by now, came and went almost daily. But then so did political parties. Most people thought Hitler's youth arm had as little chance for survival as his tiny National Socialist Party.

Actually, in part they were right. The original Youth Bund itself failed. But the group that took its place would succeed beyond their wildest dreams. By 1936 it would have swallowed up every other youth group in Germany.

In casting about for avenues along which his embryonic National Socialist Party might expand, Hitler naturally turned to young people.


2. Hereafter the National Socialist German Workers' Party will be referred to variously as Nazi Party, National Socialist Party, or N.S.D.A.P.
The Nazi Party would need future numbers and leaders. The instrument by which they could be not only supplied, but even more importantly thoroughly indoctrinated, was an auxiliary youth group. Hitler had studied other political parties closely, and undoubtedly observed that most of them sponsored auxiliaries for young people. They were as keenly aware as he that "Whoever has the youth [on his side], has the key to the future."\(^3\)

Moreover, Germany's future chancellor without doubt knew well that many National Socialist principles had enormous potential appeal to German youth groups. Indeed, a number of practices and principles used by the rising Nazi Party had been borrowed directly from the youth movement, making them easily acceptable by many of the young people.

Although the Munich-based N.S. Youth Bund had 1,000 to 2,000 members at the close of 1922,\(^5\) as a formal group it soon disappeared.

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3. Fritz Carl Rögge, Deutsche Jugend im Aufbruch (Berlin, 1933), 11.

4. Even though some borrowed ideas had been altered, their roots remain clear: the Führerprinzip - leadership principle - had been prevalent in youth groups since the days of Karl Fischer; anti-Semitism had long been rife among youths, since Jews represented "city-dwellers," a class among whom youths felt stifled; the longing for the "folkish" community (Volksgemeinschaft) had grown up, particularly after the war, among many youth; the greeting "Hail" had been used by youth groups since the Middle Ages, and, although its classical origins are obvious, the ramrod-arm salute was traditional in several youth bands; further, the "contemporary use of the Swastika originated with an early follower of [Stefan] George, Alfred Schuler, who found this symbol in Bachhofen, an early student of ancient myths and rituals." Kohn, op. cit., 242. For an interesting discussion of the origins of the Swastika, see William L. Shirer, The Rise And Fall Of The Third Reich (N.Y., 1960), 71.

Almost nothing is known of this earliest Nazi youth branch except that in one case at least its zeal to maintain ideological purity created the seeds of its own destruction.

This occurred when a representative from a small Nazi-oriented youth group in Flauen, Saxony tried to bring his organization into the Nazi Youth Bund. He and his group were rebuffed with "the answer that they belonged to the ordinary squabbling youth." That Saxon band, after being refused admission to the N.S. Youth Bund, decided to create its own Nazi-centered group. Soon, from its headquarters in Flauen, it spread out into neighboring districts.

By mid-1923, the Flauen movement had gained adherents throughout Saxony. Its leader, Kurt Gruber, who had just graduated from law school, provided most of the spark behind the movement's growth in that region. Gruber himself came down to the 1923 Munich gymnastic festival and while there met and talked with Hitler. His efforts impressed the Nazi leader, and consequently he carried back to Saxony instructions from Hitler "to organize in the Vogtland something resembling the form of the existing youth-revolts in Munich." 9

6. Flauen is approximately 200 kilometers southeast of Weimar.


8. Baldur von Schirach, most important later head of the Hitler-Youth, gives Gruber "the credit for having set up the first groups of the H.J." Nazi Conspiracy And Aggression (Washington, D.C., 1946), IV, 26, 27. Hereafter cited as NCA.

A few months later, Hitler attempted his abortive Putsch in the Bürgerbräukeller. The stigma brought on the N.S.D.A.P. by the incident and by Hitler's imprisonment forced the Nazi youth groups in the Plauen area to change their name "on tactical grounds" to the "Roaming Sport Union of the Vogtland." Change of name didn't mean changed nature, and recruiting went on as before. By the last of 1923, the whole Vogtland (Saxony and Thuringia) had been divided into a compact network of local district-groups.

Early in 1924, the "Roaming and Sport Union of the Vogtland" was joined by the Markneukirchen German Youth-Bund, another Nazi-oriented group. This new combination bore the somewhat pretentious title "United 'Greater German Youth Movement'". Though this organization steadfastly maintained its uncommitted outward form, "uniforms" worn by its members clearly indicated their allegiance. They appeared wearing windbreakers and ski-caps, along with black-white-red swastika armbands.

With Hitler in prison, and not having a Mein Kampf as its guideline, the Vogtland movement began to deviate from "pure" Nazi doctrine. The Nazi youth allied themselves with the Tannenbergbund, a Saxon anti-communist league. Unlike National Socialism, however, the

10. Ibid., 37.
11. A year later, recruiting efforts had resulted in more than half the Vogtland youth groups united as part of the Nazi movement.
Tannenbergbund believed that communism could best be fought on a local, rather than national, level. Soon after Hitler emerged from Landsberg Prison, he easily brought the Vogtland back into line with Party beliefs.

In Austria, informal National Socialist youth groups appeared as early as 1923. Not until formation of the N.S.D.A.J. - the N.S. German Worker-Youth - in August 1925 did the struggle there break into the open. Since the Storm Troopers had been banned in Austria, and the N.S.D.A.J. collaborated with them, police reprisals continually dogged the Nazi youth group's efforts. Growth in Austria, therefore, continued only slowly.

Growth and extension out of the Vogtland into Mecklenburg, Franconia, the Palatinate and the Rhineland brought with it the need for clarification of Nazi doctrine. As one youth leader expressed it, "We could not yet offer detailed reasons for our belief, we simply believed." Since the movement was still in its infancy, it could

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13. "In Vienna there existed in 1923 a NS.-Worker-Youth [NS.-Arbeiterjugend]..." Chronik, op. cit., 5. Although this appeared shortly after the Munich-based N.S. Youth Bund, it was allied only with regard to its loyalty to the N.S.D.A.P. Later, the two national groups did render assistance to one another, after 1933. Unification of German and Austrian youth groups would not come until after Anschluss.


15. This statement was made by Schirach. Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg 14 November 1945 - 1 October 1946 (Nürnberg, 1948, 1949), XIV, 518. Hereafter cited as TMC.
hope to succeed against well-established groups only through maintaining a consistent, energetic appeal.

Area youth leaders met in Plauen to deal with the problem, in October 1925. Cognizant of its needs, the conference established uniform standards for youth leadership, as well as expanded the movement's year-old youth newspaper, the only one of its kind in Germany. 16

Efforts at maintaining ideological purity were made far easier by publication of Mein Kampf. 17 Baldur von Schirach declared at Nürnberg that Hitler's book "was like a bible, which we almost learned by heart so as to answer the questions of doubtful and deliberating critics." 18

The somewhat farcical effort by the "Greater German Youth Movement" to hide its true allegiance behind a "misleading" name 19 ended at the 1926 Weimar Party-Day. There, Adolf Hitler bestowed on it the name "'Hitler-Youth, German Worker-Youth'", 20 suggested by Julius Strei-

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16. It was begun at the 1924 Jockey Conference. Regarding standards of leadership, it must be remembered that these were established during the period when the "Greater German Youth Movement" had strayed ideologically. Thus, after Hitler brought them back to the "straight and narrow", standards had to be adjusted accordingly.

18. TNO, op. cit., XIV, 518.
19. It was farcical since they marched with swastika banners.
20. Rögele, op. cit., 38. The German is "'Hitlerjugend, Deutsche Arbeiterjugend.'" This paper will use either the shortened form, "Hitler-Youth", or the German initials for the short form, "H.J." In 1926, the Hitler-Youth was meant for boys, between 14 and 18 years of age.
cher. Kurt Gruber, who had done so much for the early movement, was made Reichsführer — National-Leader. 21

A few months later, the Hitler-Youth leadership continued its reforms by ejecting all untrustworthy elements from the membership. In addition, recruiting tactics, which remained about the same up to 1927, assumed a new phase. Instead of a few individuals setting out on recruiting forays as had been the practice, now more massive tactics became common. On one occasion, in order to "convert" the youth in the village of Bad Steben, "about 600 Hitler-youths from Saxony, Thüringia, and Upper Franconia came there together." 22 Even Nazi Party bigwigs helped in several instances. Alfred Rosenberg for one negotiated with other youth groups throughout 1928 in an attempt to expand the Hitler-Youth by consolidation. But his efforts enjoyed only meager success. 23

"From its administrative center in Plauen, the movement grew rapidly. It was soon banned in Bavaria, Hanover, Hesse, and elsewhere, but as usual it thrived on persecution." 24 In its own way, the Hitler-Youth had as romantic an appeal as ever possessed by the early Wander-vogel. The Nazi youth promised disapproval and danger and excitement,

21. Some dispute exists about Gruber's exact title, but the most authoritative sources support "National-Leader".

22. Rögels, op. cit., 39.

23. Baldur von Schirach, leader of the H.J., 1931–45, said of Rosenberg's failure, "I realized at that time that an understanding with the leaders of the other youth leagues would never be possible and devoted myself to the principle of the totality of the Hitler Youth...." N.C.A., op. cit., IV, 26, 27.

all without excessive interference from the Party. Persecution, therefore, only enhanced its appeal.

Even with continued growth, however, the Hitler-Youth remained small in relation to the other German youth groups. The combined strength of the whole German youth movement (including the H.J.) had passed 5,000,000 by 1930-31. In those same years, the "membership of the National Socialist Youth organisation had grown to [only] about 35,000", 25 seven-tenths of one percent of the whole movement.

For almost all the remaining 99.3% of German youth groups, this same period, from 1923 to 1929 had been one of relative stability. With economic stabilization in 1924 came a sort of "spiritual stabilization" among the country's youth. In reality, it took the form of a departure from the romantic expressionism which had prevailed among many youth groups since the war's end. Youth's conception of the "road to life" shifted away from an emotional orientation to one of concrete achievement, of "reality". No longer did most youth groups give their allegiance to political banners. "'Politics is nonsense' was the reply given to party functionaries." 26 They regarded political parties as essentially part of their old enemy, capitalism. (But they looked more kindly on socialism, since it seemed to express politically what they felt in the fellowship of their Bünde.)

25. Buller, op. cit., 118. Miss Buller here quotes Professor Braun of Göttingen University.

Young Germany [Schirach] said, since the war, had taken everything for gospel truth, sold itself today to this [Influence], tomorrow to that one till finally, disappointed and disgusted, it turned its back on all these activities." 27

Running parallel to this new emphasis on "reality", the last vestiges of individualism gave way before the prevailing spirit of "community". The attempts after the war to recapture the freely individualistic spirit of the old Wandervogel, as Baldur von Schirach perceptively noted, copied the pre-war youth movement's "weaknesses without its virtues." 28

This new "reality" manifested itself primarily in sports activities, and in technical achievements. In such activities, the ideal could no longer be the outstanding individual. Henceforth it would have to be that which provided success for any group, cooperation among its members. Thus was forced to grow stronger youth's sense of "communality".

This period also witnessed, particularly among larger groups, a tendency to dogmatize their procedures. Organisation grew tighter and more elaborate. Instead of young men wandering about as they pleased, now groups attended established camps or traveled on masse on

27. Ibid.
long touring trips. 29

As a logical extension of more elaborate organisation on a lower level, most youth groups joined together in 1928 to form the "National Committee of German Youth Organizations". 30 Schirach said this "was practically no more than a statistical office which was subordinate to the Reich Minister of the Interior...managed by a retired general, General Vogt." 31 Heiden called it "a bureau with innumerable desks and card indexes...." 32 At the height of its power, the National Committee represented an estimated 5,000,000 German young people. 33

In spite of its Li1liputian size, however, the Hitler-Youth, like

29. Since these youths normally used the recently-expanded system of youth hostels (numbering 2,180 by 1929), the Hitler-Youth were able to employ these hostels for their own propaganda effort. After 1931, the effectiveness of their employment of this medium approached the incredible. Since in 1932 alone, 4.3 million youths (from all countries) stopped overnight in German hostels, the H.J. had a ready-made audience, requiring use of but few of their own members. This use of the hostels accounts in no small measure for the H.J.'s phenomenal growth after 1933. It also helps make clear why Hitler greatly expanded the hostel system after 1933.

30. "Most [groups], except a few political bands [including the H.J.], joined together in the National Committee...." "Reichsausschuss der Deutschen Jugendverbände," Der Grosse Brockhaus (1931 ed.), IX, 494. For a list of member-groups, see Ibid., 494, 495.

31. TDWC, op. cit., XIV, 373.


33. Estimates of its strength vary considerably, but the most dependable sources agree on about 5,000,000. It is best known for its strong Pan-German tendencies.
the Wandervogel, exerted an influence out of proportion to its numbers. Even more than its "innate" appeal, this was due to the efficiency of its propaganda arm, with its activities in hostels and elsewhere. The H.J. already possessed by far the best youth newspaper in Germany. 34 The year 1929 saw not only another expansion of the paper, but establishment of a semi-monthly "Youth Press Service". 35

Regardless of how statistically insignificant the Hitler-Youth may have seemed, its leadership made provision for taking in young people heretofore ineligible. They founded in 1929 the Bundes Deutscher Mädels for girls, Deutsche Jungvolk for boys 10 to 14, as well as the NS.-Schülerbund - N. S. Schoolboys' Union. 36 All three eventually joined the Hitler-Youth: the Jungvolk by 1931, and the other two by January 30, 1933. Lest all these indications of growth inflate the Nazi youth movement out of all proportion, the highest number enrolled at any time prior to Hitler's coming to power was just under 108,000.

To all appearances during these years, the Hitler-Youth worked in close accord. Despite appearances, the very success of its growth brought with it increasing internal strains. In the early '20's, the Party had had to learn a lesson the hard way. By having maintained

34. In fact, it was practically the only one.
35. Röpels, op. cit., 39. How many papers it served is unknown.
overly-stringent entrance requirements for the N.S. Youth Bund, that effort had failed. Few members had joined, and many who might have been invaluable were turned away. But the lesson definitely had been learned.

When Hitler in 1923 gave Kurt Gruber instructions to organize the Vogtland, he didn't insist on careful membership screening. Therefore Gruber and his co-leaders admitted many groups whose practices might have kept them out of the earlier N.S. Youth Bund. Increasing the membership was now more important than strict doctrinal enforcement. As Baldur von Schirach related, when he and his comrades joined the Nazi youth in 1925, the "SA furnished the protection for the meetings, and we simply continued in the SA, as part of the Party, the activities which we had carried out before in our youth organization." 37

But as the Hitler-Youth grew larger, the likelihood of its collapse over enforcement of minor points lessened. On the contrary, the Nazi youth would more likely collapse if the minor points weren't enforced. As the membership grew, it stretched the old organizational methods beyond their capacity to expand. Clearly, tighter leadership and organization was needed.

At this point, Hitler's disciples in the movement saw their opportunity to inject "purer" Nazi doctrine. In short, they wanted the Hitler-Youth to assume its true nature - that of a political auxiliary group - in practice as well as theory. But they ran headlong into for-

37. TMHC, op. cit., XIV, 369.
midable opposition.

Standing in their way were National-Leader Kurt Gruber, along with many of the older Hitler-Youth leaders. Gruber and the others had been with the movement from the beginning. It was they who had rescued the moribund Nazi youth effort from total collapse. And they had guided the movement's growth from its initial eight young men huddled in a Plauen basement to over 35,000 members. To them, their abilities and methods had been proven. Naturally they opposed any change, especially change that would mean reduction of their own control. The determination on both sides produced bitter quarrels throughout the period 1929 - 1930.

By 1930 it became clear which faction had gained control. In that year, the "National Socialist Youth organizations were centralized in the SA." Henceforth the boy of eighteen passed from the Hitler Jugend into the Party and the Storm Troopers." For some months too, it had been obvious that Kurt Gruber's influence had dimmed under the rising star of Hitler's 23-year-old protege, Baldur von Schirach. Finally, "Gruber resigned [since his] nervous state was


39. NCA, op. cit., IV, 27.

40. Roberts, op. cit., 201, 202. A problem arises here. Schirach stated above that he and his comrades joined the SA in 1925, not 1930. But Schirach, in spite of his youth, had reached the age of eighteen by 1925. As for his comrades, Schirach knew Hitler personally, and may have been able to obtain permission for their entrance into the SA, if they were not of age.

41. Since 1929, he had been Reich Youth Leader of the N.S. Students' Union.
such that he was physically unable to continue his work." 42

After Gruber's resignation, one of Schirach's good friends, Dr. Adrian von Reuteln 43 assumed leadership of the Hitler-Youth. The Nazi Party's task of controlling the H.J. was made far easier after April, 1931, when the Hitler-Youth's administrative headquarters moved from Plauen to Munich. The move symbolized and completed the defeat of Gruber's faction.

To assure once and for all the supremacy of his own policies, on October 31, 1931, "the Führer appointed the 24-year-old Baldur von Schirach the Reichs youth leader of the NSDAP... The latter's old comrade, Dr. von Reuteln was given the leadership of the students' league and also the leadership of the HJ, under Schirach's command." 44

Baldur Benedikt von Schirach, who would be leader of the Hitler-Youth from 1931 until the fall of the Third Reich, was born in Berlin, May 9, 1907. Curiously, his forebears included several distinguished Americans. His mother, Emma Tillon, 45 "claimed two signers of the Dec-

42 NCA, op. cit., IV, 27. From this and other indications, Gruber may have clashed openly with Hitler, as well as have been guilty, in the Führer's eyes, of adhering to old-fashioned ideas.

43 He was incorrectly called "von Renteln" at Nürnberg by everyone but Schirach, who should know. Dr. von Reuteln was a noted economist, as well as leader of the N.S. Schoolboys' Union.

44 NCA, op. cit., IV, 27. See also Chronik, op. cit., 7. As youth leader, Schirach became "temporarily a member of the staff of the Oberst SA Leader Röhm... with the rank of an SA Gruppenführer [Major-General]..." TMC, op. cit., XIV, 372.

45 Her name is also spelled Tillen in some sources.
laration of Independence among her ancestry."

Furthermore, his paternal great-grandfather had served as "one of the honor guard at the bier of President Lincoln." A year after his birth, Baldur's family moved to Weimar, where his father, recently retired from the army, "took over management of the Court theater there, which later became the Weimar National Theater." In such a cultured atmosphere Baldur grew to love literature, and especially poetry. In later years, he would publish several volumes of his poems, but most of them took on a political tone that destroyed what value they may have had otherwise.

In his tenth year, young Baldur joined his first youth organization. The one he chose, the Young German League, was one of a number of similar efforts begun in imitation of Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts.

46. Heiden, on. cit., 644.

47. Douglas M. Kelley, 22 Cells In Nuremberg (N.Y., 1947), 86. This great-grandfather, Frederick von Schirach, served with the 54th N.Y. Volunteer Regiment, lost a leg at Bull Run, "and thereafter served as a major and adjutant in the General Staff." Ibid. After the Civil War, Frederick and his family moved back to Kiel, where eventually a grandson - Baldur's father - was born. He married Emma Middleton Ly- nah Tillon of Philadelphia, but later foreswore his American citizenship and enlisted as a "professional officer in the Garde-Kürassier Regiment of the Kaiser." TWMC, on. cit., XIV, 363.

48. TWMC, on. cit., XIV, 363.

49. Here are a few sample titles: "The Unknown Hitler"; "The Triumph of the Will"; "To the Führer".

50. Junendeutschland Bund.
in England. This group, in which he remained a little over a year, probably had little effect on his later career, except to introduce him to the youth movement in general.

If the sometimes dubious testimony Schirach gave at Nürnberg can be believed in this instance, the early life-experience which most influenced him, far above membership in the Young German League, was his country boarding-school. Directed by "an associate of the well-known educator, Hermann Liets...", the school strove to present to its pupils a mirror of the state. Since a state is administered by its inhabitants, the pupils ran their own school. This would later appear in his philosophy, according to Schirach, as "his" principle of self-leadership of youth. That the Liets-plan boarding school had an in-

51. This is likely, since in his Nürnberg testimony, he stated that the Jungdeutschland Bund "played an important part in the education of German youth until about 1918 or 1919." *TMC*, op. cit., XIV, 364.

52. His prison psychiatrist there cautioned, "one must keep always in mind that Schirach was making out the best case he could for Schirach." Kelley, op. cit., 89.

53. Schirach probably attended this *Waldpädagogium* from 1914 until late 1926, though these dates have been determined by a process of elimination. In 1914 he would have been 7 years old, certainly of age, and since the Schirach's were "well off" (*TMC*, op. cit., XIV, 363), he could have gone to a private school from the beginning. By 1927 he was off to Munich University, making this the terminal possibility.


55. Schirach actually said, "gave me my idea of the self-leadership of youth..." *TMC*, op. cit., XIV, 365. But according to every available piece of Nazi literature touching on the subject, this idea - that "youth must be led by youth" - came from Adolf Hitler. Schirach probably fitted his own philosophy to Hitler's suggestion. What Schirach was undoubtedly doing here was pumping up his own fame on a harmless point, calling from his own past a section which seemed to be a "likely" source.
fluence on young Schirach is beyond speculation. What the school did not do was prepare him to become a National Socialist. 56

In 1923, he joined another youth group, the Knappenschaft, whose principles, according to Schirach, were "simply comradeship, patriotism, and self-control." 57 Here he first came into contact with socialism through the working-class youths and ex-soldiers who made up this youth group's membership. To promote the interests of socialism, members of the Knappenschaft began protecting the meetings of other pro-socialist groups from attack by communist rowdies. At this time, communist agitation concerned itself particularly with the National Socialist Party. The Knappenschaft therefore naturally came into frequent contact with the N.S.D.A.P. "Through this protective activity", Schirach testified, "I met leading National Socialists [such as] Count Reventlow... Rosenberg... Streicher...[and] Sauckel...." 58 At their instigation, he read H. S. Chamberlain's *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*. Moreover, he read, and was "profoundly influenced" 59 by Henry Ford's book *Eternal Jew*. Later he also read *The Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion*, which, wrote Adolf Hitler, "reveal the nature and activity of the Jew-

56. In further testimony at Nürnberg, it was revealed that Lietz's "educational work had no political and most certainly no anti-Semitic tendencies, because Lietz came from the circles around the Democrat Neumann, from the Damaschke circle." TRHC, op. cit., XIV, 366.
57. Ibid., XIV, 366, 367.
58. Ibid., XIV, 267.
ish people". 60 The Protocols later proved to be a forgery. 61

Late in his seventeenth year, after completing Ford's book, Schirach related,

"I first met Julius Streicher whose opinions...even stronger medicine for an impressionable youth than those expressed in Eternal Jew....After that meeting I neglected my literary friends and consorted chiefly with political thinkers, all of whom spoke of the Jews as Streicher did. Among friends who assumed that all Jews were evil and all the ills of Germany were fostered by Jews, I came naturally and without question to think and feel as they did." 62

Then in 1925 came the most epochal event Schirach would ever experience; he met Adolf Hitler. Of that fateful meeting 63 the young Nazi youth leader gave two accounts. The first was made on the stand at Nürnberg, before a crowded courtroom:

60. Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf (München, 1925), 308.

61. Schirach lamented at Nürnberg, "Imagine how astounded I was...to discover that Ford had withdrawn his writings many years ago, and that the Protocols of Zion were forgeries. Could I have been anti-Semitic if I had known these two facts? I do not know." Kelley, op. cit., 68.

62. Ibid. At Nürnberg, Schirach made the statement, "According to my opinion - in 1924-25 - Jews were to be entirely excluded from the civil service. Their influence in economic life was to be limited. I believed that Jewish influence in cultural life should be restricted ..." ThWC, op. cit., XIV, 419. It must be remembered that this statement may or may not contain the truth. Schirach, after all, was attempting to place himself in as good a light as possible. One of the charges against him at Nürnberg was that he allowed 60,000 Jews to be shipped out of Vienna while he was Saulgaufer - District-Leader - there. It can be safely assumed that he was trying to "play down" his anti-Semitism.

63. It probably occurred in January, 1925, in Weimar. See, for more information, ThWC, op. cit., XIV, 368, 369.
to speak at the school, "which resulted in the greater part of the students joining the N.S.D.A.P...." 67

In 1928, Hitler made him leader of the National Socialist High School movement. 68 The following year, a majority of groups in the Nazi University movement elected Schirach "Reich Leader of the National Socialist Students union". 69

Schirach immediately directed his "incredible appetite for work" 70 toward strengthening the Student League. For a year and a half he gave the movement all the energy he had. Proof of the success of his efforts came during the 1931 General German Students Congress, held at Graz, Austria. There, thanks substantially to Schirach's personal "direction" which was needed by the Fuehrer", 71 the German part of the Congress elected as their leader one of Schirach's collaborators. This election becomes more significant in light of the fact that all "German students and all Austrian...and Sudeten-German students were represented" 72 at the Congress. Victory for a Hitler-

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67. Oswald Dutch (pseud.), Hitler's Twelve Apostles (N.Y., 1940), 201.
68. This was the Hochschulbewegung. Rogels, op. cit., 48.
69. PMHC, op. cit., XIV, 370. These groups were polled by Rudolf Hess "on behalf of the Fuehrer". Ibid. Although it is possible that Hess "suggested" what the Fuehrer wanted, Schirach possessed the talent, drive and solid achievements to make him ideal for the post.
70. Kelley, op. cit., 91.
71. NCA, op. cit., IV, 27.
72. PMHC, op. cit., XIV, 371.
Youth member indicated the direction toward which the whole German student body was turning.

Hitler, according to Schirach, "was surprised that the university movement was moving so far ahead of the other activities of the NSDAP." Whether or not the Führer was surprised, Schirach had sufficiently impressed him to be appointed, shortly thereafter, Reich Youth Leader of the N.S.D.A.P. At the time of his appointment, on October 31, 1931, Baldur von Schirach had reached the "ripe" age of 24.

The Graz Congress did indeed serve as a barometer of student mood. These were the years without hope, the years of unemployment, and of bread lines. The chance that students, who normally had little practical experience, would find work after graduation grew less and less likely. They were left quite susceptible to anything, or anyone, which promised to see them through the troublous times ahead.

Among the youth groups, these years of depression and unemployment after 1929 wreaked definite changes of mood and direction. Between the war's close and the financial recovery in 1924, youth had sought to meet their needs through romanticism, harking back to the prewar days. That effort had failed. From 1924 until about 1929 they had clung steadfastly to tangible accomplishments: sports and the like.

73. Ibid., XIV, 372.

74. The Reich Youth Leader at that time had jurisdiction over "youth cells, then the Hitler Youth and the National Socialist Students Organization..." (Ibid.), though his control of these groups remained nominal. Dr. von Reutel actually continued to lead the H.J. and the N.S. Schoolboys' Union.
The onset of the depression after 1929 exposed once again the clay feet possessed by their "gods". First, romantic idealism had failed them, then practical accomplishments. All that was left was a feeling of utter despair, and frustration.

Nor could what adults taught be any longer applied to the ordering of their young lives. If they went to a university — the "accepted" way to success — how could that improve their prospects for the future? More than half of all graduates would barely be able to eke out an existence. Many of Germany's youth recognized that the general outlook contained at least in part a certain spiritual bankruptcy, and that to attempt to whitewash it with another theological or philosophical system would have been so much wasted effort. The power of logical argument to sway their lives had been sorely damaged, and would be looked upon with the utmost suspicion in the years immediately ahead.

Rather than give themselves over in hopeless, helpless submission to catastrophic economic forces, to the fear of an uncertain future, a subtle change crept over the youth of Germany. One might almost say their subconscious "will to live" refused to be defeated. What emerged from the morass can be detected only from its outward manifestations. Called by the sociologist Rosenstock the "'new primitivity'", 75 this new attitude expressed itself not in empty formality, but by a de-

75 Buller, op. cit., 119.
sire to sacrifice, if necessary to give life itself. What is important to realize is that this "new primitivity" plainly showed that the "will to live" had not been trampled underfoot, but that it still had the power of creating new systems from the shattered old ones. Something had to be done to save Germany from the deepening chaos settling on her like a shroud. Thus, the Fatherland became "an object for service and for the general desire to sacrifice", which called forth widespread response from Germany's youth. It was enthusiasm born of desperation, action carried more on wings of devotion than in the vehicle of rational thoughts. It was the call to "become free from empty phrases and to return to real life!"

To consider returning from the "new enthusiasm" to the "hopeless past" would have been for most, unthinkable. They had resolved in the midst of their present chaos, that it had become necessary to give themselves to something "more than themselves, but less than God". To have retreated would have meant returning to brutal, terrible Realität.

In its new guises, romanticism had once again appeared to assuage, to provide escape. But this time, it had reappeared with a vengeance,

76. Here again is the essential difference between pre- and postwar youth trends. Now youth had realized that it was hopeless to attempt to build onto present reality. What was necessary was an entirely new reality.

77. Buller, op. cit., 121.

78. Braun, quoted in Buller, calls it "the new atmosphere of conviction and dedication which stresses life more than thought, enthusiasm more than argument, obedience to the cause more than intellectual questioning." Ibid., 125.

for it had been thwarted on too many other occasions to retreat now. 80

Although most of these "new romantics" came at first from urban middle-class elements who had been hardest hit by the depression, others, who were more cultured among the youth, were sucked into the spiraling vortex by such writers as Möller van den Bruck, Ernst Jünger, Spengler, and Stefan George. 81 In some cases mounting, in others echoing the call to sacrifice, these writers injected new elements, and reemphasized old ones. Both Jünger and Möller van den Bruck "advocated in nebulous form an idealistic and heroic socialism, Prussian in style, as opposed to the 'puny' internationalism of Marxian socialism." 82 Many of the programs later carried out by Hitler - drang nach Osten, etc. - were set in the spotlight by these writers. 83 Jünger for one was later to repudiate Nazism. But his pre-repudiation writings won over many of the "cultured and educated youth who strictly speaking did not follow the Hitler program but who combined in an indefinite, nebulous, and purely emotional fashion pan-German and militaristic nationalism with a revolutionary temper bent on decisive action at all costs." 84

80. Hartshorne refers to these youths as "unpolitical reactionaries ...." Hartshorne, op. cit., 11.
81. For further information on these writers, see: Hartshorne, op. cit., 4, 10-13; Kohn, op. cit., 24, 242; Finson, op. cit., 465; Rauschnung, op. cit., 63; Valentin, op. cit., 543.
82. Finson, op. cit., 465.
83. Möller van den Bruck's Das Dritte Reich presaged many, if not most, of Hitler's later programs.
84. Finson, op. cit., 465. Rauschnung agrees with the view expressed here when he says of Jünger, "his revolutionary interpretation of the present time gives expression to the revolt of youth...." Rauschnung, op. cit., 63.
Thus were drawn aside into a new mystical idealism the cultured, the intelligent middle-class youths who might have otherwise been able to give to Germany the help she really needed. As one caught up in the era wrote,

"We little suspected then what power we had in our hands.... We played with the fire that had set a world in flames, and it made our hearts hot. Mysticism and everything mystical had dominion over us. It was in our ranks that the word Fuehrer originated, with its meaning of blind obedience and devotion. The word Bund arose with us too, with its mysterious undertone of conspiracy. And I shall never forget how in those early days we pronounced the word Gemeinschaft [community] with a trembling throaty note of excitement, as though it hid a deep secret." 85

These outward manifestations of their inner frustrations made Germany's youth fair prey for National Socialism or any other cause with a strong emotional appeal, such as communism. 86 This weakness for emotional appeals could not have come at a worse time. When youths should have been subjecting all pleas made to them to critical, rational analysis, such analysis was not only unpopular, it had approached a state of irreverence. Their enthusiasm to sacrifice was left lying about needing only to be plucked by the strongest appeal.

Perhaps the "greatest tragedy of this time was the wicked exploitation of a mood and attitude that might have been used for the

85. Hartshorne, op. cit., 12. Here he's quoting a young German who fled when Hitler came to power.

86. A majority of working-class youths in the industrial areas of the Ruhr Valley in these years, did, in fact, embrace Communism. To "capture" them for National Socialism took more than a year of unceasing effort.
highest ends." 87 Before nationalism could develop, it was perverted into "jingoism and imperialist chauvinism...." 88

In such a pregnant time, the National Socialist Youth gained the man who would guide them to preponderance. Between Schirach's assumption of office and the first Führer-Day five months later, Hitler-Youth leaders submerged themselves in furious activity. They were well aware, as was Hitler, that the times provided for them unparalleled opportunity. They began with a thorough reorganisation "which was necessary because Kurt Gruber had not been able to fully devote himself to his tasks as a leader especially during the last months of his activities." 89 The organizational plan that emerged duplicated that of the S.A. almost exactly. In fact, the only difference lay in financial policy. By assessing membership fees, the H.J. severed completely its financial ties to the Party. The S.A., of course, continued its dependent status.

Recruiting during this period proceeded with enormous energy. In slightly more than a year, 1930-31's membership of 35,000 more than tripled to just under 108,000 in late 1932. Most of this growth can be attributed directly to Reich Leader von Schirach.

At Nürnberg, he disclosed one of the reasons why his leadership proved so effective:

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87. Buller, op. cit., 120.
88. Seibert, op. cit., 19.
89. Roberts, op. cit., 203.
Good leadership is not characterized by answering letters on time but by its contact with the fighting community. Thus the Fuehrer had brought us up and he preached again and again not to lose myself in paper work — one of the greatest and wisest teachings which I received from him. 90

When the Hitler-Youth along with the S.A. was forbidden by Brüning's decree, 91 the work of recruiting continued underground. Dressed in blue "sailor caps, white shirts and a brown sweater or...coat", 92 the H.J. members lived in constant danger of arrest. "At this time!", testifies Schirach, "the H.J....gained its best human material. Whoever came to us during this illegal time, boy or girl, risked everything ...." 93 Some who joined at this time joined for the excitement, the challenge. But many others were convinced that Hitler embodied him who would make straight the crooked way, who would make the rough places smooth. And they were willing to lay down their young lives that Germany through him might live. During this so-called "flying period" of the movement, twenty-one members of the Hitler-Youth between the ages of 15 and 18, were killed struggling for the "cause". Shortly after Hitler's appointment as Chancellor, they were eulogized by Schirach thus: "Our dead shall not fall in vain. We shall render it true what

90. NCA, op. cit., IV, 30.

91. It was banned from April 14 to June 15, 1932. Actually, Hitler had planned to take the H.J. out of the S.A., but Brüning had moved too fast for him.

92. NCA, op. cit., IV, 28, 29.

93. TMWC, op. cit., XIV, 286.
stood as a light before their eyes and what they in their last, bitterest hour, hallowed through their deaths." 94

Shortly before Brüning's ban was lifted, Hitler took the H.J. out of the Storm Troopers, 95 giving as his reason "Youth must be led by youth." Two weeks later, the Hitler-Youth united with the N.S. Schoolboys' Union.

By now, Schirach had converted his nominal title into a real base of power as a result of a conference with Dr. von Reutel held "in the most friendly manner" 96 at which the latter surrendered his remaining powers.

At the same time, Schirach's co-worker Hartmann Lauterbacher had made great inroads toward converting "the formerly Marxist industrial workers youth" 97 of the Ruhr area to National Socialism. The


95. At this same time - 1932 - Schirach had been made an "independent office leader /Selbststaendiger Amtsleiter/...for the education of the youth in the NSDAP." ThWC, op. cit., XIV, 361. Under the Führerprinzip (leadership principle), he now reported directly to Hitler.

96. NCA, op. cit., IV, 28, 29.

97. Ibid., IV, 30. In "converting" the former Communist youth, Lauterbacher made thorough use of Hitler's statements about punishing the French for their occupation of the Ruhr. Too, the greater appeal the Nazis had to nationalism and patriotism influenced many youths to side with Hitler. Recognizing the value of attracting fanatical believers to his movement, Hitler had said, "The petit bourgeois Social-Democrat and the trade-union boss will never make a National Socialist, but the Communist always will." Eric Hoffer, The True Believer (N.Y., 1958), 25, quoting Rauschning, Hitler Speaks (N.Y., 1940), 134. Hoffer has an interesting discussion on fanaticism being transferable, on page 25.
Hitler-Youth, according to Reichsleiter von Schirach, "used the winter of 1932/33 for many demonstrations. We drove all through all of Germany and called the youth to the HJ. I will never forget a Fuehrer appeal in the beginning of January 1933 in Berlin, at the start of which I was searched for weapons by the police. Twenty days later we were in power." 98

98. NGA, op. cit., IV, 30.
CHAPTER III

"LET US UNITE"

Between 1933 and 1936, the Hitler-Youth followed a definite, predictable pattern in dealing with most of the other youth groups it absorbed. Beginning by creating a furor over some technical point, the H.J. would then move in to "relieve" the besieged group of its unnecessary mental torment. That the Nazi youth met as little resistance as it did is one of the sad, incredible facts to emerge from these turbulent three years.

Less than nine weeks after President Hindenburg made Adolf Hitler Chancellor of Germany, Schirach began the "coördination" of German youth groups. The fact that he was only youth leader of the Nazi Party itself didn't hinder him.

His first target was the huge National Committee of German Youth Organizations. Using the excuse that "the new Cabinet ministers were too overburdened to solve the youth question by their own initiative ...", 1 Schirach simply dispatched 50 members of the Berlin H.J. to take over the Committee's offices. He labeled it "a revolutionary act, a measure which youth carried out for youth...." 2 Actually, of course, the H.J. carried it out for the H.J.

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Since the National Committee kept records of all the youth groups it represented, Schirach captured an enormous quantity of material. Seizure of these records placed the Hitler-Youth in a most favorable strategic position. Now they knew not only the strength of each member group, but the most influential personalities in each one. These individuals they proceeded to "summon" in an attempt to win them over to the H.J. In a good many cases, such tactics worked, and brought in the youth groups along with their key members. The old leader of the "requisitioned" National Committee, General Vogt, recognized that defiance would be useless, and himself joined the H.J. leadership.

In going over the National Committee's records, Schirach quickly saw that the greatest hurdle yet to be conquered among the "free" youth groups was the Großdeutsche Jugendbund (Greater German Youth League). But its leader, naval chief of staff von Trotha, refused to give in. So, from April until June 1933, Hitler-Youths engaged in increasingly frequent battles with its members.

3. In the National Committee were 97 associations, embracing youths from 14 to 21, divided into Catholic, Evangelical, Marxist and miscellaneous groups. See Chronik, op. cit., 10.

4. Many groups, however, did not follow their leaders, and formed new bünde themselves. This not only reduced the quality of leadership of the new groups, but increased the already bewildering variety of easily conquerable groups. To these small groups' credit, they fought hard, but were no match for the by now enlarged H.J.

5. After the National Committee was confiscated by the H.J., most of the remaining larger youth groups joined together in this organization to avoid their being transferred to the Hitler-Youth. Naturally they would resist takeover bitterly.
Then on June 20, by promoting him, the Führer gave Schirach the power he needed to continue the job of "coordination". Hereafter the young H.J. leader would be Youth Leader of the entire German Nation.

The day after Schirach's appointment, Hitler added still more to the Nazi youth membership by "settling" the relationship between the N.S.D.A.P. and the Stahlhelm. In the resulting agreement, the Stahlhelm-Youth joined the S.A. as a "brother" organization to the Hitler-Youth. But like many "permanent" agreements made by Hitler, this one was soon broken, and the Jungstahlhelm subordinated to the H.J.  

Schirach, as new Reich Youth Leader, took action equally as swift. He "did not hesitate for a moment to take the step which was for the Hitler Youth the elimination of an unbearable state of affairs ...." He simply dissolved the Greater German Youth League and all its member organizations. Admiral von Trotha, the group's "late" head, was made honorary leader of the Naval Hitler Youth. By the same order which dissolved the Grossdeutsche Jugendbund, Schirach eliminated a number of other, smaller youth groups not associated with Trotha's organization.  

6. This was the nationalist private army of which Hindenburg was honorary head.

7. A frequent point of confusion arises from the fact that another youth section of the Stahlhelm, the Scharnhorst, was united with the H.J. by the terms of this agreement.

8. THMG, op. cit., XIV, 374.

9. Those dissolved included: Free Band of the Young Nation; German Free Band; German Boy Scout League; The Geuses; Community Circle of German Boy Scouts; Circle of German Boy Scout Districts; German Boy Scout Corps; Free Band of Protestant Boy Scouts. NCA, op. cit., IV, 871. This list clearly indicates the fragmentation rampant in these groups.
Committee, which had continued in a "puppet" role since April.

Equally as important, all remaining youth organizations in Germany were required by this order to "report" to the Youth Leader of the German Reich. They had to submit names of their leaders, information regarding their bank accounts, as well as membership figures, organizational structure and other information. Any groups not complying within 44 days would be dissolved. The Hitler-Youth thereby gained all the information it hadn't gotten already from the raid on the National Committee. In this way, that "many small and unimportant groups and leagues were incorporated goes without saying and took place without any resistance." 10 The League of Youth Hostels which had unwittingly provided such fertile propaganda centers for the H.J. received the same treatment given the National Committee: H.J. members simply marched in and took it over.

June 22, 1933 was a busy day for Schirach. First he had dissolved the Grossdeutsche Jugendbund. Then, he set up what would be, next to the Reich Youth Leader himself the controlling body of the Hitler-Youth, the Reich Youth Leadership. 11 Finally, to at least formally satisfy critics of his "recruiting" methods, Schirach that same day created the

10.Ibid., IV, 33.

11.Called the Reichsjugendführung, it originally consisted of 13 divisions, and numerous subdivided lower sections.
Reich Youth Leader Council, composed of representatives from six categories of youth groups. One was to have been the bändische representative. He was never appointed, but actually it didn't make much difference. The council never met.

The task of integrating all the new members gained in June took most of the remainder of 1933. During that time, in the words of an official history, "the Hitler Youth stood looking out upon a group of meaningless associations, such as the 'Young Odenwald Clubs', or the 'German Youth Alliance for United Shorthand'...who among others would wait until 1934 for their dissolution...." Moreover, the very existence of the youth-tutelage alliances within the Evangelical and Catholic Churches presented a direct challenge. That same official history noted, "the problem must, in all cases, be solved."

If the remaining youth groups felt uneasy about Youth Leader von Schirach's actions, a speech made by Hitler himself in November 1933 should have clearly warned them of their impending fate:

"When an opponent declares, "I will not come over to your side, and you will not get me on your side", I calmly say, "Your child belongs to me already. A people lives forever. What are you? You will pass on. Your descendants, however, now stand in the new camps. In a short time they will know nothing else but this new

12. This was the Deutscher Jugendführererrat, which included (1) Evangelical youth; (2) Catholic youth; (3) Defense bands; (4) Gymnastic and Sports youth; (5) Professional youth; (6) bändische youth groups.


14. Ibid.
community. "... This new Reich will give its youth to no one, but will itself take youth and give to youth its education and its own upbringing." 15

Following his speech, the propaganda campaign against remaining youth groups began in earnest. Schirach railed against the church groups in particular. Soon it became evident that the youth associations connected with the Evangelical Church would be next on his target list. His main argument against them seems to have centered on a "technical" point. Schirach contended that since these church organizations didn't limit themselves to their special interest - religious activity - but instead encroached on what he considered the H.J.'s realm - camping, hiking, and sports - they ought to be disbanded. In these groups, he said, "I saw a danger to the idea of unity in German national education, and above all I felt that among young people themselves there was a very strong tendency toward the Hitler Youth." 16

Thinking doubtless to cultivate that "tendency toward the Hitler Youth" Schirach thought he detected in the church youth groups, he aimed at them a steady propaganda barrage. One Hitler-Youth pamphlet sought to "adjust" the church groups' thinking:

"Before Christianity came, German culture was already on a very high level, and it was destroyed only by Christianity....

15. DMGC, op. cit., II, 207.
16. Ibid., XIV, 405.
Christianity has disintegrated and corrupted the Germans. It brought to them ideas of theft, adultery, and other crimes which were completely unknown to them. When Christ was dying he wept and lamented. When Planetta (the murderer of Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss) was being led to execution, he was heroic. His last words were: 'Heil Hitler! Long live Germany!' 17

Schirach's speeches assumed much the same vein:

The 'service of Germany appears to us to be...the service of God. The banner of the Third Reich appears to us to be His banner; and the Führer of the people is the saviour (rescuer) whom he sent to save us from the calamity and peril into which we were actually plunged by the most pious parties of the defunct German Republic.' 18

The Hitler-Youths too were put to work singing songs such as,

'We are the happy Hitler Youth
We need no Christian virtues,
For our Fuehrer Adolf Hitler
Is always our mediator.
No parson, no evil man can prevent us
From feeling ourselves to be Hitler children,
We do not follow Christ but Horst Wessel, [composed Nazi anthem]
Away with incense and holy water vessels.
We follow our flags singing
As worthy sons of our ancestors,
I am no Christian, no Catholic,
I go with the SA through thick and thin.
I can do without the Church,
The Swastika is redemption on earth,
I will dog its steps,
Baldur von Schirach, take me with you!' 19

At the same time, Schirach and the Reich Youth Leadership held

17. Ernst Jächh, The War For Man's Soul (N.Y., 1943), 24. Dr. Jächh was founder and president of the Hochschule für Politik in Berlin. He had supported the League of Nations, being an internationalist, and after Hitler came to power, he fled to England, where he became an associate of Mr. Churchill.

18. TMWC, op. cit., XIV, 481. This quote is from Schirach's book Revolution der Erziehung, 148. That his speeches contained virtually the same words is attested to by Ernst Jächh.

19. NCA, op. cit., VI, 638.
discussions with newly-appointed Reich Bishop Ludwig Müller. Müller had been appointed through Hitler's influence, and naturally looked with favor on Schirach's efforts to expand the H.J. "With great satisfaction," Schirach reported, "we from the HJ ascertained that the Reichs Bishop was fundamentally ready to lead the members of the evangelical youth leagues into the HJ...." So the propaganda screen merely preceded what actually was inevitable.

On December 21, 1933, Müller and Schirach reached final agreement on the terms by which the Hitler-Youth would absorb all evangelical youth groups:

1. The Protestant Youth Work recognizes the unified state political education of German youth by the National Socialist State and the HJ...as representatives of the philosophy of the State. The youth of the Protestant Youth Work below 18 years of age is to be incorporated into the Hitler Youth and its subordinated branches. Anyone within this age group who does not become a member of the HJ, from now on shall not be a member of the Protestant Youth Work.

2. Education in regard to open air sports (including gymnastics and sports) and in regard to state politics, up to 18 years of age, shall take place only within the HJ.

20. Müller, until a few months before, head of the "German Christians", had recently been elected Reich Bishop in a hotly contested election during which Hitler had had to take to the radio to urge Müller's election. As late as 1933, "the 'German Christians' had some three thousand out of a total of seventeen thousand pastors, though their lay followers probably represented a larger percentage of churchgoers." Shirer, op. cit., 326. Since Müller's election had been nationwide, and since a controversial rally of "German Christians" had taken place in Berlin in November, it seems difficult to believe that Schirach knew nothing of the opposition to Müller, as he claimed at Nürnberg.

21. NCA, op. cit., IV, 33, 34. This is quoted from Schirach, op. cit.
3. All members of the Protestant Youth Work shall wear the official uniform of the Hitler Youth according to their membership in the HJ."  

The official statement issued by the Reich Youth Leadership concerning this agreement merits inclusion verbatim: "With very few exceptions the young followers of the Reichs Bishop were glad to be freed from the inner struggle of the past months. The Reichs Bishop acted like a true spiritual advisor of this young community...." 23

Having completed the absorption of the Evangelical youth associations, Schirach next turned his interest toward the least united of the two remaining groups outside the H.J., the German Gymnastic Federation. 24 In the opinion of Hans von Tschammer und Osten, the Federation suffered from two evils. Primarily, it "constituted an educational unit whose principles were fundamentally at variance with those advanced by the greater part of the individual associations. [But in addition,] the unfortunate division of our people along denominational lines proved a serious handicap to the progress of sports." 25

Therefore, the Hitler-Youth moved to take it over. The process this time took nearly a year, and was not completed until November 30, 1934.

22.NCA, op. cit., IV, 34.

23. Ibid.

24. This Deutsche Turnerschaft had a membership of 1,600,000, which represented 17,000 subsidiary clubs and organizations.

To allay any fears that incorporation of the Federation into
the H.J. was merely to glorify centralization, Sports Leader von Ta-
chammer und Osten insisted that the step had been taken "to raise the
biological standards of the whole nation, to safeguard its cultural
assets, and to restore social, religious and economic peace." \(^{26}\) As
to with whom lay the responsibility to restore that "social and eco-
nomic peace" is another matter. \(^{27}\) Nonetheless, the amalgamation ef-
fort pleased the Reich Sports Leader. "It is a source of special pride
to me that the task entrusted to the organisation of German sports and
games has been — and is being — efficiently carried out." \(^{28}\)

Elimination of the Gymnastic Federation meant that, other than
a few scattered, insignificant bands, the only obstacle remaining in
the way of the Hitler-Youth's absolute supremacy was the youth groups
of the Catholic Church.

As has been evidenced by the swiftness and efficiency with
which the H.J. took over previous groups, its leadership had not neg-
lected to first learn opponents' most vulnerable spots. All the mater-

\(^{26}\) Ibid., 222.

\(^{27}\) Hitler had said in *Mein Kampf*, "The public, as stupid as it
is forgetful, is, as a rule, prevented by the very outcry from recog-
nizing the real instigator of the struggle or else has forgotten him,
and the scoundrel has to all intents and purposes achieved his goal." Hitler, *op. cit.*, 115.

\(^{28}\) *Germany Speaks*, *op. cit.*, 224. Regardless of what anyone not
participating in these events thinks of the methods used by the Nazis,
it must be remembered that these National Socialists believed, and they
translated belief into action. For that, as will be shown, they are
more to be commended than their opponents.
ial they had captured as well as information which each group was forced to submit to Schirach made the job quite easy. If no weak points could be found, the H.J. could—and did—resort to terror, or force, or legal dissolution.

With the Catholic Church, however, tactics could not be the same. The "other" church—the Evangelical—had practically disintegrated in a good strong wind. But they had nothing like the unity felt among Catholic groups. In Mein Kampf, Hitler showed his appreciation of this point: The Church's "power of resistance does not lie in its lesser or greater adaptation to the scientific findings of the moment ...but rather in rigidly holding to dogmas once established, for it is only such dogmas which lend to the whole body the character of a faith." 29

From his Vienna days, Hitler clearly had learned that for a political party to succeed, it cannot fight the Church. 30 At least, the fight could not be an open one. Therefore, he took the Church's strength—dogma—and made it serve his own purposes. 31

29. Hitler, op. cit., 459. For just that reason, to create a "faith", Hitler had established dogmas in his National Socialist Party. His deep respect for the Catholic Church's methods can be seen all through Mein Kampf.

30. "Anyone who thinks he can arrive at a religious reformation by the detour of a political organization only shows that he has no glimmer of knowledge of the development of religious ideas or dogmas and their ecclesiastical consequences." Ibid., 114.

31. Hitler acted out of recognition of at least three weaknesses of the Church: first, that it acted generally in good faith (to Hitler a weakness); second, that it felt more comfortable about a given inflammatory situation if its members had something as instructions to cling to; finally, as noted above, once it had agreed to something, it was slow to reverse that judgement.
To accomplish this, he had Vice-Chancellor von Papen negotiate a Concordat with the Holy See. This document was signed on July 20, 1933. In it, the German government ostensibly guaranteed to the Church religious freedom and the right of self-government. But this was to be no general guarantee. The Concordat was filled with "fine print" virtually negating the import of the document. Especially was this so in the case of Article 31, that applying to the continuation of Catholic youth organizations. Papen had liberally provided Schirach with loopholes which would be used sooner than perhaps even Papen himself suspected. 32

Exactly ten days later, Schirach issued an order forbidding "Joint membership in the Hitler-Jugend...and organizations of Catholic youth associations..." 33 The only exceptions permitted were those older local groups who confined themselves to solely religious activities. Not only that, Schirach's order included the instructions that the "decision as to whether or not a Catholic youth organization falls under the ban on joint membership is to be made by the regional leadership [Obergauführung]." 34 This last part was included in the face of the Concordat's provision for joint agreement of Church and state on all such decisions.

Once again, Hitler had let the Church know precisely where it

32. For the full text of Article 31, see Appendix V.
33. KCA, op. cit., V, 198.
34. Ibid.
“What’s to be done, you say? I will tell you: we must prevent the churches from doing anything but what they are doing now, that is, losing ground day by day....What can we do? Just what the Catholic Church did when it forced its beliefs on the heathen: preserve what can be preserved, and change its meaning.”

Following his own manner of attacking the Evangelical Church, Schirach assigned to the Catholics all blame for any problems:

“The confessional youth league...has no right of existence in our time. While the young German in the period of National Socialism is drawn to the community and thereby the attitude and way of living of the HJ, sometimes some dark pang of conscience holds him back to give in to this urge, to follow really his innermost thoughts. Particularly the catholic youth societies led their members into moral conflicts for which an educator of the youth cannot account. By promises for a life beyond they tried to hold the youth back from the disinterested surrender to the state.”

The Reich Youth Leader also sought to protect youth from detrimental influences in the Bible: “As an educator of youth I have indeed certain apprehensions regarding some passages of the Old Testament, in which pornographic and indecent incidents are narrated in a manner that must necessarily be a source of danger to the youthful mind.”

During these months of 1934 and 1935, Schirach's chief object—

35. Hitler is so quoted in Hermann Rauschning, The Voice of Destruction (N.Y., 1940), 50. For more on this point, see Hitler, op. cit., 100, 337-343, 459.

36. NCA, op. cit., IV, 35.

37. Louis P. Lochner, What About Germany (N.Y., 1942), 35. This is from an interview the author had with Schirach. Lochner was formerly Associated Press Bureau Chief, Berlin.
ion to the Catholic youth societies was that they encroached on what he conceived to be the proper realm of the Hitler-Youth. Employing the same reasoning he used against the Evangelical groups, he reserved to the H.J. such endeavors as sports, hiking, and social gatherings, since they were not "concerned with...religious education." 38

But as the anti-Catholic campaign wore on into late 1935, Schirach's pronouncements took on a harder tone.

On the spot where once the proud Zentrum [Center party] stood that we could see work hand in hand with the Marxist traitors of the people in the Reichstag, there stands today a group of the Catholic youth organizations and opposes the 'We' of our community with the 'I' of their societies...." 39

"Only one religion is fit for the German people and this is the Deutsche Christen. It is time for us to take care that a Jew bastard out of the House of David is not forced upon the German people as God. Any teacher who still talks to his pupils about a life in heaven is not fit to educate German youth'...." 40

"If...the catholic youth is advised not to join the HJ, then this part of the German youth is deprived of a right which today every other young member of the community possesses." 41

To be sure, during these months, many members of the Catholic youth groups did resign for various reasons and join the H.J. But the Reich Youth Leader was not to be satisfied short of complete surrender.

At Nürnberg, Schirach described a series of negotiations about

38. NCA, op. cit., IV, 35.
39. Ibid., IV, 36.
40. William Edward Dodd, Ambassador Dodd's Diary (N.Y., 1941), 367.
41. NCA, op. cit., IV, 37.
youth between representatives of the Catholic Church and Reich Minister of the Interior Frick, which he attended. These negotiations had been going on for some time, trying to work out the differences between Church and state, guided by the 1933 Concordat. According to Schirach, he personally suggested a plan for cooperation which met warm approval from all sides. What was in the plan was not disclosed.

Before it could be discussed further, however, the meetings were interrupted by the Röhm purge. The purge itself made even clearer the Nazi Party’s intentions toward the Church. Two of the men murdered on June 30, 1934 “happened” to be important Catholics. One, Dr. Erich Klausener, was head of Catholic Action. The other, Alfred Probst, was head of the German Youth Force, one of the especially stubborn Catholic youth associations. 42 After this date, negotiations with the Catholic Church were never resumed. 43

Interior Minister Dr. Frick made the next move. On July 22, 1935, he forbade Catholic youth groups to “wear uniforms or uniform-


43. Schirach insisted at Nürnberg that this was due to the increasingly strong influence of Martin Bormann. Bormann’s directive on Christianity had been widely circulated, and read in part, “National Socialist and Christian concepts are irreconcilable....No human being would know anything of Christianity if it had not been drilled into him in his childhood by pastors....If therefore in the future our youth learns nothing more of this Christianity, whose doctrines are far below ours, Christianity will disappear by itself.” NCA, op. cit., VI, 1036, 1037. An irony of history lies in the fact that Bormann’s own son is in 1965 a Catholic missionary to the Congo.
like clothing and to assemble publicly with pennants and flags..." 44 as well as to hold any organized sport activities. Pressure came also in indirect ways. After mid-1935, jobs on any level of government were closed to all except Hitler-Youth "graduates". 45

As a prelude to the final act, local Catholic youth groups began to be accused of assorted acts of violence, 46 and those trumped-up charges used as reasons for disbanding their organizations.

Finally, Adolf Hitler issued, on December 1, 1936, the "Law of the Hitler-Youth", ending any possibility that the Catholics could continue to operate youth groups. Its first article read, simply and definitively, "All of the German youth in the Reich is organized within the Hitler-Youth." 47

Of this law, Schirach said,

"The struggle for the unification of the German youth is finished. I considered it my duty to conduct it in a hard and uncompromising manner. Many might not have realized why we went through so much trouble for the sake of our youth. And yet: The National Socialist German Workers' Party, whose trustee I felt I always was and always will be, this party considered the struggle for the youth as the decisive element for the future of the German nation. And I promise the German public that the youth of the German Reich, the youth of Adolf Hitler will accomplish its duty in the

44. Ibid., IV, 51.

45. Of course, this couldn't possibly have been retroactive and still have left a sufficient supply of state employees.

46. For details on these, see NCA, op. cit., VI, 640.

47. Ibid., III, 972. For the full text, see Appendix VI. Jewish youth groups were allowed to retain quasi-autonomy, but this was only a theoretical right. The problem of the Jewish youth groups was in reality thought of as a part of the larger Jewish "question", falling under the jurisdiction of Amt. IV b. 4, headed by Adolf Eichmann.
spirit of the man to whom alone their lives belong.
I am responsible to the Reich that the entire youth of Germany
will be educated physically, morally, and spiritually in the spiri-
it of the National Socialist Idea of the State." 48

Although execution of this 1936 law would be delayed for another
three years, in reality the back of organised resistance to absorption
by the H.J. had been broken by the time of its issuance. Of course, it
did not end opposition to the Hitler-Youth. Particularly would opposi-
tion become obvious in the war years. But for the present, resistance by
the former "bastions of youth" - the churches and large youth associa-
tions - was finished. All that remained for Schirach to do was gather
in the scattered groups that were left.

When one considers that at the end of 1932, the H.J. had only
108,000 members opposing from nine to ten million young people in all
other groups, for Schirach to have succeeded seems incredible. Not
only did he face great numbers, his opponents had strengths of their
own: the Catholic and Evangelical churches both had the weight and tra-
ditions of Christianity behind them; the youth-tutelage groups had
large, proven organizations; and the "free" groups normally would re-
sist to the bitter end forcible incorporation into a large political
auxiliary like the H.J. Why then did Schirach - and Hitler - succeed?

Most obviously, as has been seen with the "case histories" pre-
sented above, Schirach had behind him the inestimable value of govern-
mental sanction and support. He could bring to bear all the power of

48. NCA, op. cit., IV, 997. This passage is quoted from Schirach's
such forces as legislation, police cooperation, as well as virtual immunity from prosecution. Moreover, the entire propaganda machinery of the Third Reich was at his disposal. Any attempts by other youth groups to employ the largely Nazi-controlled press and radio to answer charges against them would have been ridiculous, even if possible. 49

But these are powers which other causes at other times have fought successfully. 50 Often, in the face of such massive power, it has been necessary to fight on underground, but the fight was carried on. Why is it then that eventually all youth groups capitulated to Schirach? And why were the Catholics the only group to offer the Hitler-Youth any serious, prolonged resistance? Why, too, did innumerable youths join the Hitler-Youth of their own volition?

The answer is complex, as is that to the question "why didn't the Jews resist Hitler more forcefully?" To answer all such questions with some blanket answer like "the power of the state", is both oversimplified and misleading. Hence, we must look deeper.

The trends prevailing among most non-Nazi "free" youth groups in the early '30's - mysticism, desire to sacrifice, "groupism" - have been discussed above. All these tendencies were tailor-made for

49. This was at a time when Germany was deluged with posters, such as one that read "Thou art a German youth...The Time of Marxism is overcome...The Time of the old Finde is past...Art Thou a German Youth - Then thou belongeth to us in the Hitler-Youth." The National Archives, Washington, D.C., Microfilming Program At The Berlin (Germany) Document Center, Microfilm Roll 38. Hereafter cited as EDG.

50. If they have not been successful, at least they have fought on continuously.
use — or misuse — by a Schirach or Hitler.

The trend toward "groupism" had become accelerated after 1930, primarily by the increasing activity of pro-Nazi elements. As has been noted, most post-1929 youth associations had vehemently dissociated themselves from politics; so to maintain their non-political posture under increasing pressure from Nazi agitation, they banded together in ever-larger groups, such as the Grossdeutsche Jugendbund. But most of these enlarged associations were no more than small groups writ large. And in the process of growing they increasingly lost sight of the need to provide for the individuality of their members. The groups grew too "dogma-bound" to continue calling themselves "free". Their members therefore became increasingly dissatisfied. Many had already left to form their own "wildcat" sects. In fact, those who broke away seemed to be on the way toward forming something like the original Wandervogel.

Hitler naturally moved to take advantage of such dissatisfaction. For a medium, his doctrine of Volksgemeinschaft — community of all the people — was a logical choice. In his speeches he pledged a new sense of meaningful community for all Germans. He struck "a powerful note when he told his youth that though they were in a wide, rich and diverse fellowship, it was a fellowship they could comprehend, and in which they could play their part individually." In this sort of appeal by the

51 Had the Hitler-Youth not interposed itself into the "natural" process, they might well have succeeded.

52 Buller, op. cit., 156.
National Socialists, no mention was made of any political content in their program. Many youths who had become disgusted with the impersonality of their oversized Führer naturally responded to such a call.

In spite of the outward strength of their religious ties, church-affiliated groups varied widely in their attitudes toward Nazism. Especially was this true of Evangelical youths. Since the position of the Evangelical church itself was so unclear, naturally the same indecision filtered down to its youth affiliates. Pastor Niemöller, for instance, who had been a U-Boat Commander in the World War and was consequently revered by many youths, himself endorsed Hitler. He would later repudiate his endorsement, but the example for youth had already been set. And regardless of what may be said of later-Reichs Bishop Müller, his following before his election included at least 3,000 pastors. Many young people were deceived, therefore, into believing that all the vitriolic propaganda pouring from Schirach’s and Hitler’s lips was nothing more than talk, and that they would be able to change the H.J. for the better once they got in. That they were profoundly mistaken is one of the sad observations of this era.

Not only church confusion and indecision were vulnerable points which the H.J. could use, the empty formality which had permeated many of the churches, particularly the Evangelical, since the 1890’s, had, if anything, grown more widespread. Not only were religious ties weak, therefore, but the Church itself failed in its role of guide, of shep-
herd to its flocks through the vacillatory attitude of its leaders.

Though they were considerably more united, the Catholic Youth Associations also suffered from their church's indefinite position. That the 1933 Concordat had been signed was clear. Officially then, the Vatican and Hitler were in agreement. But how was one to react in the face of increasingly violent attacks against youth groups, against individual clergymen, against the Church itself. Many clergymen chose to fight back. But too many others remained aloof and indifferent. And in so doing, they gradually lost contact with their youth. One of the most surprising indications of Catholic youths' feelings came during Schirach's pressure in 1934 and 1935, when large numbers of them voluntarily came over to the H.J.

Was it, with either the Catholic or Evangelical youth, simply a case of failure of the Church? Not at all. It was true that the Churches had in large measure failed. But it was equally true that the Nazi Party provided a strong substitute for religion. The strength of Nazism's attraction, therefore, only increased in intensity the weak hold churches had on their youths.

The Nazi Party itself contained definite "religious" qualities, which, when combined with the "action" element present in Nazism, possessed an enormous appeal for dissatisfied youth. Under Nazism, no longer would youths have to suffer under the millstone of uncertainty; the Party possessed infallibility - the Führer was always right! Henceforth, young people would not have to worry that their youth group
would dissolve or be dissolved after a few years; the Hitler-Youth was guaranteed to last at the least the fabled millennium. No longer would youths have to be torn by conflicting allegiances; Nazism affected all of life, therefore new freedom could be felt through singularity of purpose. Too, there would be no more need for intricate theories; the "word had become flesh"; theory had manifested itself in human form; that of Adolf Hitler himself. Moreover, youths now had an outlet for their desire to sacrifice; Hitler demanded complete surrender of self to the Party and state; he even supplied the purpose for self-surrender - to help Germany fulfill her destiny. The Party also clearly and finally identified the essence of evil, after years of German fighting German. "You know your enemy; it is the JEW!". And, Hitler even presented them with tangible symbols to cling to and cheer and die for: flags, uniforms, secret words and all the rest.

In short, they "put on the trappings of saviours and prophets of youth, and promised them 'a better and greater future' without any mental or political effort on their part." ⁵³

Thus, the evangelistic fervor generated by the Nazi Party and its youth arm caused not only the Church affiliates, but all youth-tutelage groups to seem dull.

Like the Churches, these youth-tutelage groups suffered from their own internal weaknesses. For a number of years, leadership of tu-

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⁵³ Seibert, op. cit., 15.
Tutelage associations had lacked the ability to stir their members' imagination. Instead of leaders being allowed to rise according to their ability, outgoing leaders increasingly picked their successors. And, like royalty, these political "heirs apparent" many times failed to measure up to the quality of the "line's" founder. Tutelage groups' leadership had also in many cases grown older. "Youths", who were in reality eternal adolescents, led their groups not on a march into misty woodlands, but into galloping bureaucracy, into increased standardization. Most any group looked like most every other group.

By now, most tutelage organizations had taken on at least the external appearance of the "free" bands, which proved damaging to both groups. The tutelage aggregations had the appearance of "free" without the substance of the latter, and in the process the "free" bands' practices lost their former flavor of individuality and rebelliousness. Naturally, many would be dissatisfied and ripe for plucking by a Baldur von Schirach.

The disunity among the "free" sects - with a different group for nearly every conceivable opinion - prohibited any sort of united opposition to Hitler. Although larger associations had been formed - most notably the National Committee - these were more statistical offices than media for conducting joint action. It was especially among

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54. These they designed, in most cases, to assure themselves of a continued position. In altogether too many instances, these "youths", to secure their own future, went over to Hitler after receiving guarantees that they would be retained.

55. Leaders of the "free" groups, so unwilling to disentangle themselves from petty squabbles, must therefore bear their share of blame for Schirach's success.
these splintered bands that the H.J.'s propaganda in the youth hostels bore fruit. In the face of disunity among its opponents, the Hitler-Youth members possessed a fierce and fanatical devotion to their cause. As Schirach said, at "that time, many like myself drew a dividing line between themselves and their friends and relatives and exchanged fight for the new ideal for the quiet life of a well-protected home." 56

On top of devotion among its members, the Hitler-Youth employed the medium of disguise very successfully. Schirach himself had grown up a member of youth groups and knew their history. He was perceptive enough to realize that if he wedded the external trappings of the old "free" groups with Nazi ideology, the H.J.'s appeal would be greatly increased. As Hitler had said, "preserve what can be preserved, and change its meaning." 57

The H.J. hiked, camped, engaged in "Boy Scout" activities, 58 and had its own songs — many right from the pages of an early youth movement songbook called "Pluck-Fiddle Jack". It had its secret "nests" and its weekend jaunts. In short, Schirach tried his best to give the H.J. the external appearance of a Wandervogel-type association. But internally, "old things are passed away; behold all things are become new". The old love of German things was twisted into hatred for anything non-German. Romantic idealism became contempt for rational thought. Rev-

56. NCA, op. cit., IV, 25.
57. Rauschning, op. cit., 50.
58. Anyone desiring to investigate the H.J.'s similarity to the Boy Scouts should see the Deutscher Jungendienst (Potsdam, 1933), which was the H.J. Handbook. Its main atypical Boy Scout activity is instruction in grenade-throwing.
erence for the values close at hand became rejection of values held by anyone else. Vigorous, manly independence was warped into "swashbuckling, truculent aggression". Voluntary loyalty to the leader became servile obedience to the Führer. The desire for a healthy body was guided into the Rosenbergian "blood and soil" worship of race and strength. The Hitler-Youth may have appeared to be an innocent effort to continue the old German youth movement, but beyond appearances, similarity ceased. What had been the old youth movement was twisted, perverted, and forced into the mold of Hitler's "new order".

At least one author has suggested that the Hitler-Youth was nothing less than the historical result of the direction in which the youth movement was headed. The H.J. did indeed contain many elements which were prevalent in that movement. But only in the sense that the Hitler-Youth's success is a historical fact is it a historical result.

In reality, it represents the victory by one wing of the German youth movement over the remaining wings. The H.J. wasn't the maiden effort to take over German youth. The churches had tried. The Stahlhelm tried. They even tried in the same postwar period, and could take advantage of the same weaknesses presented to the H.J. The difference is simple: the Hitler-Youth happened to be the youth auxiliary attached to

59. Becker, op. cit., x.
60. For this paragraph, I am indebted to Becker, op. cit., x.
61. It did, of course, take advantage of historical trends, such as the desire to sacrifice and the tendency toward romantic mysticism. Concerning these, the H.J. could be called an historical fulfillment of a single, or of several, trends. But it did not "fulfill" more than a few.
the political party which gained power. By itself it is highly ques-
tionable that the Hitler-Youth would have ever succeeded. But it did,
because it enjoyed at least two insuperable advantages over its fellows:
the derived program, platform and appeal of National Socialism; and the
organizational ability and energy of Baldur von Schirach.

With only the Party, the H.J. would have doubtless succeeded,
after Hitler entrenched himself in power. But with Schirach, the
speed with which it organized, grew, and took over other groups was
truly amazing. Within three short years, it supplanted virtually ev-
ery other group in Germany, most of which had existed for more than
thirty years.
CHAPTER IV

A CHILDHOOD DISTORTED

With a foresight born of their fanatical belief in ultimate victory, the Hitler-Youth leaders had established as early as 1929 the organizational structure they would use as long as the H.J. existed. 1

These early planners divided the H.J. into two sections, on the basis of age. The first covered age ranges from six to fourteen, and included the Pimpf and Deutsche Jungvolk for boys, and the Jungmädchen for girls. The second section was made up of the Hitler-Youth for young men 14 to 18, and the League of German Girls which included young girls from ages 14 to 21. All these groups were loosely gathered under the title Hitler-Youth.

Thus, boys entered the Nazi youth program at age six, and girls when they were ten. Upon reaching their eighteenth birthday, both sexes were permitted to join the Nazi Party. Then, for boys came six months in the Labor Service followed by induction into the Army. 2 Young women remained in the ranks of the State youth until they reached 21. Should they marry before that time, they resigned from the League of

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1. Introduction of the Reich Youth Leadership in 1934 was the only important exception; and even it only centralized existing offices.

2. Even those boys scheduled to enter State service had to complete a six-month stint in the Army. Schirach himself served six months in the Wehrmacht, beginning as a private and rising (remarkably swiftly) in six months to major.
German Girls and entered the National Socialist Married Women's Organization. 3

Fimpfs are hard
taciturn and true
Fimpfs are comrades
\( \text{For} \) the Fimpf the highest \( \text{goal} \)
is honor 4

His "password-slogan" successfully out of the way, the six-year-old Fimpf (little fellow), youngest of the Nazi youths, would be allowed to pass into the room where a number of his playmates were seated. All would have on brown shirts and black shorts similar to his own, while each right arm proudly displayed the swastika armband. Each Fimpf at this weekly meeting knew that anyone not in the Nazi youth as he was, was considered little more than a social outcast. And because of this knowledge, the young boy would work hard to fulfill his sole purpose for being a Fimpf - to qualify himself for the Jungvolk. He had four years in which to prepare himself, but the exams were rigid and he dared not fail.

3. For further information, see RCA, op. cit., V, 69, 70.

4. Reinhold Sautter, Hitler Jugend, Das Erlebnis einer grossen Kameradschaft (München, 1941), 97. It would be impossible in a paper of this sort to include a detailed account of life in the Nazi youth from week to week. What I have therefore attempted to do in this chapter is present the reader with "typical" activities in each organizational subgroup, and then go into greater detail where I feel it necessary.
Each Pimpf carried with him to such meetings a small book. Between its heavy cardboard covers were pages filled with "everything the boy did, thought, or neglected to do from the age of six to fourteen. Every accomplishment and every mistake was registered, signed and countersigned by officials." This was his Leistungsbuch, his performance record book.

Whether or not he passed on to the Jungvolk depended on his total behavior as entered in this record. But it also depended on how well he did in the Pimpfenprobe - the promotion exam given when he reached the age of ten. To pass this Pimpfenprobe the youth had to have a rudimentary knowledge of National Socialist ideology. He needed some skill at running and long-distance hiking, as well as other sports. And he had to know techniques familiar to Boy Scouts the world around - marching, erecting tents, and the like. But he would be quizzed on still more. He had to recite certain Hitler-Youth songs, as well as know his "password-slogans", and be able to give the story of Adolf Hitler's life.

If the ten-year-old Pimpf passed all these tests, and his record in the weekly meetings and on weekend excursions satisfied his youthful H.J. leader, with a solemn oath he stepped up into the Jung-

5. NCA, op. cit., V, 157, 158.

6. Each young boy carried the book with him constantly, until he became a full-fledged Hitler-Youth at age fourteen. Then it was handed over to H.J. officials who from it judged his capabilities for future party service.

7. These were similar to the example given above.
I promise,
to do my duty at all times in the Hitler-Youth.
in love and fidelity
to the Führer and our flag,
So help me God! 8

Of the outstanding purpose of the Jungvolk, Baldur von Schirach wrote in his book Hitler-Youth: Idea and Form that it was designed to teach the ten-year-old "to subordinate his own little will to the laws which, strictly followed, are building states and making nations happy but which, when violated, result in the loss of freedom, in the collapse of folkdom." 9

Schirach went on to say that during his four years, the Jungvolk "learned that discipline and subordination are not inventions of despotism and moreover that they not been created by a few with a lust for power in order to secure their personal positions but that they the prerequisites for the life of the nation and thereby for his own life." 10

The process of teaching this sort of ideology to a ten-year-old who could hardly be expected to understand words like "subordination", let alone apply them to himself - would naturally have failed,

10.Ibid.
Summer Camp. The crossbar inscription reads "Germany is there, where strong hearts are."
if not approached in the right way. So the "Jungvolk leader work more with the instincts of his youth...", by having his young charges memorize Party slogans, holidays of the Nazi Party, and "flag mottoes", such as "He who loves his nation proves it only by the sacrifices which he is ready to make for it... Yes, the flag means more than death." 12

Six months after passing from Pimpf to Jungvolk status, the youth was given a physical fitness test which was later compared with his score on a similar test given at age fourteen, in order to gauge his progress. Even more coveted than their score on this test, was the performance insignia, to gain which a Jungvolk had to pass rigid exams in several areas of learning. 13 In most ways, this exam was no more than a stringent version of the Pimpfenprobe each youth had just passed. But there was one important difference: now the young boy had to learn to shoot an "air-gun", which was really nothing more than an ordinary pellet rifle. Once a youth advanced into the Hitler-Youth, he would learn about higher calibers.

While the youth was in the Jungvolk, besides increasing his knowledge, the leaders attempted to instill in him a "boundless con-

11.Sohirach, op. cit., 83.
12.NCA, op. cit., V, 120, 121.
13.For this test, see Appendix IX.
fidence....The HJ. says to a little Jungvolk-youth...thou canst! In this moment he really can." 15 But he was taught that he could only within the framework of the group. "The great value of the" Jungvolk, according to Schirach, lay "in the fact that [from it the youth would see] that his blind obedience afforded the possibility of success to his group." 16

In this case, after he reached "graduation" age, the oath a youth gave more sharply mirrored the training he had received during the previous four years:

'I promise to serve the Führer Adolf Hitler faithfully and selflessly in the Hitler-Youth. I promise to stand up at all times for the unity and comradeship of the German youth. I promise obedience to the Reich-Youth-Leader, and to all leaders in the H.J. I promise on our holy flag, that I shall always strive to be worthy of it, So help me God!' 17

Girls joined their counterpart to the Jungvolk, the Jungmädchen, at age ten. While in the Jungmädchen, the girl received training similar to that given the boys. Physical exercise requirements were somewhat less, but like the boys, they learned to march, erect tents, run, and all the rest.

The training they received in *Weltanschauung* - philosophy of life - was, however, geared a bit differently. It could be called more simplified. But more than that, *Jungmädchen* teachers carefully disguised basic National Socialist principles in fairy tales, or stories from German mythology. Whatever the tale, it had to meet the requirements first, of pointing out simply and clearly the good from the bad, or the weak from the strong, and secondly, of upholding "community" thinking. This kind of approach would have seemed "simplified" to the boys, but it appealed to young girls' romantic natures.

Similar to a *Jugvölk* at age fourteen, if the *Jungmädchen* passed her tests and had a "clean" *Leistungsbuch*, she repeated her oath and was sworn into the League of German Girls. 18

Schirach set for the B.D.M. two goals. The first was physical development, arising naturally from Hitler's admonition that Nazi Germany "must above all prevent the rearing of a generation of hothouse plants...." 19 To accomplish it, Schirach decreed that after 1933, two-thirds of every B.D.M. meeting would be spent doing physical exercises. 20

The remaining one-third of each meeting was to be taken up with "world outlook schooling", the familiar *Weltanschauung*. Hitler

18. In German, this is the *Bund Deutscher Mädel*. It will be cited hereafter as either B.D.M., or League of German Girls.


20. This decree was changed in 1939 to more strongly emphasize beauty and cultural pursuits.
had further set the example by declaring that the "goal of female education must invariably be the future mother....it must be considered reprehensible: to withhold healthy children from the nation." 21 Schirach's second goal for the B.D.M., therefore, was clear: prepare yourself to be a mother and wife.

To accomplish both goals, the B.D.M. set up a vigorous training program for its girls, held in local homes, or Party headquarters buildings, or even in Hitler-Youth homes. Exercises were performed whenever possible outdoors. It became a familiar sight to see ranks of B.D.M. girls, clad in their dark shorts and white undershirts, jogging down a country lane.

Meetings for members of the B.D.M. under age 17 occurred several nights a week. By the end of their seventeenth year, though, many of these girls had completed their schooling and taken regular jobs. Therefore girls older than seventeen 22 usually attended only one meeting a week. In the twice-monthly weekend excursions, however, all were expected to participate.

Then, early in 1938, the Reich Youth Leader issued a decree changing the goals for B.D.M. girls between the ages 17 and 21. Entitled "Faith and Beauty", 23 this new program greatly lessened empha-

21 Hitler, op. cit., 414, 403, 404.

22 Those who were not away for their Landjahr (year in the country), attended these meetings.

23 Chronik, op. cit., 38.
sis on physical exercise, substituting instead "household science", and various ways to develop cultural skills, as well as bodily grace and agility. To carry out "faith and beauty", Schirach established, in addition to existent training centers, a number of "communes" throughout Germany, local centers where the new subjects could be taught. By the provisions of Schirach's decree, each German girl was bound to the "faith and beauty" commune nearest her home until she either married or became 21. By 1943, the number of such communes scattered across Germany had grown to 30,082. 24

A good deal of the B.D.M. program, of course, dealt with motherhood and its virtues. And since Hitler encouraged all German women to produce more babies, this naturally had its effect on girls in the B.D.M. Several programs, notably the Landjahr, 25 were carried out in conjunction with the young men of the Hitler-Youth, thereby creating situations which encouraged liaisons. Fromiscuity grew to such a degree that the B.D.M. became known as the "League of Soldier's Mattresses or the League of Silly Tarts...." 26 But Hitler had taken to himself

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24. "Altogether at present, in 1943, there stand 30,032 work communes, of which 11,000 [teach] household education (cooking, sewing, tasteful clothing, living-culture, culture in home and family), 1,726 [are] Health-Service work communes, 5,526 [are] work communes for body exercises (gymnastics, light athletics, swimming, tennis, fencing, roller-skating, racing ice-skating, hockey, skiing, water-sports), and 11,820 other work communes [teach] (Folkish life, history, art, poetry, customs of foreign lands, languages, air defense, choral [singing], orchestra, carving, modelling, drawing)." Ibid.

25. This will be discussed in detail below.

full responsibility: "For the morals of the German State and of the German people the leaders of the German State will be responsible - of that we can assure all anxious folk both within and without Germany." 27

In "addition to being trained in the home and at school, physical, spiritual, and moral training in the spirit of National Socialism should be given in the Hitler Youth...." 28 So wrote Hitler in 1936, thus establishing the task for the whole H.J.

Probably in no other phase of the Nazi youth work was this commission more successfully carried out than in the age groups 14 to 18 - among youths in the B.D.M. and Hitler-Youth. This followed, naturally, since the older youths grew, the easier they could comprehend as well as retain what they were being taught.

The B.D.M., as shown above, had training of its own. But the lion's share of Schirach's training efforts went to the young men in the Hitler-Youth. 29 Their proper education was vital, for from their ranks would emerge Germany's future soldiers and Party-members.

In order to receive the education the Party desired him to have, a certain amount of a youth's time had to be given to Hitler-

27. Adolf Hitler, My New Order (N.Y., 1941), 420. This statement is taken from a speech the Chancellor made in Berlin, May 1, 1937.


29. Hereafter this term will be used in its more restricted sense, including only young men from ages 14 to 18. It will also include the several branches of the H.J., such as Flying H.J., Naval H.J., etc., which will be discussed in Chapter V.
Youth service. Schirach's official pronouncement on this subject divided a young man's week into three parts: From Monday through Saturday noon, he went to school, studied and worked; Saturdays after noon were always reserved for the H.J.; finally, Sunday would remain undisturbed. The family's control over Sunday seemed to remain intact.

But this was the official position. In practice, almost every weekday evening was taken up by some form of Hitler-Youth activity. Saturdays had already been claimed, and before long, Sundays too were brought into the fold of Nazi "duty-days".

During the week, from early morning until late afternoon, Hitler-Youths, like others their age, attended their regular schools. Before Hitler had become Chancellor, German young people had gone to regular school six days a week, ending on Saturday noon. After 1933, the Nazi regime condensed the "regular" subjects into the weekdays' classes, and used Saturday mornings as National Socialist training classes.

Twice a week, from the moment they left school till late in the evening, Nazi youths were on duty with their local H.J. group. "Duty" depended on what was thought best, or ordered, to do. It might have been a parade or a rally; it was often the distribution of propaganda leaflets, or collection of various charities, as the annual "Winter-
Help-Relief"; it could be participation in a prearranged "spontaneous" demonstration with the S.A.; frequently, after other tasks in the afternoon, the boys retired to some meeting-place where they listened to speeches by Party dignitaries, or by local leaders. "The grim earnestness of these affairs never \[relaxed\] for a moment." 32

On Wednesday nights occurred the most important event of the week for Hitler-Youths. This was the night for the Heimabend - "home-evening". Assembling in small groups in designated homes, young people all over Germany gathered about their radios to listen to the "Hour of the Young Nation". Beginning at 20 hours (8 P.M.), for sixty minutes they heard broadcast themes such as "'the old German tribes' 'the Knight moves to the East', 'Socialism', 'Peasant War and Reformation', etc.”, 33 or else to one of the frequent anti-Semitic harangues. Of this program, Schirach wrote, "The radio...has never before had so integral a relation to the life of the people as \[in\] this permanent school hour of the national youth." 34 At the close of the radio program, the assembled youths sang H.J. songs, then heard readings from various Nazi literature, as well as listened to short speeches required to be given by each boy present.

These three evenings were all the Hitler-Youth officially took of a boy's time during the week. However, if the lad happened to

32. Frederic Sondern, Jr., "Thousand-Year Reich," The Readers Digest, XXXV (September, 1939), 52.
33. Schirach, op. cit., 133.
34. Ibid., 134.
be enrolled in a state vocational school (and such enrollment was en-
couraged by the H.J.), his class meetings consumed an additional eve-
ning a week. This left one "free" evening from Monday through Friday. 
As though the youth's neglected studies wouldn't take up that one re-
maining evening, the Hitler-Youth managed quite frequently to rob the 
youth of it, too, by calling "special" meetings. 35

Having consumed most of Monday through Friday and half of Sat-
urday in school and Hitler-Youth activities, the German youth came to 
the busiest time of all, the weekend. Just after noon on Saturday, Nazi 
youths all over Germany assembled for their weekly march into the coun-
tryside for outdoor training. On the way out to their training sites, 
the Hitler-Youths strolled in loose formation, talking and enjoying 
the sights. But as soon as they came within the limits of a village or 
city, their step became measured, the formation tightened, and all 
broke forth into "spontaneous" song, rousing the dogs and late sleep-
ers.

Through a small village in Silesia might ring the strains of

Still softly through the forests of Silesia rises to-day our 
song which soon will ring in jubilation through meadow and field, 
and even if our singing and ringing does not please grumblers or 
the devil [the Jew], to us, young Hitler soldiers, hail, the 
world belongs to us. The world. 36

35. But then, studies were no longer so important. Hitler him-
self had made it clear that "...the youthful brain should in general 
not be burdened with things ninety-five per cent of which it cannot 
use and hence forgets again." Hitler, Mein Kampf, op. cit., 418.

36. NCA, op. cit., Supplement A, 545.
The one they most often sang was composed by Baldur von Schirach himself. This was their "flag song".

Our flag flies before us, we march into the future man for man, We march for Hitler through night and through want, With the flag of youth for freedom and bread. Our flag flies before us. Our flag is the new era. And the flag leads us into eternity. The flag is more than death. 37

On some Saturdays, the youths were required to march only a certain distance. On those particular days, they returned home before nightfall. At least twice a month, however, the Saturday march had a specific goal. The group might have been scheduled to spend the night in a youth hostel; or the day's march could end at one of the many tent camps. 38 Numbering nearly two thousand by 1936, these semi-permanent camping areas were equipped with all the facilities needed for Hitler-Youth training, such as rifle ranges and outdoor sports tracks, and were within easy march of almost any point in Germany.

Camp life for a Hitler-Youth was a unique combination of healthy outdoor life and National Socialist education.

At the start of a typical day in camp, "reveille" echoed through the tents shortly after dawn. Boys clad in bathing trunks emerged from their canvas homes and joined together in an endurance run to the nearest river or lake. Returning from the water, they quickly gulped down

37. Ibid.

38. H.J. members were also required to spend three weeks of every summer in such camps.
breakfast and assembled, a half-hour later, in full uniform - shorts, knee socks with dark shoes, and a short-sleeved shirt with "boy scout" neckerchief - around the camp flagpole. Before the flag-raising, a designated boy gave the "parole", or password. 39 If the password for that day happened to be "Herbert Norkus", 40 a second boy would then recite:

"We don't mourn at cold caskets,  
We step up and say: there was one  
Who dared what we all dare.  
His mouth is silent. We step up and say:  
The comradeship is immutable.

Many die. Many are born.  
The world is large which encloses them.  
The word, however, which we have sworn to,  
The word is not lost even to the dead;  
That means: the duty is greater than the world.

The duty to remember what has been  
Before we were. Because we will be  
What others, while we rot in the grave,  
Find worthwhile reading from our life.  
That is more powerful than ore and stone!" 41

Then, the camp leader delivered a brief history of Herbert Norkus, after which the flag was raised. While the swastika-banner rose to its lofty height, the boys stood with arms outstretched in the Hitler-salute, singing, "A young nation is rising, ready to storm...." 42

39. These were selected from a list including "...Scharnhorst-Gneisenau-Mücher-Waterloo...Immelmann...Richthofen...Feldherrnhalle ...." NCA, op. cit., V, 121.

40. Norkus was one of the 21 killed during the H.J.'s "fighting period".

41. NCA, op. cit., V, 119.

42. Ibid., 120.
ally, the flag-ceremony itself came to a close with the recitation of one of Hitler's statements, or a poem by Schirach.

If, as was often the case during weekend camps, this particular morning happened to be Sunday, the flag-ceremony would be followed by what Schirach termed the "Sunday morning celebration". In an H.J. handbook it is described as "a confession to the highest known to the German, but also it is a challenge for action...." 43 Rather than reducing itself to a theological debate, the "celebration" desired "to strengthen life and men through the absolute conviction in the might of God and the ideology of the leader and his party...." 44 In form, it was generally a speech by one of the camp leaders on a suitable theme. 45

In principle, after the "celebration" ended, those among the Hitler-Youth who so desired could attend church. By the terms of both the 1933 Concordat with the Catholic Church and the agreement of 1934 with Reichs Bishop Müller, the right of Hitler-Youths to attend the church services of their choice at least twice a month had been made inviolate. But by various subterfuges these terms were evaded. One

43, Ibid., 122.
44, Ibid.

45. Sample themes considered "suitable" included: "He who wants to live should also fight!....God is mighty in all powerful men. Only he who has learnt to obey, can later command....He who loves his nation, proves it only through sacrifice." Ibid. From time to time, an "object-lesson" play would be produced in place of a speech. The players normally included a communist, a Jew, a Catholic, and a "typical" Aryan German youth. Each was dressed as an extreme example of the character he portrayed. Thus, the "Jew" wore glasses and an artificial nose, and the other "actors" were likewise "fittingly" dressed.
method was to insist that Hitler-Youths report for duty fully uniformed right after church. Since many churches in Germany forbade anyone to attend in military uniform, the youths had no time to change, and therefore were forced to skip church. But the Hitler-Youth seems to have unofficially relied on the ridicule heaped by his fellows on anyone who did go to church to keep attendance low. Ridicule of church-going arose naturally from songs such as:

'We are the rollicking Hitler Youth;
We have no need of Christian truth;
For Adolf Hitler is our Leader
And our Interceder.'

Finally, in March 1941, further church attendance by Hitler-Youths was absolutely "forbidden".

The remainder of Sunday afternoon would be taken up by a short period of sports or target shooting with .22 caliber rifles, or another activity which the H.J. called "terrain sports". This consisted of sneaking about the countryside with maps and compasses, attempting to surround and surprise the enemy's camp or his "troops". Just before dusk, the return march began, and with it the camp-weekend came to a close for the Hitler-Youth.

46. For specific church objections to the tactics used by the H.J., see the German Evangelical Church Manifesto of August 23, 1936 in Henri Lichtenberger, The Third Reich (N.Y., 1937), 344, as well as the 1937 Papal Encyclical "Mit brennender Sorge" in Ibid., 357.

47. Ibid., op. cit., XIV, 476.

At Nürnberg in 1946, the prosecution asserted that all this "terrain sport" and rifle shooting constituted pre-military training, specifically forbidden by the Versailles treaty. Schirach and his co-workers, however, consistently denied that allegation, citing in defense of these practices the fact that they were performed by "boy scout" type organizations the world over. In fact, the "British Board of Education [had] recommended this rifle training, and also the entire H.J. handbook, to Boy Scouts." 49 And yet, in an interview with the Associated Press Bureau Chief in Berlin, Schirach had declared,

'I would favor quasi-military education even if Germany were surrounded by disarmed neighbors, for the simple reason that the tendency of such training is peaceful and humane. We want nothing except to make our youth healthy and happy. To attain this ideal we need bodily training. Our soldierly attitude has nothing in common with militarism....' 50

Was the Hitler-Youth training its members for military service? Of course. 51 But in the age group served by the H.J., all that

49. TMC, op. cit., XIV, 522.

50. Lochner, op. cit., 70. This statement has the ring of a parody by Peter Ustinov. In one scene, Ustinov has his imaginary Nazi at Nürnberg answer, "All my life I have worked untiringly for peace. If only Poland, Britain, Russia and America had not resisted us, there need have been no war. Since the possibility of maintaining peace was in other hands, it is ungentlemanly to blame us for making war." Peter Ustinov, We Were Only Human (London, 1961), no page numbers used.

51. Adolf Hitler presented a crystal-clear picture of the Hitler-Youth's position in Nazi Party thinking in a speech at the 1935 Nürnberg Reichsparteitag: "...the boy, will step into the [Fimpf], and the [Jungvolk] will come to the Hitler-Youth, and the Youth of the Hitler-Youth, will then enter the S.A., the S.S. and the other organizations, and the SA men and the SS men will one day enter the Arbeidtdienst [Labor-Service] and from there to the Army...." Adolf Hitler, Adolf Hitler an seine Jugend (Berlin, 1937), no page numbers used.
was necessary for Schirach to do was develop a "military attitude", a familiarity with handling weapons, with marching, with taking orders. The Wehrmacht could provide all the necessary polish later on. If, however, a dispassionate observer were to remove the Hitler-Youth from its historical-geographical location, except for its brand of ideological indoctrination, it would appear only a little more sinister than the average group of American Boy Scouts.

Not only did soldiers come from the H.J., but the training of future leaders for Germany was one of the tasks the Führer had reserved especially for the Hitler-Youth. At regular H.J. leadership schools at Potsdam, Braunschweig and elsewhere, 765,000 male and female leaders had been trained by May 1939. Moreover, beginning in early 1937, certain outstanding youths could go to one of seven Adolf Hitler Schools, designed, in the words of one Party functionary, to pay for themselves by producing one more Adolf Hitler. Entrance into these schools came at age 12 for outstanding Jungvolks who had been nominated by "the pertinent authorities." Students at Adolf Hitler Schools paid no fees, but had to submit themselves to special training designed jointly by Rosenberg, Hitler, and Schirach. Graduates, who usually completed their schooling by age 18, could eventually hold any job in Germany, even Hitler's.

52. If one were to carry this argument to its extreme, the Boy Scouts offer their own brand of "indoctrination", based, however, on a more acceptable "brand" of ideology to the Western mind.

53. NCA, op. cit., V, 14.
Sometime around their seventeenth year, many boys of the Hitler-Youth and girls of the B.D.H. set out for the Landjahr. This "year in the country" (which actually lasted nine months) sent thousands of German young people from the cities to live and work in peasant homes. It by no means included all German youth, since it was designed only for "young people who had completed grammar school and lived in cities, particularly industrial cities of 25,000 inhabitants and over." 54

But for those who did go it proved an invigorating time. 55 Boys generally worked in the fields, helping with the harvesting. But girls played at least as important a role, and in some ways they were the most vital members of the Landjahr program.

At numerous Land-Service camps throughout the rural areas, these "city" girls learned the principles of modern hygiene, as well as skills such as canning, cooking, scientific gardening and the like. Then, after completing their short training course, they were sent into peasant

54. John B. Holt, Under The Swastika (Chapel Hill, 1936), 121. Holt lived in Germany from 1931 to 1935.

55. The impetus for the Landjahr, which began in 1934, came from the incorporation into the H.J. of the Artamen, "conservative alliance youth with agrarian reform as their goal...", (Becker, op. cit., 191) in the year 1934. A typical day in a Land-Service peasant home went something like the following: 6 A.M., rising bell, followed by setting-up exercises and a cross-country run; 6:30 - 7, cleaning-up; 7 - 8, flag-raising, breakfast; 8 - noon, work, followed by lunch; 1 - 2 P.M., free time, compulsory bed rest for girls; 2 - 3:15, sports, followed by tea; 4:15 - 6:00, political education and group activity; 7:00, flag lowering in full uniform, followed by evening meal; 7:30 - 8:30, campfire circle; 9 P.M., lights out. Ibid., 195.
homes in the surrounding area. There they taught what they had learned to German peasants who, in many cases, had no idea at all of such modern concepts as personal hygiene, or proper room ventilation or sanitation. These Landjahr efforts did much toward introducing modern techniques of cooking, of cleanliness, of scientific farming to German peasants who for centuries had used the same primitive methods. No "agrarian revolution" emerged from the work of Landjahr youths, but certainly more progress was made in four or five years than had occurred in the previous several decades or more. Young people, many of whom had left their city environment only infrequently, grew tanned and healthy. Crops were harvested sooner than ever before. Marshlands in Brandenburg were drained and the rich soil reclaimed for farming. And, public works which had never been more than dreams emerged into reality. 56

But there are other sides to the Landjahr. Out in the country, youths were subjected to a great deal more Nazi propaganda — up to three hours a day — than they had had back home. These youths also proved to be excellent "circuit riders" carrying the Nazi doctrine deeper and deeper into the hinterland. Moreover, the presence of a B.D.H. girl in the household provided the opportunity for the peasant mother

56. In the year 1933, 70,000 youths served in the Landjahr; in 1934, the figure had grown to 500,000. In addition to these youths, others participated in the "Land Service", designed to aid with planting and harvesting. But the "land service" was considerably smaller than the Landjahr. In 1936, for example, only 6,500 youths participated in the "service".
to have another baby, in keeping with Hitler's program.

But all the Nazi indoctrination about having more babies had its effect on young people as well. Normally, H.J. boys and B. D. M. girls lived in separate camps. But twice weekly they met together, one night for Heimabend - political evening - and one day for joint sports events. Conscious of pro-baby propaganda, as well as feeling the vigor of their young bodies growing from steady exercise, these young people naturally took advantage of the relative lack of supervision. Too, their "uniforms" contributed a great deal. Girls wore nothing under the gym shorts and white athletic undershirts, and the boys generally went around stripped down to their short pants for working on hot summer days.

One observer wrote, "All mothers dread...the excursions of the 'Hitler Maidens', for most of them are no longer maidens when they return and at least fifty per cent come home pregnant." 59

57. Peasant women were expected to avail themselves of this opportunity. The nine-month length of the Landjahr is probably only coincidental.

58. Die Jugend des Führers Adolf Hitler, Bildbuch über die Grossdeutschejugend (Leipzig, 1942), no page numbers used. Regular winter uniforms were blouses, long skirts, and brogans.

59. Bella Fromm, Blood and Banquets... (N.Y., 1942), 210. Mrs. Fromm continued this dialogue by recounting the story of a friend's daughter. "When Hilda finally had to join the labor services, she came back expecting a baby...Hilda...said, 'I am proud to be able to give Hitler a baby. I hope it will be a boy to die for HIM.' Turning to me, she said: 'Please do not call me Hilda any more, and refrain from using the familiar Du when talking to me. I am one of the Fuehrer's brides and do not care to talk to anti-National Socialists.'" Ibid. Mrs. Fromm was a prominent (though anti-Nazi) socialite
Hitler, in several of his "table talks" commented that this was precisely what he hoped and expected would happen. Baldur von Schirach wrote the League of German Girls a fitting poem. Its first two lines read, "We are the gate, which leads into the future, / We are the tree, on which the fruit ripens...." 60

Parents naturally resented so constant and insidious an intrusion into their children's as well as their own lives. "Family life', Hitler remarked, 'is an old-fashioned conception. We have no need for it in our new life, which puts the state above all. Don't trust anybody. Watch your wife. Watch your children. Watch everybody. And report their activities to the government." Schirach insisted that "Only the Führer knows his youth, of their father and mother, of their life's involvement, their home, their luck and their cares." 62

Parents saw themselves and their homes under attack, and they reacted in many different ways.

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and society reporter for the Ullstein papers in Berlin until she was forced to flee in 1941. Her book is quite accurate in other areas, so there is no reason to disbelieve this particular account. Similarly, another famous story made the rounds of Germany during this time. A 17-year-old girl, according to the story, wrote her mother a letter from camp: "Dear mother, 80 per cent of the girls are pregnant - so am I. Your loving daughter." Heinrich Hauser, Battle Against Time A Survey Of The Germany Of 1939 From The Inside (N.Y., 1939), 308.

60. Das Lied der Getreuen (Verse ungenannter österreichischer Hitler-Jugend aus den Jahren der Verfolgung 1933-37... (Leipzig, 1941), 21.
There were those who chose to write letters of protest to Reich Youth Leader von Schirach personally. "I always considered that [type of letter]", said Schirach, "a special proof of the confidence which the parents had in me." 63 Many parents, to protect themselves, gave their children such answers as "I never trouble myself with political questions", or, "Yes, I'm a National Socialist, now stop bothering me." Such answers can hardly be expected to have gained the youth's sympathy. On the contrary, it drove him or her closer to Hitler's waiting arms. Many parents, too, who can be no more numbered than named, bravely chose to quietly and clearly, but secretly instruct their sons and daughters in what they believed right. 64 That even the limited opposition to the Hitler-Youth that was present in Germany throughout these years could have existed at all, is due at least partially to parents and teachers who with courage refused to surrender their personal integrity in the face of constant pressure.

For the majority, however, the gnawing suspicion that their own child might be a state informer drove a deep and impassable gulf between adults and children. Illustrating this gulf, Edward Hartshorne relates the story of a six-year-old girl caught up in the Nazi vortex. While she was playing at home with a friend, the two of them overheard her father criticizing the government. The friend insisted to the six-

63. MWG, op. cit., XIV, 376.

64. They did this in spite of the very real danger of being turned in to the police by their own children.
year-old that she turn her father in to the police. Her refusal was met with the friend's blunt statement that since her brother in the H.J. had told her that a good German should love the Führer first, unless the little girl reported her father, she would do it, making it harder on everyone. So, the little girl hesitantly turned her father in. When he returned from his visit to the police station, the father refused to speak to his daughter. What had heretofore been a contented home now saw a curtain of suspicion rise up in its midst. The "system" had won.

That many parents suffered in the contest for their children's loyalty cannot be doubted. But what of the children themselves? These children were subject to perhaps even greater pressure than were their parents. Certainly it was more insidious.

If the youth was not a practicing Nazi — meaning active in the H.J. — he was prohibited from taking his final high-school examinations. Without having successfully passed these exams, it was impossible for him to enter college. Even if he didn't wish to continue on to college, many of the most meaningful professions would be still closed to him. Only former H.J. members could become doctors, artists, or teacher or writers. Only ex-Nazi youth would be eligible for jobs in local, state or national government. Moreover, pressure from a young person's

65 This story appears in Hartshorne, op. cit., 18.
friends often became unbearable. Richard Wagner's granddaughter, Friedelind, described the pressures she felt: "I involved myself in difficulties immediately by refusing to join the B.D.J...When I did not, one of the mistresses of the Wagner household in newly discovered zeal for Hitler, flung at me, 'Friedelind is not a National Socialist - she is a traitor.'"

Reich Youth Leader von Schirach expressed his own sort of concern for those youths outside the movement: "Youngsters who did not join the Hitler Youth were at a disadvantage in that they could not take part in our camping, in our trips, in our sporting meets. They were in a certain sense outsiders of the youth life, and there was a danger that they might become hypochondriacs."

Schirach, however, allowed the causes for such a difficult decision for young people to exist only three years after passage of the 1936 law. In 1939 he issued supplementary decrees to the earlier legislation, making membership in the Hitler-Youth compulsory for everyone.

Before a proper perspective toward the methods and goals used by the Hitler-Youth can be established, it is necessary to examine what the Führer himself wished for "his" youth. For it was largely

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67. Ibid., op. cit., XIV, 376.

68. At Nürnberg it was claimed that these 1939 laws didn't do much, for 99% of Germany's youth was already in the Hitler-Youth. For the full text of these laws, see Appendices VII and VIII.
to fulfill Hitler's desires that Schirach guided the H.J. as he did.

In my great educative work [Hitler said]...I am beginning with the young. We older ones are used up...We are bearing the burden of...dull recollection of servitude and servility. But my magnificent youngsters!...What material! With them I can make a new world.

My teaching is hard. Weakness has to be knocked out of them. ...A violently active, dominating, intrepid, brutal youth - that is what I am after....I want to see once more in [youths'] eyes the gleam of pride and independence of the beast of prey. Strong and handsome must my young men be. I will have them fully trained in all physical exercises,...In this way I shall eradicate the thousands of years of human domestication....

I will have no intellectual training. Knowledge is ruin to my young men....But one thing they must learn - self command!...Out of [this] comes the stage of free man, the man who is the substance and essence of the world, the creative man, the god-man. 69

Following these guidelines, and similar ones he had learned from Mein Kampf and from Hitler personally, 70 Schirach established for the H.J. certain definite goals.

First, and equivalent in importance only to physical development, the Reich Youth Leader desired to teach his youths - both average members and leaders - the Weltanschauung, the philosophy of National Socialism as thoroughly as possible. To achieve this goal, he

69. Rauschnng, The Voice Of Destruction, op. cit., 251, 252. The reader will find ample evidence of this point of view in Mein Kampf, where there are literally hundreds of similar sentences.

70. Schirach was married to Henny Hoffmann, the daughter of Hitler's personal photographer, Heinrich Hoffmann. Henny was a great favorite of Hitler's and for a time lived in the Hitler household with her father. Even after her marriage to Schirach, Hitler continued to hold her in great esteem, and so became a frequent visitor to the Schirach home until the war began.
employed a number of devices. Many have been discussed above: the speeches given at the twice-weekly meetings; the carefully controlled Wednesday evening Heimabend, with its radio broadcast "Hour of the Young Nation"; the more intensive indoctrination youths received at their weekend, summer, and leadership camps; and the parades and Lendjahr and other devices.

But Schirach also managed to see nearly every member of the Hitler-Youth in person at least three times a year. He did this by visiting camps, where he could see a large number of boys at once, and by maintaining a frantic traveling schedule. By leaving his paperwork to be completed by his subordinates in Berlin, he was able personally to hold frequent conferences with lower-level H.J. leaders. By such intimate contact, he not only cultivated and held the youths' loyalty, but could more easily guide them in the direction he himself wished.

In seeking to further spread the Nazi doctrine, Schirach also enlisted aid from every sector of Party and Nation. The Grossdeutscher Rundfunk - national radio - devoted part of its broadcast day to the Schulfunk, an educational program beamed ostensibly to German school children, but in reality containing information designed to supplement the lessons taught in the Hitler-Youth. Numerous Party leaders and heroes of the World War also spoke to the youth, in person and via radio.
Especially was this true of Julius Streicher. 71

The most intensive speech-making by party leaders heard by the Hitler-Youth occurred at the annual Nürnberg Party-Day. There, H.J. units outstanding enough to be selected to march in review, heard speeches by Hitler, Göring, Göbbels, and many others. 72 For those not lucky enough to hear their Führer in person, all the speeches were reprinted in the various news media, and shown in newsreels.

The Reich Youth Leadership itself published a veritable barrage of youth periodicals — nineteen in all, 73 in addition to offer-

71. In one speech Streicher gave in 1936, he called to the assembled youths, "'Do you know who the Devil is?"....'The Jew, the Jew," resounded from a thousand children's voices." NCA, op. cit., II, 704. For a fairly typical passage from Streicher's books for young people, this one entitled the Poisonous Fungus, see Appendix X.

72. Those Hitler-Youths who had actually seen Hitler were very nearly revered by their fellows.

73. The most important of these periodicals was the magazine Wille und Kraft (Will and Strength). Here are a few titles of articles appearing in its 1933 numbers: "History and Eastern Politics; The Population-Political-Movement of the Ostmark (Austria); Spengler — Sayings On Politics; The Nordic Race In The United Kingdom; The Jew In Germany; The Czechoslovakian Press In Vienna; Jews And Science; The German Jews in Paris as the Center of the Abominable Mad Race [Greuelhetze]; German-Russian Relations in Racial-Historical Considerations; Richard Wagner, the Announcer of the German Revolution; The Sudeten German Question; The Catechism of the New Youth Movement; Positive Christianity; The Eternal Jew; The Revolution of F.D. Roosevelt; The Bolshevik Leader-Type is a Jew...." Wille und Kraf, Halbmonatschrift des jungen Deutschland Führerblatt der Nationalsozialistischen Jugend, Balfur von Schirach, ed. (München, various dates). A fairly complete listing of these H.J. periodicals with descriptions of each can be found in NCA, op. cit., V, 117, 118. The periodicals themselves are in the Library of Congress.
ing the Reich Youth Press Service to all German and many foreign dailies. Besides periodicals, the "Press and Propaganda Office of the Hitler Youth" 74 issued books, pamphlets, and assorted printed material, as well as short-subject films and full-length movies.

During the winter months, a series of these full-length films was offered under the name "Youth film hours". 75 These film hours were one of the few propaganda programs which was voluntary for youth. Voluntary or not, their low admission price - 20 pfennigs - caused them to draw an attendance only slightly smaller than they would have had they been compulsory.

The Press and Propaganda Office published, or approved for publication, hundreds of books for the Hitler-Youth. Among them, probably the most important was Fritz Brennecke's Of The German People and their Lebensraum. 76 It was this book which provided the most cogent, easily comprehensible account of Nazi racial theories, and of the necessity for the German Volk to expand toward the east. It was one of the very few "textbooks" actually used by the Hitler-Youth itself, since it preferred to leave the task of formal education to the schools.

In its efforts to educate the youths in National Socialist philo-

74. NCA, op. cit., VI, 79.
75. Ibid., V, 116.
76. Fritz Brennecke, Vom deutschen Volk und seinem Lebensraum (Handbuch für die Schulungsarbeit in der HJ) (München, 1937), Harold L. Childs, tr.
Sophy, the Hitler-Youth certainly achieved thoroughness. Neither can there be any doubt that in most cases, these efforts succeeded. However, there were exceptions. Until 1936 or 1937, the H.J. had quite a few former members of groups which had been forcibly incorporated into the Nazi youth. Many among this number tried to resist the Nazi propaganda on a clandestine level, but few were able to do more than register feeble protests. The Hitler-Youth was by then too well entrenched in power. Those who assumed they could resist the H.J. propaganda quickly discovered that a lie told often enough is soon difficult to distinguish from the truth. After 1937 or 1938, those entering the H.J. had just finished duty in the Jungvolk and Pimpfs, and would have been less likely to cause trouble.

Schirach's second goal was really Hitler's first love, to build a strong and healthy young Germany. In cooperation with Reich Sports Leader von Tschammer und Osten, the Hitler-Youth succeeded in a remarkably short time in improving the health standards and fitness of Germany's youth. With the aid of some 4,000 doctors, 800 dentists and 500 pharmacists, as well as Wehrmacht medical specialists, each youth was given a thorough physical examination as well as needed medical attention. By 1939, most Hitler-Youths radiated energy, health and vigor, the natural by-product of so many hours spent marching, drilling, and participating in "terrain sports". In improving its mem-

77. Hauser, op. cit., 119.
bers' health, the H.J. succeeded most admirably.

As his third goal, Schirach worked to improve vocational skills among German youth. To achieve it, the Reich Youth Leader worked closely with the German Labor Front, the labor organization created by Dr. Robert Ley. Beginning in 1933, they jointly established a system of vocational training centers throughout Germany, specifically geared to the needs of young people. As an added incentive, each level of Party organization (from the village up) held a contest for vocational apprentices, designed to test a participant's ability to finish well a specific assignment in a given time. If he won the local contest, he passed on to the next higher level, and so on, until finally he won the district (Gau) contest. Now he was eligible to participate along with the other Gau winners in the Reichsberufswettkampf — the National-Crafts-Competition. In 1934, the first year of these contests, over one million men and women took part in them on all levels in Germany. Although limited to manual tasks such as bricklaying and carpentry, these competitions did succeed in materially influencing Germany's supply of skilled laborers. German youths normally began their vocational training right after their Landjahr service.

At the same time, and adjunct to improving their skills, Schir-

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78 A comparable program existed for encouraging scientists, engineers, technicians, etc., but it was limited primarily to visits to scientific firms in Germany. The highest goal which the H.J. youth was taught to reach was, first, Party leadership, then position in the Party bureaucracy, then military service. The vocations came up a poor fourth. Toward the end of 1943, frequent pleas by industrialists for more skilled engineers, etc., indicated the myopia of this policy.
ach sought to revise the labor laws as they pertained to young people. He did succeed in shortening working hours, in abolishing night work for young people altogether, as well as prohibiting child labor, and in introducing three weeks' paid vacation annually for youths. Later, though, he lamented, "It was only part of what I wanted to achieve." 79

Schirach's final, and most enigmatic major goal was to achieve cooperation among youth of all nationalities. To accomplish this, he dispatched to other countries yearly about six thousand H.J. members, and brought some 250,000 foreign youths into Germany from a number of countries. 80 In his book Hitler-Youth, Schirach set the limitations on outgoing H.J. members:

Hitler boys who go abroad do not travel as propagandists of National Socialism; their task is not to teach but to learn. They should see the beauty of the foreign landscape and explore the national characteristic of the host-country.... Probably the world would not improve but the people could become juster.... 81

The purpose of his efforts to achieve worldwide youth cooperation is most unclear. At Nürnberg, it was charged that Schirach planted youthful intelligence operatives among these 6,000 Hitler-Youths who visited abroad each year before the war, to locate promising invasion routes, strategic bombing targets, etc. Although it is possible - if not likely - that some of these youths were spies, it seems highly

79. NKG, op. cit., XIV, 394.
80. Italy, France, Belgium, Holland, Yugoslavia, the U. S., Sweden, Finland, England, Portugal, Spain, Hungary, Poland, Syria, Egypt, and Japan.
81. NKG, op. cit., IV, 409.
unlikely that Schirach sent them out as such. He expended herculean efforts for international unity. In a majority of his speeches after 1933, he alluded in some way to this kind of cooperation. Often he personally took charge of visiting groups, making certain they enjoyed every convenience and that their impression of Germany's youth work was complete. Was he sincerely working for international understanding? As his Nürnberg psychiatrist noted, it must be remembered that throughout his career, Schirach "remained the enthusiastic juvenile". 82 But was his purpose in appearing an "internationalist" juvenile or sinister? Unfortunately, this must remain one of the paradoxical facets of Schirach's actions.

Another aspect of this international understanding is more clearly understandable. That is Schirach's desire to educate the children of Ausland Germans - nationals living abroad - in the ways of the Hitler-Youth. To do this, he chose, as he often did, to operate through an existing institution, which institution then became virtually a subordinate of the H.J. In May, 1933, he entered into an agreement with the old League for Germandom in Foreign Lands. 83

82 Kelley, op. cit., 92. For whatever value it may be, the Nürnberg Tribunal decided that Schirach probably had no foreknowledge of Hitler's plans for war. See TMWC, op. cit., XXII, 564.

83 Volksbund für das Deutschum im Ausland (VDA). This organization, founded in Austria in 1880, had worked for the maintenance and protection of Germanic culture wherever German emigrants were found. Hitler, curiously enough, had been a member of the VDA as a boy in Brannau-am-Inn. After 1933 and its virtual takeover by the Hitler-Youth, it became an office designed to promote Nordic racial ideals.
agreement amounted to a Hitler-Youth takeover of the League's facilities. Through what were formerly the League's offices, now called the Hitler-Youth foreign office, lecturers, leader-training specialists, and various publications went forth to Hitler-Youth organizations in fifty-two foreign lands, including the United States. The official statement declared that the Hitler-Youth foreign office "cares...for the youth of the German settlements abroad, in Europe and South America, and elsewhere and awakens in the Reich German Youth the understanding for the brothers and sisters abroad." 84

While Schirach enthusiastically, but naively went about his tasks, Germany ground inexorably toward war.

84 NCA, op. cit., IV, 409.
CHAPTER V

"Führer, we thank thee"

The Hitler-Youth, 1 since the mid-1920's had been subdivided into several branches, according to the type of service performed. Most members entered "general" service, and followed the program of training described in the previous chapter. For a privileged few who qualified, however, the H.J. provided more specialized branches, such as the Flying H.J., Naval H.J. and several others.

From Monday through Saturday noon, members of these branches were responsible for generally the same training tasks assigned to the "regular" Hitler-Youth. But on the weekends and in summer camps, training varied considerably. As the war drew closer, the importance of these optional groups became more apparent. At Nürnberg, Schirach frankly admitted what had been obvious all along, that these units offered nothing less than full-scale military training to their members.

Up to 1937, boys in the Motorized Hitler-Youth learned primarily how to drive automobiles and motorcycles, most of which were donated by various industries. 2 Once they received their driver's licenses, they were put to work as couriers between tent camps or as chauffeurs for H.J. officials. In 1937, Schirach concluded an agree-

1. This term continues to refer solely to boys in the 14-18 age group.
ment with the National Socialist Motor Corps, whereby the latter organization opened its training facilities to the motorized H.J., to train the youths in engine theory and repair. Also included in the agreement was a provision, that thereafter the N.S. Motor Corps would accept volunteers only from the ranks of the Motorized Hitler-Youth. Needless to say, these former motorcycle drivers rendered important wartime service as mechanics and drivers in the motorized divisions of the Wehrmacht.

The Naval Hitler-Youth had no comparable agreement with the German Navy. Although its organizational manual emphasized that it existed primarily for those boys who wished to serve in either the merchant marine or navy later on, the Naval H.J. was not limited to such youths. According to Schirach, "just because they had been in the Navy HJ, these boys did not go into the Navy, but just as many went afterwards into the Army or the Air Force, and it was the same with other special units...." Naval H.J. training consisted largely of classes in seamanship, accompanied by practical application in sailing craft, rowboats, or occasionally in a small craft loaned by Admiral Erich Raeder.

Boys who wanted to become pilots joined the Flying Hitler-Youth. Through informal cooperation with the National Socialist Flying Corps, these youths began their training by building balsa-wood

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3. For the full text of this manual, see NCA, op. cit., V, 361, 362.
4. TNWC, op. cit., XIV, 384.
model airplanes. Then came courses of instruction in flight theory, aircraft maintenance and repair, followed by actual flight training. Partly to evade the restrictions against propeller-driven flight training imposed by the Treaty of Versailles, and partly through lack of funds, H.J. flight training was conducted exclusively in gliders. In this way, Air Marshal Göring had, by 1939, a group of trained fliers, who needed only brief experience in powered flight to become fighter pilots. 5

Several other special units existed to train army support personnel. These included the Signal Hitler-Youth which trained telegraphers and field-telephone experts, along with the Entertainment H.J., with its bands, orchestras and "cultural experts".

The last, and perhaps most intriguing branch was that one through which Heinrich Himmler gained most of his recruits for the S.S. This was the Streifendienst, the H.J. Patrol Service, roughly equivalent to the army's military police. Until Schirach's agreement with Himmler in 1938, the Streifendienst served to insure against disorder during meetings or marches, and it also conducted investigations

5: This author spent more than two years at what was formerly considered the finest German pilot training base, Rothwiesen, near Kassel. Its facilities included not only a camouflaged landing field, but underground hangars, a disguised underground refueling system which could refuel as many as 40 planes at once, and billets which, even after more than 30 years of constant use, are like new. Judging from small murals left there by the pilots, most post-glider flight instruction took place in older bi-wing trainers.
within the H.J., as well as combatted "juvenile delinquency" throughout Germany. 6 But the patrol-service, like the whole Hitler-Youth, was still subject to regular police jurisdiction.

Desiring to end the jurisdiction of the German police over the H.J., Schirach began negotiations with German police chief Himmler. 7 The agreement they reached in October 1938 read in part,

Since the Streifendienst in the HJ has to perform tasks similar to those of the SS for the whole movement, it is organized as a special unit for the purpose of securing recruits for the general SS; however, as much as possible recruits for the SS special troops, for SS death head troops, and for the officer candidate schools should also be taken from these formations. 8

By this agreement, Schirach received his desired autonomy for the Hitler-Youth. Henceforth, only the H.J. patrol-service could arrest anyone in the State youth organizations. The Reich Youth Leader, however, had to further agree that before a youth would be accepted for patrol-service duty, he would pass a physical examination given by an S.S. doctor. This was necessitated by the last provision in the agreement, wherein Himmler agreed to take his S.S. 'replacements primarily from these Streifendienst members.' 9

6. The term "juvenile delinquency", in Nazi parlance, included, in addition to its accepted meaning, any young person who opposed the Hitler-Youth.

7. Himmler, in addition to being the Reichsführer S.S., held the position "Chief of the German Police".

8. NCA, op. cit., V, 63.

9. Ibid., 64.
Little more than a month later, in December 1938, Himmler and Schirach signed a second agreement. This one affected those boys who wanted to become farmers after completing their various State obligations. Before this time, they had been permitted to join a special H. J. farm service section, where they received advanced farm training. However, by Schirach's new arrangement with Himmler, preference in selecting members of this farm service section would be given to boys "who suited the special demands of the SS according to physical conditions and moral attitude." 10

By these agreements, Himmler was also permitted to place S.S. liaison officers 11 in each H.J. district office. Not only did they advise the H.J. patrol-service, but they served as general recruiting officers for the S.S., by conducting frequent "orientation courses-of-instruction." 12

Entrance requirements for the S.S. were, however, quite stringent. In Himmler's own words, "Of 100 men we can use on the average 10 or 15, no more." 13 Not as many boys, therefore, entered the S.S. as

10. Ibid., 301. The first provision of this new accord commented that the "farm service of the HJ is according to education and aim particularly well suited as a recruiting organization for the Schutzstaffel (generally SS and the armed parts of the SS: SS special troops and SS death head battalions)." Ibid. Evidently it was presumed that boys oriented to life on a farm would be of an intellectual level high enough to carry out orders but sufficiently low not to question them.

11. Verbindungsoffiziere.


might be first assured. Nonetheless, the fact remains that nearly all of Himmler's S.S. replacements came from the Hitler-Youth. Even though he took only 10-15% of all applicants, from an organization which had grown to eight-and-one-half million young people by 1938, he would have had more than enough from whom to choose. 14

An atmosphere of feverish activity marked military as well as diplomatic offices in the few days just prior to the Munich agreement. Most people expected war to come momentarily. Although no one outside Germany was aware of it, the German Army had already been mobilized. The Hitler-Youth, too, stood ready for anything. On September 28, two days before Chamberlain agreed to hand over the Sudetenland, an order went out from the Reich Youth Leadership. In "case of war", 15 it read, all H.J. members aged 17 and 18 were to be thrown together, rushed through three-month "short-education" training courses, and from there be sent directly to the Wehrmacht. When, less than two days later, the Munich pact was signed, Schirach said, with what may have been relief, "I regarded [the pact] as the basis for peace, and it was my firm conviction that Hitler would keep that agreement." 16

Nevertheless, eleven months later, he and General Keitel 17 signed

14. This figure is made up of three million girls, and five-and-one-half million boys. Chronik, op. cit., 34.
16. TMUC, op. cit., XIV, 390. Schirach had broken so many agreements himself it seems difficult to believe his statement here.
17. Keitel was negotiating for the High Command of the Wehrmacht (OKW).
an accord for "the collaboration of the Wehrmacht in the military education of the HJ." Principally it enabled the Wehrmacht to roughly double the number of Hitler-Youth leaders to whom it gave two-week field defense training courses.

By this accord, Hitler-Youth training methods, names of administrative divisions, organization, etc., would thenceforth imitate Wehrmacht practices as closely as possible. Finally, the pact ordered a Wehrmacht liaison officer attached to each H.J. Bann.

Schirach at Nürnberg denied the military significance of the pact, commenting that a "young man of 16 cannot be trained along military lines in a short two-week training course," nor was that the purpose of the agreement." In making this statement, undoubtedly he was right. What the agreement did accomplish, however, was to make uniform

18. NCA, op. cit., V, 66, 67. This order is dated August 11, 1939. Schirach at Nürnberg disputed the statement that he and Keitel had actually negotiated this pact, but an examination of the text reveals that it was made as a "result of a close cooperation of... General Keitel, and...Schirach...." Ibid.

19. This raised the number of participants from 30,000 to around 60,000.

20. The Bann was the lower administrative level. Since Banns were one level lower than districts, and S.S. liaison officers were stationed only at districts, the Wehrmacht had many times more of these officers than did the S.S. Their recruiting efforts were probably correspondingly more successful.

the training employed in the H.J. with that of the Wehrmacht. And, at least some value came from the two-week training courses, or they would not have been held.

But the seeming innocence of this accord assumes another form when considered in light of a document published just two days before, on August 9, 1939. On that date, Hitler's secretary, Rudolf Hess, issued an order entitled "Tasks and Employment of the HJ in the War". Bearing the stamp "GEHEIM" (Secret) on its upper right hand corner, the order acknowledged that responsible leaders in the H.J. had already been given their war instructions, which they must begin to carry out "at once". Its third article stated that the "HJ remains responsible also during the war for the organization, accomplishment, education, discipline and leadership of its members." In this light, the accord between Schirach and General Keitel two days later sheds its innocent exterior, and becomes transformed into a war necessity: to make pre-military service training in the H.J. as precisely like that to be met in the Wehrmacht as possible. That this step would make the Wehrmacht's training job easier goes without saying. And, it proves that by this date, if not before, Baldur von Schirach was well aware that Germany was heading straight for war.

22. NSDAP Records, op. cit., Reel 101, Frame 117398, dated August 9, 1939.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. That an order from the Führer's secretary to the Hitler-Youth could have escaped Schirach's notice would have been virtually impossible.
In order to relate the complete story of the Hitler-Youth during the war years, it would be necessary to write a social and military history of Germany in World War II. This paper is, however, of limited scope and cannot indulge in so detailed an account. Moreover, other works are available to the reader which cover the subject of Germany in the war years. 26 What follows concerning the Hitler-Youth in the Second World War is by nature a vignette, a general tour through the period with closer consideration of the more important points.

By a decree published on Hitler's fifty-first birthday, April 20, 1940, all youths above the age of ten who held German citizenship thenceforth owed war "service-duty" to the Reich. This decree, in effect, meant that a youth's time, after he left school, until late at night, belonged to the State for use as it saw fit. 27

During the first two years of the war, the tasks assigned the Hitler-Youth at the war's outset changed very little. In the country, Hitler-Youths continued to aid with planting and harvesting in both the Landjahr and Landdienst (land-service) programs. Girls of the B.D.M. still worked in peasant homes, teaching and helping. Toward

26. As an overall picture, William L. Shirer's The Rise And Fall Of The Third Reich (N.Y., 1960), is the best recent work. However, the reader should be aware of its limitations, and not rely too heavily on it for more than a generalized study.

27. Youths from ages 10 to 14 were supposed to be home by nightfall. Those older than 14, however, could be kept out indefinitely. The reader should also be sure to distinguish this decree from the later "emergency war service" law, which came after 1943, and took up even school hours in many cases.
the middle of 1942, anti-aircraft gun emplacements began to interrupt
the gentle contours of some farms, and on these a few Hitler-Youths
served; but otherwise, country service remained much the same.

In the cities, however, the H.J. took on a great number of ad-
ditional tasks. Young boys now made up almost the entire postal sys-
tem. Sales personnel, street sweepers, laborers unloading and loading
goods, all these and more were youths of the H.J. Families constant-
ly answered knocks at their doors to find a Hitler-Youth boy or B.D.M.
girl requesting old clothes, scrap iron, or any other useful material
in the house. The bands which played on street-corners nearly every
Saturday and at the Railroad Station on Sundays seemed to have sudden-
ly grown young. Few players in them appeared to be older than fifteen.
Boys and girls crawled around fields inside the city and in the suburbs
and out in the country as well, searching for tea roots, or for wild
fruits, or for any herb which might have medicinal value.

In the fall, youths armed with large bags roamed city and coun-
try collecting leaves and wood to fuel winter fireplaces. Whenever
they could, they collected books as well, to help reach their scrap-
paper quotas.

Young girls trained in nursing skills in B.D.M. centers helped
staff hospitals, and boys and girls filled in the great gaps in the
German Red Cross and health and social work services left by Army
conscription. So enthusiastically did Hitler-Youths participate in
Winter-Help-Relief fund drives in the streets that it took some cour-
age to pass a group of five or six without "the coin in the coffer ringing". Propaganda leaflets the Party desired to have distributed were carried about by Hitler-Youths. Young boys increasingly served as couriers for the local Wehrmacht air-defense commands, loaded Army trucks, and even drove some of the trucks they had loaded. They registered their fellow citizens at air-raid defense offices, helped construct countless air-raid shelters and manned fire-defense and emergency aid radio and telephone networks. 28

Youths were sent to Poland to teach German to Polish children in 56 new schools there. 29 More and more members of the H.J. were needed to train newly-enlisted Hitler-Youths among the Germans in Bohemia-Moravia, in the Ukraine, and elsewhere. The H.J. and B.D.M. staffed "resettlement camps" filled with 40,000 to 50,000 "youths from 15 to 20 years of age from the Occupied Eastern Territories who had been seized and shipped to Germany for war employment in the Reich." 30

Hitler-Youths were of inestimable value to local police departments. H.J. patrol-service members helped maintain city security, dis-

28, In fact, they ran the entire telephone service, since this is handled in Germany through the Post Office department.

29, Chronik, op. cit., 51.

30, TMWC, op. cit., XIV, 502, 506. For proof of the H.J.'s participation in this program, see NSDAP Records, op. cit., Reel 96, Frame 110339, dated March 15, 1941. Such forcible shipment was called by the Nazis a "resettlement action", and by the Nürnberg Tribunal "Heuaktion".
tributed ration cards, as well as guarded railroad stations and train marshalling yards. They even guided lost persons around the streets during blackouts.

The Party also used its youthful comrades to help stem the widespread "whisper-propaganda."

Hitler-Youths dutifully reported anyone they knew or suspected had been guilty of spreading pessimism, or criticizing the regime, or even complaining about stinking fellow streetcar passengers caused by the shortage of soap. Only the most foolhardy German would openly denounce Hitler within the hearing of a Hitler-Youth. With more than eight million H.J. members throughout Germany, they could effectively stop a good deal of open anti-war or anti-government talk.

The youths themselves were not all the war changed. On September 1, 1940, Hitler had removed Schirach from the Reich Youth Leadership and turned his duties over to his former assistant, Artur Axmann. Schirach was given the position of Gauleiter of Vienna, which he held till the war ended.

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31. Chronik, op. cit., 42.

32. Schirach, along with his new position of Gauleiter (District-Leader) was made "Reich Youth Leader". Axmann became "Youth Leader of the German Reich". Although the difference between the two looks miniscule, in title-conscious Nazidom, it made every difference. Schirach, who had fallen out of favor with Hitler, partly because of his comments against the Nazi treatment of the Jews, retained only the title and none of the substance of the office of Youth Leader. Though he continued to be revered by "his" youth, Schirach actually had little to do with the H.J. after his transfer, except an occasional "inspection-tour" of the larger H.J. camps.
As the war ground on into 1942, though youths continued to be used for such work as screening city dumps for useable material and serving as governmental office workers, along with all their other duties, more of them began to be used for purely military tasks. Many were now being trained in defense education camps hidden in the German Alps. Others were used to help capture escaped prisoners. Youths increasingly manned anti-aircraft guns on the rooftops. They began serving as ground crews for the Luftwaffe.

By the close of 1942, Hitler-Youths served in countless tasks which advanced the total war effort. But their service was not without cost to the youths themselves. It of course forbade them much free time. But far more importantly, it had increasingly disastrous effects on the education they received.

Since Hitler held in contempt any education that wasn't essential to bodily training or the spread of National Socialist doctrine, he had allowed many teachers to be drafted into the Army. Those who weren't called into military service were carefully screened to make certain of their political opinions. If the teacher didn't measure up, he or she was replaced by someone more "reliable", generally a Party functionary, and often an ex-Hitler-Youth or B.D.M. leader. Consequently, teacher quality dropped.

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33. NSDAP Records, op. cit., Reel 100, Frame 115755, Letter to Gebiet Baden, signed Schwarzwälder, Oberstammführer, dated May 11, 1943.
Moreover, the quality of schooling received by a youth often depended on his performance in the H.J. or B.D.M. If that performance had been outstanding, the youth could count on special consideration when the teacher graded his exams. By this process, the relative importance of knowledge itself therefore paled.

To make matters worse, after late 1940, the reopening date of the school year was moved from September to November. By this step, school children could spend two months longer helping with the harvest without conflicting with their schoolwork. Students of course could expect little further educational help from home. Most of their fathers were either in military service or working overtime in a war plant. If fathers were home, they were often reluctant to help their child with his lessons in Nazi ideology. Consequently, the Hamburger Tageblatt reported, on February 11, 1941, that, reflecting their inadequate schooling, apprentices "not only seem unable to spell properly, but also fall far below the old standards in arithmetic. At a recent examination for 179 apprentices, 94 spelled names without capital letters, and 81 misspelled Goethe's name [in 17 different ways]." 34

No less an authority than the High Command of the Army (OKH) commented on the problem, "The transfer of HJ-Leaders to the battlefront, [and] the absence of educators in schools and parental homes

34. Heinrich Fraenkel, "Is Hitler Youth Curable?" The New Republic, XII (September 18, 1944), 336.
has aggravated education and pre-military training of the upheaved youth." 35 As the war dragged on and the military situation became more desperate, the time devoted to educating youth dwindled even more rapidly in the face of growing war requirements.

As 1942 became 1943, the Hitler-Youth initiated conscription of youths aged 13 and 14 for service with the Streifendienst or with the fire-defense troops of the "Universal-SS". 36

But as the Russian front began to crumble after Stalingrad, undreamed-of measures became necessary. Hitler-Youth boys and B.D.M. girls were put to work staffing refugee camps. Moreover, back in 1940, Hitler had given Schirach the responsibility of arranging for evacuation of German children from areas in danger of air attack. By early 1943, Schirach had supervised the movement of more than 600,000 young people into some two thousand "K.L.V." camps. 37 Staffing these camps placed an especially difficult new burden on an already hard-pressed B.D.M.

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35. NSDAP Records, op. cit., Reel 102, Frame 119076, Letter from OKH at Potsdam to Reich Youth Leadership, dated December 9, 1943. It is interesting to note that Hitler personally headed the OKH.


37. The name of the program was "Erweiterte Kinderlandverschickung". Chronik, op. cit., 53. From the second words-combination comes the initials K.L.V.
Then, on February 15, 1943, a Reich decree ordered total mobilization of German youths in the 14-to-18 age group. This extraordinary step amounted to military conscription of the Hitler-Youth, many of whom had already been "drafted" into various other types of duty. After this "emergency war service law", youths increasingly made up the total complement of anti-aircraft gun crews, of fire-control squadrons in cities, of plane-spotting teams in the country, of fortification-construction crews along the Eastern front, and in countless other ways, including actual military service.

To read the official H.J. Chronicle, one would think that nothing was amiss: "On this first day of the new year 1944 our hearts and thoughts in love and admiration are with the Führer. He has begun this mightiest of all wars for the future of his own youth. The youth must be eternally thankful to him for that...."

The Hitler-Youth had always been compelled to deal with the problem of opposition. At first it had been disgruntled youths who were forcibly brought in with their dissolved youth groups. Then, young people who simply wanted no control over their activities banded together in mysterious, informal societies like the "Pack". Members met to hike around the countryside, much as did the early Wandervogel. But as the war progressed and as the situation on the home front became increasingly chaotic, bands of youths more and more frequently roamed the

38. Ibid., 64.
streets in search of Hitler-Youths to beat up. More and more Hitler-Youth meetings were broken up by fights or heckling, involving members of the "Pack" and other furtive groups.

But at no time did this opposition achieve either coherence or unification. Due to this weakness, it could be dealt with piecemeal. The nearest any group ever came to organized resistance occurred when two students at Munich University, Hans and Sophie Scholl, began a letter-writing campaign against the Hitler regime. Hans Scholl was a much-decorated soldier, who had been so grievously wounded on the Eastern front that he was discharged from the Army and allowed to resume his studies. Having seen on the front the way the war was really going, Hans and his sister mimeographed letters for distribution throughout the University, and eventually, to several nearby Universities as well. Both were caught by the Gestapo and executed in July 1943. This did not still the letter writing, and it went on under the name "White Rose" until the end of the war. 39

Baldur von Schirach himself stated privately at Nürnberg his awareness of the reasons for this kind of opposition: "The kids who thought Hitler was a great man began thinking differently after they had fought at the front-2-3-4-5-6 years, had seen their comrades die,

39 Wartime opposition is outside the scope of this paper. Those interested in further pursuit of the subject should see: Gabriel A. Almund, ed., The Struggle For Democracy In Germany (Chapel Hill, 1949); Becker, op. cit.; Karl Becker, Zero Hour For Germany (London, 1944); Hans Rothfels, The German Opposition To Hitler (Hinsdale, Ill., 1948); Seibert, op. cit.; Max Seydewitz, Civil Life In Wartime Germany (N.Y., 1945).
had gotten wounded and come home just long enough for their wounds to heal and then gone back to the front again. They were obedient to the end, of course, but it was an embittered Youth, I can tell you!" 40

One of these "embittered youths" was lucky enough to send out a final letter from surrounded Stalingrad, in the last plane to leave that doomed city:

Well, now you know that I shall never return. Break it to our parents gently. I am deeply shaken and doubt everything. I used to be strong and full of faith; now I am small and without faith. I will never know many of the things that happen here; but the little that I have taken part in is already so much that it chokes me. No one can tell me any longer that the men died with the words 'Deutschland' or 'Heil Hitler' on their lips. There is plenty of dying, no question of that; but the last word is 'mother' or the name of someone dear, or, just a cry for help. I have seen hundreds fall and die already, and many belonged to the Hitler Youth as I did; but all of them, if they could still speak, called for help or shouted a name which could not help them anyway.

The Führer made a firm promise to bail us out of here; they read it to us and we believed in it firmly....If what we were promised is not true, then Germany will be lost, for in that case no more promises can be kept. Oh, these doubts, these terrible doubts, if they could only be cleared up soon! 41

From the very first of that last full year of the war, the sense of desperation which must have been felt by many Germans became plainly evident in the use Hitler made of his youths. Beginning in May 1944, special Wehrmacht "Shock-troop" 42 teams were assigned to each Hitler-

40. G.M. Gilbert, Nuremberg Diary (N.Y., 1947), 353.
42. NSDAP Records, op. cit., Reel 102, Frame 119083, Letter from 362 Infantry Division, Abt. IIa, signed Schmidt, Oberst, dated May 3, 1944.
Youth Bann to inspire and educate "our youth in the military-ideas".

Not only did these shock-troops come to train, they brought "little gifts" for the youths. To the younger age groups they gave "gas-masks, steel-helmets, pistols; for the older age-groups machine guns and ammunition... for all of them pictures and drawings...of the H.J.-homes...." 45

What of the countless young men who had passed on to military service? The overwhelming majority served in the Wehrmacht or the Waffen-SS. At least three, however, worked as S. S. guards at Buchenwald. 46 Others served in the Vernichtungstruppen - annihilation troops - in the Soviet Union. One young lance corporal, only a few years out of the Hitler-Youth, wrote of their activities in his diary:

'Stary Bykhov is completely demolished; 250 Jews were shot.... We have eaten well....Fifty prisoners were brought here and given to us to use for target practice. There are two Russian girls here, seventeen and eighteen, very pretty. We shall have to rape them....Retreating to Novozybkov. All the villages on the way burnt.' 47

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid. These Hitler-Youth Homes were special buildings usually in each town of any size, which the local populace had presented to the H.J. Magnanimity had nothing to do with the gift. Towns were compelled to do so by Reich decree.


47. Seibert, op. cit., 26. This quote is from Soviet War News, November 1, 1943. In spite of its extreme nature, this quotation seems mild in light of the hundreds of photographs this author has seen in the Library of Congress depicting German atrocities in the U.S.S.R. One of the German soldiers' favorite tricks was to carve the outline of a large red star on the backs of captured Russian soldiers with sharpened bayonets.
In March 1945, only weeks before the final defeat of the Third Reich, Hitler-Youth commands in those areas directly menaced by American and British forces 48 organized one of their last, most desperate gambles. They divided from 15 to 20% of their remaining youths into two groups and sent them out to stop the enemy's tanks.

The first group, called "tank-close-combat-troops" 49 consisted of boys each of whom carried two small anti-tank shell launchers (Panzerfäuste), a spade, smoke-grenades, mines and other anti-tank equipment.

The second category, the "tank-protection-troops" 50 provided covering fire for their fellows in the first group. These covering troops carried carbines, or hunting rifles, or KK-rifles, along with spades. Supposedly, there would be about three times more boys providing covering fire than attacking the tanks directly.

In those districts in danger of imminent invasion, members of the Jungvolk who were not old enough to kill tanks filled the ranks of a hastily-organized "tank-warning-service". The order setting up this

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48. These H.J. commands often worked with army commanders who barely knew the location of their own troops, let alone the whole Gruppe or Korps they served.


50. Ibid.

51. This abbreviation is unknown to the author.
service took care to consider general morale among the German people: "Each tank reporting, which a youth has to deliver, goes to the local military leader and is definitely not for the population...." Finally, the order closed with the formula for success: "The determining factor for the success of tank-close-combatting is the education of war-volunteers in a spirit of attack and a unanimous desire to annihilate the tanks." 

Perhaps the most poignant scene in the final days, is that of the Hitler-Youths committed by Youth Leader Axmann to the last-ditch defense of dying Berlin: "The barricades guarded by Home Guard aged men in patched uniforms. Soft-faced children under huge steel helmets, horrifying to hear their high voices. So tiny and thin in their far-too-loose uniforms, they can't be more than fifteen."

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53. Ibid.

CONCLUSION

"'You must stand the test in a thousand ways.'" 55 With these words, Baldur von Schirach ushered his youths into the second World War within a generation. Before it was finished, the war had tested their mettle in many more than a thousand ways. Not only had the Hitler-Youth itself collapsed along with the Nazi government, Schirach and Axmann were in hiding. Within a year after the war's close Schirach would be in Berlin's Spandau Prison, serving a twenty-year sentence imposed by the Nürnberg Tribunal. Ironically enough, the former Reich Youth Leader's sentence was based, not on the millions of young lives he had warped and twisted, but on his having permitted the removal of 60,000 Jews from his district of Vienna to eastern concentration camps.

The Hitler-Youth itself had made enormous contributions to the German war effort. In the minds of many people twenty years after the war, they are best remembered for their legendary "fanatical last stands" in defending every inch of German soil before the advancing Allied troops. This story is, in reality, one of the many myths emerging from the Second World War. Although there were, of course, such cases, their occurrence was far less frequently met than legend would have it. Programs such as the "tank-close-combat-troops" were organized in the last three or four weeks of the war, but hardly had enough time

55. Chronik, op. cit., 42.
to be organized, let alone implemented. Nor was the German military organization itself coherent enough to have effectively carried out any but the most skeletal implementation of such programs. In short, the condition of Germany at this time was one of confusion, chaos, despair, and collapse. And most of Germany's young people, even though they may have violently hated the enemy, were still as upheaved as the rest of dying Germany.

Most of them who weren't already engaged in vital work, had been called up into home-defense service only in the last months of the war. All across the Western front, when American and British troops took villages and towns, they found they had been fighting old men and young boys in the main. This author believes that the fact that troops invading Germany met relatively little resistance of the guerrilla or "werewolf" variety was due in large measure to Baldur von Schirach. Throughout, he was unalterably opposed to such tactics being used. Here again, we see a paradox about the Reich Youth Leader. He was willing for his young people to be employed in war service, or even conscripted into the Army and S. S. But guerrilla warfare was going too far. This is as paradoxical as Schirach's blind support of Hitler at the same time he at least appeared to be working for international youth understanding.

There can be little question that young men who received their early training in the Hitler-Youth made better soldiers. They were strong and healthy. They were well-disciplined and trained to obey.
And they were unquestionably loyal to the Führer in the overwhelming majority of cases. A comment by General Elfeldt, who defended the foot of the Cherbourg Peninsula on D-Day, is revealing. When asked why his troops had been able to organize so formidable a defense of the "hedgerow" country in his sector, Elfeldt replied, "I think it may have been due to the kind of scout training these young soldiers had received in the "Hitler Youth" organization." 56

Certainly as vital to the war effort, and not infrequently overshadowed by the "fanatic" myth, were the home-front services performed by the H.J. By 1942, these had become so extensive that had they suddenly ended, whole sections of the German economy would have been completely halted. Without hospital staffs, without postal, telegraph or telephone service, without many anti-aircraft gun crews, or aid in harvesting crops, the civilian economy would have been at the least severely restricted. Its aid to the civilian economy resulted in a secondary benefit to the war effort, which certainly ranks among the Nazi youth's most important contributions. This was the number of men, whom, by filling jobs on the home front, they enabled to leave home and join Hitler's armed forces.

But for the youth themselves, the war left the scars of shattered hopes, of torn lives, and of utterly hopeless confusion.

Five months after the war's end, a definitely changed Baldur von Schirach stood in the dock at Nürnberg, and in the face of great opposition from Hermann Göring, made a statement he hoped would help

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the youth he had so grievously misled:

The youth of Germany is guiltless. Our youth was anti-Semitismally inclined, but it did not call for the extermination of Jewry. It neither realized nor imagined that Hitler had carried out this extermination by the daily murder of thousands of innocent people. The youth of Germany who, today, stand perplexed among the ruins of their native land, knew nothing of these crimes, nor did they desire them. They are innocent of all that Hitler has done to the Jewish and to the German people....I have educated this generation in faith and loyalty to Hitler. The Youth Organization which I built up bore his name. I believed that I was serving a leader who would make our people and the youth of our country great and happy and free. Millions of young people believed this, together with me, and saw their ultimate ideal in National Socialism. Many died for it. Before God, before the German nation, and before my German people I alone bear the guilt of having trained our young people for a man whom I for many long years had considered unimpeachable, both as a leader and as the head of the State, of creating for him a generation who saw him as I did. 57

Evidently, Schirach believed that by an open confession to former members of the Hitler-Youth, he could ease their confusion, and set them once again on the path toward the right. "This speech", he said, "will no longer leave any doubts in the minds of German youth." 58

Careful examination of the speech, however, reveals that all Schirach really said was that it wasn't so bad to hate Jews; it was, however, wrong to carry that hatred to extremes and kill them. Other than that, he admits only to having made a ghastly mistake in following Hitler. The most incredible part of Schirach's speech is the

57. TMWC, op. cit., XIV, 432, 433.
naivete he showed in expecting it to be of any help. How could an admission of his mistakes have rested the minds of the war-torn German youth? Schirach told them, essentially, that it had been a mistake to have believed in Hitler. What he neglected to tell them was what they needed most to hear: what was left in which they could believe?
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APPENDICES

I. Free Youth Groups.

II. Socialist Youth Efforts.

III. Evangelical Youth Groups.

IV. Catholic Youth Groups.

V. Concordat of 1933, Article 31.

VI. Law of the Hitler-Youth, December 1, 1936.


IX. Requirements for the Jungvolk Performance Insignia

X. Streicher's Poisonous Fungus.
Key To Appendices I - IV

Altwandervogel (A. w.-v.) = Old Roamers; contained both sexes, but segregated them into separate groups.

B., Bd. = Bund (League)
bestehender Bund = extant league
Bündnisse u. enge Zusammenarbeit = Alliances and close coöperatives
d. = des, der (of)
Dt. = Deutsche (German)
Durchgangsstadium, Übergangsstadium = transitional stage
geistiger Zusammenhang = coöperation because of close-knit spirit
Jgd. = Jugend (Youth)
Spaltungen = splitting
von bürgerliche Seite = from the side of the commoners
Wandervogel e. V. = Roamers, containing both sexes
w.-v. = Wandervogel (Roamers)
Zusammenschlüsse = uniting
APPENDIX I
Free Youth Groups

Freie Jugendbewegung

- Durchgangsstadium
- 1927 bestehende Bünde
- Spaltungen u. Zusammenschlüsse
- Bündnis
- Entwicklungszusammenhang
- geistige Einwirkung des Jungdeutschen Bundes
- siehe Wehr-Jgd.
APPENDIX II

Socialist Youth Efforts

Sozialistische Jugendbestrebungen

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Freie proletarische Jugend
APPENDIX III

Evangelical Youth Groups

Evangelische Jugendbewegung

- Durchgangsstadium
- Spaltungen, Zusammenschlüsse
- 1927 bestehende Bünde
- siehe: Freie Jugendbewegung
- Bündnisse

Freie evangelische Gemeinschaft
Jugendbde. f. entscheid. Christen
Ev. Gemeinschaft
Jugendverb. d. christl. Jungen
Baptisten
Christl. Pfadfinder
Methodisten
Täglichm. Sozien
Christl. Pfadfinder

Bibel-Kreis
Neuland
Evang. Ver. u. Pflege
Jugend

Bd. deutl. Jugend-Ver.
Bd. prakt. Jugendvereine
Jugendbde. f. wohlt.
Jugend
Werk.
-Jugend

Neuwerk
Bd. deutsch.
Christl. Jugend-Ver.
Christl.
Neuland.
Sekt.-Jugend
Weg-
genossen
Jung.

Verb. christl. Jugend-Ver.
Reichsverb. christl. Jungen
Christl. Pfadfinder
Deutschchristl. Stud.-Verein
Deutschchristl.
Stud.-Verein
Führer-Kreis
Bd. deutsch.
Christl. Vereine
Bibelkreis Treubund
Bibel-Kreis
Bibelkreis
Mädchen-
Bibel-Kreis
Gmsh.
Jugend

Jung.

scharen

scharen

scharen

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scharen
APPENDIX V

Concordat of 1933, Article 31

"Article 31...Those Catholic organizations which to their religious, cultural and charitable pursuits add others, such as social or professional interests, even though they may be brought into national organizations, are to be protected in their institutions and activities, provided they guarantee to develop their activities outside all political parties. /Schirach later interpreted this as "outside all H.J. activities."

It is reserved to the central government and the German episcopate, in joint agreement, to determine which organizations and associations come within the scope of this article. /Schirach later took unilateral action, then called in a Church representative, and when no agreement could be reached, let the action stand.

In so far as the Reich and its constituent states take charge of sport and other youth organizations, care will be taken that it shall be possible for the members of the same regularly to practice their religious duties on Sundays and feast days, and that they shall not be required to do anything not in harmony with their religious and moral convictions and obligations." 1

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1. NCA, op. cit., V, 1087. Italics are supplied by the author. Italicized statements were later used as loopholes to legitimize incorporation of the Catholic Youth into the H.J.
APPENDIX VI

Law of the Hitler-Youth, December 1, 1936

"Art. 1
All of the German youth in the Reich is organized within the Hitler-Youth.

Art. 2
The German Youth besides being reared within the family and school, shall be educated physically, intellectually, and morally in the spirit of National Socialism to serve the people and community, through the Hitler Youth.

Art. 3
The task of educating the German Youth through the Hitler Youth is being entrusted to the Reichs-Leader of German Youth in the NSDAP. He is the 'Youth Leader of the German Reich'. The position of his office is that of a higher governmental Agency with its seat in Berlin, and is directly responsible to the Fuehrer and Chancellor of the Reich.

Art. 4
All regulations necessary for the executions and completion of this law will be issued by the Fuehrer Chancellor of the Reich."

Signed by Hitler and Reich Secretary of State,
Dr. Lammers.

2. Ibid., III, 972, 973.
APPENDIX VII


"Article 1

1. The youth leader of the German Reich is solely competent for all missions of the physical, ideological and moral education of the entire German youth of the Reich area outside of the house of the parents and the school. The competence of the Reich minister for science, education and public orientation remains unaffected as far as private education and social education are concerned.

2. The following problems are transferred from the sphere of action of the Reich and Prussian Minister for science, education and public orientation to the sphere of action of the youth leader of the German Reich:

   All affairs of youth care, the youth hostel system as well as the accident and liability insurance in the interest of youth care.

   The question of competence for the year's service on farms (Landjahr) is left to a special regulation.

3. The youth leader of the German Reich with the Hitler youth is subordinated to the Financial authority of the NSDAP.

Article 2

1. The Cadre Hitler Youth (Stamm HJ) exists within the Hitler Youth.

2. Whoever was a member of the Hitler Youth since 20 April 1928 is a member of the Cadre Hitler Youth.

3. Juveniles, who have had at least one year of good conduct in the Hitler Youth, and fulfill the conditions of ancestry for the acceptance into the NSDAP, may be accepted into the Cadre Hitler Youth. More specific regulations will be issued by the Reich Youth leader of the NSDAP in agreement with the Führer's deputy.

4. The acceptance into the Cadre Hitler youth of persons over 18 years of age, who are to be used in the leadership and administration of the Hitler Youth, can take place immediately.

5. Only the Cadre Hitler Youth is an affiliate of the NSDAP.

6. Membership in the Cadre Hitler Youth is voluntary.

Article 3

The Reich minister of the Interior will appoint the national agencies, subordinated to the youth leader of the German Reich, in agreement with Führer's deputy and the Reichminister of Finance.
Article 4
The members of the Hitler Youth are entitled, and are obliged, if ordered, to wear the prescribed uniform." 3

Signed Adolf Hitler, Rudolf Hess

3. Ibid., IV, 44, 45.
APPENDIX VIII
Second Execution Order of the
1936 Law of the Hitler
Youth, dated March 25, 1939

"Article 1
Length of Service

(1) Service in the Hitler Youth is honorary service to the
German people.
(2) All juveniles from the 10th to the end of the 18th year
of age are obliged to serve in the Hitler Youth, and namely:
1. Boys between the ages of 10 and 14 in the Junior Hitler
Youth (DJ),
2. Boys between the ages of 14 and 18 in the Hitler Youth (HJ),
3. Girls between the ages of 10 and 14 in the Junior Hitler
Youth (JW),
4. Girls between the ages of 14 and 18 in the German Girls Lea-
gue (HDM).
(3) Pupils of elementary schools, who have already completed
their 10th year of age, are deferred from the service in the Hit-
ler Youth until they leave the classes of the elementary schools.
(4) Pupils of elementary schools, who have already completed
their 14th year of age, remain, until their discharge from school,
members of the Junior Hitler Youth (DJ and JW).

Article 2
Educational Authority

All boys and girls of the Hitler Youth are subject to a public-
legal educational authority according to the provisions of regula-
tions, decreed by the Fuehrer and Reich Chancellor.

Article 3
Unworthiness

(1) Those juveniles are unworthy of membership in the Hitler
Youth, and thus are excluded from the community of the Hitler
Youth, who
1. Commit dishonorable acts,
2. Were dismissed from the Hitler Youth, before this law came
into effect, because of dishonorable acts,
3. Who cause offense by their moral behavior in the Hitler
Youth or in public, and thus injure the Hitler Youth.
(2) Furthermore, juveniles are excluded from membership in the
Hitler Youth, as long as they are in official custody.
(3) The youth leader of the German Reich can permit exceptions.

Article 4
Unfitness

(1) Juveniles, who have been found, in the opinion of a medical officer of the HJ or of a physician, commissioned by the HJ, to be unfit or only partially fit for service in the Hitler Youth, must be relieved altogether or partially from service in the Hitler Youth according to the medical decision....

Article 5
Deferment and Exemption

(1) On request of the legal guardian or the HJ leader concerned, juveniles can in each case be deferred or exempted from service in the Hitler Youth up to the duration of one year, if they:
1. Are retarded considerably in their physical development,
2. In the judgment of the school principal cannot fulfill the demands of school without the exemption.
(2) In individual cases, a request for deferment or exemption from service in the Hitler Youth can also be granted, when the conditions of Part 1 do not exist, but if there are other urgent reasons, which justify the temporary or permanent absence of a juvenile from service in the Hitler Youth....

Article 6
German Subjects of non-German National Origin

(1) Juveniles of German citizenship, whose both parents or father belong according to their own statement to the Danish or Polish ethnic groups, are to be exempted from membership in the Hitler Youth on request of those who are charged with their care....Illegitimate juveniles may be exempted from membership in the Hitler Youth on request of those who are charged with their care, if the mother belongs according to her own statement to the Danish or Polish racial groups; they are to be exempted if the guardian agrees to the request.
(2) The request is to be made to the lower administrative authorities.
(3) The Reich Minister of the Interior exercises the supervision over youth organizations of the Danish or Polish ethnic groups. New foundations need his permission.
(4) No compulsion may be exercised by anyone toward the joining of a youth organization of the Danish or Polish ethnic groups.
Article 7
Racial Requirements

Jews...are excluded from the membership of the Hitler Youth.

Article 8
German Subjects residing Abroad

Juveniles of German citizenship, who reside abroad, and who
are only temporarily in the German Reich, are not obliged to
serve in the Hitler Youth.

Article 9
Registration and Induction

(1) All juveniles are to be registered with the respective
Hitler Youth, leader for induction into the Hitler Youth before
15 March of the calendar year during which they complete their
10th year of age. If a juvenile fulfills the conditions for accept­
ance into the Hitler Youth (for instance release from official
custody, receipt of citizenship, permanent residence in the German
Reich) after this time, the juvenile is to be registered within one
month after fulfillment of the conditions named.
(2) The legal representative of the juvenile is liable for the
registration.
(3) Induction into the Hitler Youth takes place on 20 April of
every year. Hitler's birthday
(4) The youth leader of the German Reich will issue more spe­
cific regulations about registration and induction....

Article 10
Discharge

(1) The following will be discharged from the Hitler Youth:
1. Juveniles after the expiration of the period, fixed in Art­
cicle 1, and girls who marry.
2. Juveniles concerning whom it is established that they are
excluded from membership in the community of the Hitler Youth ac­
cording to the regulations of this law.
(2)....
(3) Male and female leaders remain members of the Hitler Youth
after the period fixed in Article 1 has expired. Their discharge
will take place by special regulations. They are to be discharged
on their request.

Article 11
Leaves during Membership in the Hitler Youth

(1) The membership in the Hitler Youth becomes inactive for the
duration of active military service.
(2) Members of the Reich labor service may not be active in
the service of the Hitler Youth.

Article 12
Punitive Regulation

(1) A legal guardian will be punished with a fine up to 150
marks or with confinement if he intentionally acts against the
provisions of Article 9 of this law.
(2) Whoever malevolently prevents or attempts to prevent a
juvenile from serving in the Hitler Youth, will be punished with
prison and fine, or with one of these punishments.
(3) Legal punitive action will only be taken on request of the
youth leader of the German Reich. The request can be withdrawn.
(4) Juveniles can be forced by the respective local authorities,
to fulfill the duties with which they are charged on the basis of
this law, and of the implementative regulations issued for it.

Article 13
Final Regulations

For juveniles of the age classes 1921 to 1929, who have not
belonged to the Hitler Youth up to now, the youth leader of the
German Reich will fix the time of their registration and induction
into the Hitler Youth." 4

Signed Adolf Hitler, Rudolf Hess, and Dr. Lammers
APPENDIX IX

Requirements for the Jungvolk
Performance Insignia

"Schooling"

1. Recite the highpoints of the Führer's life.
2. Give the names of the most important holidays of the German people, and of the Nazi Party.
3. Quote five flag mottoes.
4. Name six H.J. songs and give their full texts. Among these must be "Brothers in Mines and Pits", "The Grey-Heaven", "Holy Fatherland".

"Body-Exercises"

1. 60-meter run in 10 seconds.
2. Broadjump 3.25 meters.
4. Climb a rope twice.
5. Ground-roll twice forward, twice backward.
6. 100-meter swim in an acceptable time or 1000-meter race, not under 4.30 minutes, not over 5.30 minutes.

"Bicycle-Riding"

"Trip and Camp"

1. A day-long trip of 15 kilometers with light pack (not over 5 kg.) After 7½ km., a rest of a minimum of 3 hours.
2. Participation in a tent camp of not less than three days' duration.
3. Set up a three-man tent, and, working with others, set up a 12-man tent.
4. Fire up a cook place; bring water to a boil.
5. Knowledge of the most important wooden buildings.
6. Make a map using the stars as reference points for direction.
7. Knowledge of the most important map symbols.
8. Etc.

"Target-Exercise"

1. Air-gun shooting, 8 meters distance, seated on a shooter's table."

"Inge sits in the reception room of the Jew doctor. She has to wait a long time. She looks through the journals which are on the table. But she is much too nervous to read even a few sentences. Again and again she remembers the talk with her mother. And again and again her mind reflects on the warnings of her leader of the League of German Girls: "A German must not consult a Jew doctor. And particularly not a German girl. Many a girl that went to a Jew doctor to be cured, found disease and disgrace!"

When Inge had entered the waiting room, she experienced an extraordinary incident. From the doctor's consulting room she could hear the sound of crying. She heard the voice of a young girl: "Doctor, doctor, leave me alone!" Then she heard the scornful laughing of a man. And then, all of a sudden, it became absolutely silent. Inge had listened breathlessly.

"What may be the meaning of all this?" she asked herself and her heart was pounding. And again she thought of the warning of her leader in the League of German Girls. Inge was already waiting for an hour. Again she takes the journals in an endeavor to read. Then the door opens. Inge looks up. The Jew appears. She screams. In terror she drops the paper. Horrified she jumps up. Her eyes stare into the face of the Jewish doctor. And this face is the face of the devil. In the middle of this devil's face is a huge crooked nose. Behind the spectacles two criminal eyes. And the thick lips are grinning, a grinning that expresses: "Now I got you at last, you little German girl!"

And then the Jew approaches her. His fleshy fingers stretch out after her. But now Inge has composed herself. Before the Jew can grab hold of her, she smacks the fat face of the Jew doctor with her hand. One jump to the door. Breathlessly Inge runs down the stairs. Breathlessly she escapes the Jew house."

6. *Ibid.*, II, 707. This is an excerpt from one of Julius Streicher's numerous books for children.