

**THE GOEBBELS DIARIES**

# THE GOEBBELS DIARIES



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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

WHEN THE Russians occupied Berlin in 1945 they went through the German official archives with more vigour than discrimination, shipped some material to Russia, destroyed some, and left the rest scattered underfoot. They often followed a system that is difficult to understand of emptying papers on the floor and shipping to Russia the filing cabinets that had contained them.

Considerable fragments of Dr. Goebbels' diaries, from which the following pages were selected, were found in the courtyard of his ministry, where they had evidently narrowly escaped burning, many of the pages being singed and all smelling of smoke. Apparently they were originally bound in the German type of office folder. Thin metal strips in the salmon-coloured binders were run through holes punched in the paper, bent over, and locked into place.

At that time all Berlin was one great junk yard with desperate people laying hands on anything tangible and movable that could be used for barter. The unburned papers were taken away by one of these amateur junk dealers, who carefully salvaged the binders and discarded the contents—leaving more than 7,000 sheets of loose paper. A few binders had not been removed but most of the pages were tied up in bundles as waste paper. It later proved a considerable task to put them together again in the right sequence, as they were not numbered.

Other binders had odds and ends from Goebbels' files, and in the same batch were found papers, like the diaries, removed from folders. Many of the papers were water-soaked and showed signs of dirt and the imprint of nails where they had been walked on. The edges of some were scorched, showing that attempts to burn them had failed.

Among the papers in this miscellaneous batch were found the following:

The rough draft, headed *Entwurf*, of a message to Hermann Goering congratulating him on his fiftieth birthday.

A receipted bill from a jeweller for repairs to a Nazi party emblem—75 marks, dated June 20, 1939.

A six-page radio address, corrected by Goebbels in blue pencil, dated October 3, 1944.

A list of fifteen articles of old clothing, dated June 10, 1942, given by Goebbels and his wife to a charity collection. A note was appended that Frau Goebbels could do nothing about getting her donation together until she had talked with her husband.

An expense account, taking up five sheets of paper, for Goebbels' trip on March 8, 1943, by aeroplane from Berlin to Hitler's G.H.Q., where Goebbels remained one day and then flew back to Berlin after a conference with Hitler. Expenses totalled 85 marks.

A letter dated June 2, 1931, signed before a notary public by two women, replying to a request published by Goebbels in the newspaper, *Angriff*, asking for witnesses to an incident on June 1, 1931 (before Hitler came to power). The letter reads:

"Dr. Goebbels and another came out of the police station in the Maikaeferkaserne with the Fuehrer. As he came through the door, the police brought one of our brown shirts (*S.A. Maenner*) by force up the steps to the entrance. Dr. Goebbels, who stood in their way at the door, was hit on the shoulder by one of the police officials and pushed out of the way so that he fell down the steps. The handling of our Fuehrer started a demonstration on the part of the crowd, which hooted at the police, and *Heils* for the Fuehrer broke out. Then the police attacked the crowd with blackjacks and we were driven off."

A letter of January 26, 1939, notifying Goebbels that the taxes on his Schwanenwerder property had been increased and that he owed some back taxes for the previous year.

A report by one of Goebbels' subordinates on the moving of Goebbels' property from his Schwanenwerder home to safe places; some to Lanke, and some into the air raid shelter in the Hermann Goeringstrasse. The inventory includes oriental rugs, furniture, Gobelin tapestries, lamps, cut glass, silver, porcelain, linen, etc. The report concludes that Goebbels' valet, Emil, would be responsible for taking Goebbels' pistols into the Hermann Goeringstrasse shelter during an alarm. And "*pistole*" was underlined in the original.

A letter dated January 2, 1933 (about four weeks before Hitler took control), showing that Goebbels was in trouble about his income tax. The letter was written by a Nazi tax consultant, who reported that in dealing with the tax people he "registered a complaint on the ground that such a payment is impossible and would result in the destruction of your economic independence". A subsequent letter, dated March 28, 1933 (two months after the Nazis were in power), indicated that the tax specialist, Schuler, had been able to fix up the matter of the arrears satisfactorily.

A telegram sent by Goebbels six weeks before his death (March 13, 1945) to Colonel Berger, thanking the German troops at the Neisse River bridgehead for their donation of more than a quarter of a million marks for Winter Relief.

A memorandum dated June 4, 1942, to Goebbels, calling attention to four birthdays coming the following week:

In red crayon was a notation, *erledigt*, or taken care of, about the birthday of the Minister of Posts, Dr. Ohnesorge, aged 70.

Beside the name of Professor Paul Schultze Naumburg, aged 73, Goebbels wrote *Nein*.

Beside the name of Richard Strauss, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, aged 78, on Thursday, June 11, Goebbels also wrote *Nein*.

Beside the name of Jenny Juge, Goebbels wrote *Blumen/Karte* (flowers and a card).

There was also a typewritten undated balance sheet showing Goebbels' income, the allowance he made to Frau Goebbels, etc. For income tax purposes he declared a total income of 10,281.55 marks, of which he paid 6,481.55 to his wife, leaving 3,800 for himself.

There was a handwritten analysis of Goebbels' income for the years 1933 to 1937 inclusive. It was done in thirteen columns, showing income from book royalties, salary, interest, deductions for various taxes, etc. His total income before taxes and deductions was:

1933 . . .	34,376 marks
1934 . . .	134,423 "
1935 . . .	62,190 "
1936 . . .	63,654 "
1937 . . .	66,905 "

One sheet of paper, handwritten, but not in Goebbels' writing, was headed: Account with Central Publishing Company of the National Socialist Party. From December 16, 1935, to December 23, 1936, he drew advances amounting to 290,000 marks against future royalties. His book royalties from December 31, 1935, to December 31, 1936, amounted to 63,416.31 marks. So he was in debt to the Nazi Publishing Company (*Centralverlag der N.S.D.A.P.*) to the amount of 226,583.69 marks.

It is an interesting sidelight on Goebbels' financial methods that whereas in 1936 he declared a total income of 63,654 marks, his income from book royalties alone amounted to approximately the same—63,416.31 marks.

An account for the purchase of paintings showed that 154,000 marks' worth were bought, on which a 5 per cent commission was paid for purchase or handling. This was dated January 30, 1945—three months before Berlin fell. The paintings, with a few exceptions,

were all by German artists. Six gifts of paintings were noted, with dates of gift, to:

Sauckel, on his fiftieth birthday, October 27, 1944.

*Gauleiter* Streicher, on his sixtieth birthday, February 12, 1945.

Dr. Ley on his fifty-fifth birthday, February 15, 1945.

Dr. Hierl, on his seventieth birthday, February 24, 1945.

Schaub, on his birthday, August 10, 1944.

Minister Dr. Meissner, on his sixty-fifth birthday, March 13, 1945.

There are a number of drafts of birthday telegrams. Apparently Goebbels had a system whereby his office automatically produced drafts of birthday greetings which he then corrected.

There was a file on Goebbels' mortgage of 100,000 marks on his Schwanenwerder estate, which he apparently bought after the outbreak of war in 1939.

The diaries were typed on fine water-marked paper, which was rare in wartime Germany and available only to high government officials. In looking over the material offered for sale or barter, a customer was struck by the impressive quality of the paper and realized that he must have fallen on something of interest and importance. He acquired the lot for its value as scrap paper. The bundles, roughly roped together, passed through several hands, and eventually came into the possession of Mr. Frank E. Mason, who had made a number of visits to Germany since the war. Mr. Mason has had long experience in Germany, first as Military Attaché at the American Embassy in Berlin at the end of World War I and later as a correspondent. It was obvious to him that the material consisted of fragments of Dr. Goebbels' diaries. An examination by Louis P. Lochner, former chief of the Berlin bureau of the Associated Press, revealed the authenticity of the documents, as Dr. Lochner himself explains in detail in his introduction to this volume. Publication was decided on only after this had been clearly established.

Goebbels indulged in free and easy abuse of everybody who disagreed with him. His entries are given as he wrote them, with the gutter language into which he frequently lapsed. This was essential to a faithful presentation, although the publishers obviously share neither his views nor his expression of them.

The selections reveal Goebbels as the unflagging motive force behind the vicious anti-Semitism of the Nazi regime. He urged Hitler on to the excesses which shocked the world; his aim was the extermination of all Jews. A number of examples of this distasteful material have been reproduced, not only because they reflected Goebbels' mentality, but more particularly because his views were translated into action and are therefore of vital importance. Goebbels also reveals himself as violently opposed to the Christian churches. He makes it clear that while he wants to devote himself to the exter-

mination of the Jews during the war, he plans to deal with the churches after the war and reduce them to impotence.

The task of selecting, editing, and translating the text of this important document was exacting. It called for a man with knowledge and scholarly background. It is fortunate that Dr. Lochner was available for this work. He brought to it long experience, knowledge of European politics, wide acquaintance among political figures under the Weimar Republic and the Nazi regime, and complete command of the German language. For more than twenty years he was chief of the Berlin bureau of the Associated Press, and on his return to the United States in 1942 he wrote *What About Germany?* a book that has had considerable success. He had unique standing in Berlin, as is shown by the fact that for many years he was president of the Foreign Press Association and for some time president of the American Chamber of Commerce.

The publishers regret that it was possible to make use of only a small part of the original material in a single volume. The level of interest could have been maintained if far more space had been available. The original diaries will serve as source material for many future writers, and to this end they are to be deposited in the library of an American university; where they will be accessible to scholars.



## INTRODUCTION

I APPROACHED the task of selecting representative material for this book with a good deal of trepidation. Here were some 7,100 pages (approximately 750,000 words) of German text to select from, yet the book had to be limited to about five hundred printed pages. It was much the same sort of situation I faced constantly during my years of newspaper service as chief of the Berlin Bureau of the Associated Press of America: whenever Adolf Hitler delivered one of his addresses to the German Reichstag, which often lasted for two hours, I was faced with the problem of remaining within the number of words that the newspapers having membership in the Associated Press could absorb, yet missing nothing of importance to the reader.

*The Goebbels Diaries*, from which representative sections have been selected for this book, cover the following periods:

January 21 to May 23, 1942, with the entries for March 22 to March 25 and April 10 missing.

December 7, 1942, to December 20, 1942.

March 1 to March 20, 1943.

April 9 to May 28, 1943, with the entries for May 2 to May 6 missing.

September 8 to September 30, 1943.

November 1 to November 30, 1943, with the entries for November 5 and November 23 missing.

December 4 to December 9, 1943.

No doubt some of the missing pages went up in flames, for there is a smell of burnt paper about the whole collection, and some pages are singed.

It is also likely that large sections of the diaries, indeed whole volumes, were destroyed in ignorance of their content and importance. If this be true, the world has lost documents of inestimable value.

Each day Joseph Goebbels dictated at great length an account of what transpired the previous day. This fact should be kept in mind by the reader, who may occasionally be puzzled to find the Propaganda Minister referring to an event as having occurred on one day when obviously it must have happened the day before.

For his diaries he used an especially heavy water-marked paper and large German-Gothic script of a sort one seldom finds on typewriters. There was triple spacing between the lines, and the margins were wide. No ordinary mortal in those days could have commanded such paper or permitted himself the luxury of such large type and generous spacing.

Although Goebbels seems never to have failed to record his daily observations, which in some cases took up as many as eighty-five typewritten pages, he apparently seldom, if ever, took the time to read over what he had previously written. It thus happened that he frequently repeated himself; in fact at times he used almost the same words on two consecutive days to describe the same event.

Every day's entry began with *Die Lage* (The Situation). It was a recapitulation of the daily military communiqué—the confidential and complete communiqué to which only privileged persons had access. In a few cases *Die Lage* is followed by the words "To be inserted later". The little doctor's busy life was such, however, that he never seems to have bothered to have this material inserted later. To save space, these recapitulations have been omitted.

Paul Joseph Goebbels was born October 29, 1897, in the smoky factory town of Rheydt in the Rhineland. He was the son of a factory foreman, Fritz Goebbels, and his wife, Maria Oldenhausen, a blacksmith's daughter. His parents were devout Roman Catholics, as were his various relations.

The boy Joseph—or, as he was nicknamed, Jupp—attended a Catholic school in this textile centre of 30,000 inhabitants, and also went through the Gymnasium, or high school, of his native city. He was rejected for military service during World War I because of a deformed foot.

He managed to secure a number of Catholic scholarships and attended eight famous German universities—Bonn, Freiburg, Wuerzburg, Munich, Cologne, Frankfurt, Berlin, and finally Heidelberg, where he took his Ph.D. degree in 1921 at the age of twenty-four. He studied history, philology, and the history of art and literature.

His ambition was to be a writer. In the year of his graduation at Heidelberg he wrote an unsuccessful novel, *Michael*, and followed it by two plays, *Blood Seed (Blutsaat)* and *The Wanderer (Der Wanderer)*, which no producer would accept. He also applied, unsuccessfully, for a reporter's job on the *Berliner Tageblatt*, the well-known liberal newspaper.

All these experiences, together with the loss of the war and the collapse of the German Empire, embittered him and kept him restlessly wandering from Rheydt to Cologne, Berlin, and Munich, until, more or less by accident, he heard Adolf Hitler speak at Munich in 1922.

Young Joseph Goebbels tried to interest university students in Hitler's message and thereby discovered that he had the gift of eloquence. That was just the sort of man Hitler needed. The Fuehrer tested his disciple's abilities in the Rhine and Ruhr, then under Allied occupation. Working under an assumed name, Goebbels managed to win converts to Nazism and set up an office at Hattingen in the Ruhr Valley. In 1924 the French occupation authorities ejected him.

Goebbels then drifted to Elberfeld, where he became editor of a Nazi organ, *Voelkische Freiheit*. His articles against the French Negro troops of occupation were especially vitriolic. That same year he was appointed business manager for the Nazi *gau*, or district, of Rhine-Ruhr.

I have been fortunate in having access to an important document dealing with this period of Goebbels' life. Ex-President Hoover, during a visit to Germany in 1946, was given a hand-written diary kept by Dr. Goebbels from August 12, 1925, to October 16, 1926, which he has kindly placed at my disposal. This diary is important in its revelation of a little scoundrel in training to become a great scoundrel. In addition, it gives valuable evidence of the authenticity of the later diaries.

The accounts of those days are replete with references to beer-hall fights, street brawls, and encounters with the police. Goebbels turned his back completely upon the church in which he was raised, and abandoned the faith of his fathers.

His father and mother were greatly displeased at their son's apostasy. He complains, on the occasion of a visit to his parents at Rheydt, September 11, 1925, "Father is serious and uncommunicative. That depresses me." He writes on the occasion of his twenty-eighth birthday at Elberfeld: "Not a word from home. How hurt I feel!" Two days later he observes: "Not a word from home for my birthday, nor anything else. That rather pains me. I am gradually losing contact. And yet I think so often and with such love of home. Why do I have to lose everything, yes, everything?"

In speaking of his visits he occasionally refers to his much younger brother, Konrad. He does not mention his brother Hans, his senior by two years, probably because Hans no longer lived at home in 1925-26. He did manage, however, in 1933 to secure a lucrative position for Hans as Director General of the Provincial Fire and Life Insurance Companies of the Rhine Province. He seemed especially attached to his sister Maria.

I cite a few examples from the handwritten earlier diaries:

*September 30, 1925:* "Dr. Ley is a fool and possibly an intriguer."

*October 2, 1925:* "Stresemann has started for the Locarno Conference, to sell Germany out to capitalism. That fat, complacent swine!"

October 12, 1925: "In Munich (Nazi) scoundrels are at work—nit-wits who won't tolerate real brains. . . . That's the reason for the opposition to Strasser and me."

October 26, 1925: "Streicher spoke. Like a pig."

January 26, 1926: "Kaufmann arrived with Lucas. I don't like it. Lucas is a stupid camel. Likes to show off. But there's nothing in him."

March 27, 1926: "Went to the office for a moment. Found that camel, Dr. Ziegler, there. He had been saying bad things about me, defaming me. I can tell it by the looks of the scoundrel."

These examples are sufficient to establish a similarity of vituperative expressions between both sets of diaries, and to indicate that the later diaries, although typewritten, chronicled Goebbels' real thoughts.

This is true also of Goebbels' comments on Hitler. If one had only the typewritten diaries to go by, one might conclude from the adulation amounting almost to deification of the Fuehrer that Goebbels was writing with a view to expediency rather than from conviction—witness an entry like that of January 31, 1942: "As long as he [the Fuehrer] lives and is among us in good health, as long as he can give us the strength of his spirit and the power of his manliness, no evil can touch us." Could such an apotheosis have been written in sincerity by as coldly calculating a realist as Joseph Goebbels, by a man who from time to time even disagreed with the leader?

Here again the earlier diaries furnish corroborative evidence. They prove that Joseph Goebbels, who otherwise seemed to love no one but himself and his children, did indeed adore Adolf Hitler.

I quote a few significant entries:

November 6, 1925: "Brunswick. We drove to see Hitler. He was just eating his dinner. Immediately he jumped up and stood facing us. He squeezed my hand. Like an old friend.

"And these large blue eyes! Like stars! He is glad to see me. I am supremely happy. . . .

"Later I drove to the meeting and talked for two hours. Tremendous applause. Then *heils* and hand-clapping. He has arrived. He shakes my hand. He is completely exhausted from his great speech [delivered elsewhere]. Then he took the floor here for half an hour.

"Wit, irony, humour, sarcasm, earnestness, passion, white heat—all this is contained in his speech. This man has everything needed to be king. The great tribune of the people. The coming dictator."

November 23, 1925: "Plauen. I arrive. Hitler is there. My joy is great. He greets me like an old friend. And lavishes attention on me. I have him all to myself. What a fellow! (*So ein Kerl!*)

"And then he speaks. How small I am!

"He gives me his picture. With a greeting to the Rhineland.

"Heil Hitler. . . .

"I want Hitler to be my friend. His picture is standing on my table. I simply could not bear it if I ever had to despair of this man."

*December 29, 1925:* "Rheydt. Awakened early in the morning. Schmitz brought me a package. A Christmas greeting from Hitler. His book, bound in leather, with a dedication, 'In recognition of the exemplary manner of your fighting.' I am happy!"

*April 13, 1926:* "Munich. At 8 P.M. by car to the Buergabraeu. Hitler is already there. My heart beats as though it were about to burst (*zum Zerspringen*). Into the hall. Frenzied greetings. Man after man, the house packed. Streicher opens the proceedings. Then I speak for two and a half hours. I give everything there is in me. The people simply rave. They applaud noisily. As I conclude, Hitler embraces me. His eyes are filled with tears. I am happy."

*April 19, 1926:* "Stuttgart. Hitler embraces me when he sees me. He lavishes a lot of praise on me. I believe he has taken me to his heart as no one else."

*June 14, 1926:* "Elberfeld. I am so glad that Hitler is coming. I venerate and love him."

*June 16, 1926:* "Duesseldorf. Hitler has been here for two days. . . . Hitler, the dear old comrade. One cannot fail to like him as a person. In addition he is an outstanding personality. One always learns something new from this obstinate man. As a speaker he combines gesture, mimicry, and language in great harmony. The born agitator. With that man one can conquer the world. Unleash him and he makes the whole corrupt republic totter. His beautiful words yesterday: 'God showed us mercy beyond measure in our struggle. His most beautiful gift to us is the hatred of our enemies, whom we in turn hate with all our hearts.'"

*July 6, 1926:* "Weimar. Hitler spoke. About politics, the Idea, and organization. Deep and mystical. Almost like a gospel. One shudders as one skirts the abyss of life with him. I thank Fate which gave us this man."

When one reads these earlier diary entries, one cannot but conclude that the diaries of 1942 and 1943 are sincere in their portrayal of a very close relationship of mutual trust between Hitler and Goebbels. The postscript to the diaries, too, bears testimony to the sincerity of Goebbels' adoration of his Fuehrer and to the sincerity of the diaries; immediately Hitler passed out of life, he ended his own.

Space does not permit the systematic inclusion of excerpts from the earlier handwritten diaries. Nevertheless some sections of them seem to me essential for a proper understanding of Goebbels and his time.

There is, first of all, Goebbels' revelation of his attitude toward his fellow men. The diaries for 1942-43 convey this only by inference. On August 12, 1925, however, he put down in black and white: "As soon as I am with a person for three days, I don't like him any longer; and if I am with him for a whole week, I hate him like the plague."

On October 15, 1925, he observed, "I have learned to despise the human being from the bottom of my soul. He makes me sick in my stomach. Ugh!"

On April 24, 1926, he had occasion to write, "Much dirt and many intrigues. The human being is a *canaille*."

On August 9, 1926, he found that "The only real friend one has in the end is one's dog". This was followed on August 17 with a further tribute to his dog Benno: "The more I get to know the human species, the more I care for my Benno."

The earlier diaries further reveal, as already pointed out, that Goebbels' parents by no means approved of his conversion from Catholicism to Nazism.

Apparently young Joseph attempted occasionally to argue things out, for I find the laconic entries, *Krach mit Vater* (row with Father), and *Krach zu Hause* (family fight) recurring from time to time. On January 20, 1926, he wrote: "For a long time no word from home. They are angry with me. I am an apostate."

The earlier diaries afford insight into the little doctor's personal habits for which one looks in vain in the 1942-43 versions: his love life. Goebbels' amours were a matter of notoriety throughout Germany. His philandering even after he had become a Reich Minister was so well known and so scandalous that his wife, Magda, would on more than one occasion have sued for divorce had not Hitler insisted that he would allow no marital scandal in the case of a person so highly placed as Dr. Goebbels.

In the wartime diaries, however, the chronicler of his life and work, otherwise so candid, chooses to be silent on this sphere of operations.

The Goebbels diaries for 1925 and 1926 make essential reading for anybody interested in the amours of men of affairs. His loves in those years were Alma, Else, Anke, and two unnamed girls from Franconia and Munich—not successively but simultaneously.

Here are some entries:

*August 14, 1925:* "Alma wrote me a postcard from Bad Harzburg. The first sign of her since that night. This teasing, charming Alma! I rather like the child.

"Received first letter from Else in Switzerland. Only my dear Else can write like that. . . . Soon I'm going to the Rhine for a week, to

be quite alone. Then Else will come to call for me. How happy I am in anticipation!"

*August 15, 1925:* "In these days I find myself thinking so often of Anke. Why just now? Because it is a time for travel? How wonderful it was to travel with her! This wonderful wench!

"I am yearning for Else. When shall I have her in my arms again? . . .

"Else, dear, when shall I see you again?"

"My dear Alma, you are light as a feather!

"Anke, never can I forget you!

"And now I am, oh, so lonely!"

*August 27, 1925:* "Three days on the Rhine. I am lazy, go for walks, and sleep. . . .

"Not a word from Else. Did she fail to receive my postcard? Or is she angry with me? How I pine for her!

"I am living in the same room as I did with her last Whitsuntide. What thoughts! What feelings! Why doesn't she come?"

"I am standing by the Rhine waiting for you. Come, oh come, you kindly one, and bless me!"

*August 30, 1925:* "I received an invitation to give an address in Recklinghausen. How peculiarly that strikes me! I should like to speak there if only I could be sure Anke was sitting among my listeners."

*September 3, 1925:* "Else is here! On Tuesday she returned jubilantly from Switzerland—fat, buxom, healthy, gay, only slightly tanned. She is very happy and in the best of spirits. She is good to me and gives me much joy."

*October 14, 1925:* "Why did Anke have to leave me quite alone? Was it a case of a broken pledge? On her part or mine? I just mustn't think about these things. Only work can relieve me. . . . Probably that is best, after all!"

*October 29, 1925:* "Birthday! Twenty-eight years old. . . .

"I am getting old. I notice that today with a shudder. My hair is thinning out. On the way to baldness.

"But I want for all eternity to remain young at heart!"

*December 21, 1925:* "There is a curse on me and the women. Woe to those who love me! What a painful thought! It makes one despair."

*December 29, 1925:* "To Krefeld last night with Hess. Christmas celebration. A delightful, beautiful girl from Franconia. She's my type. Home with her through rain and storm. *Au revoir!*

"Else arrived."

*January 20, 1926:* "I yearn for the loving hands of a kindly woman."

*January 31, 1926:* "Missed the train. Swore and cursed. But a charming chambermaid from Munich!"

February 6, 1926: "I yearn for a sweet woman! Oh, torturing pain! Do you call that life?"

Elsewhere in this introduction I have referred to Goebbels' radicalism. Two entries (among others) in the earlier diaries show how close the then young agitator felt to the Communists:

October 23, 1925: "In the final analysis it would be better for us to end our existence under Bolshevism than to endure slavery under capitalism."

January 31, 1926: "I think it is terrible that we and the Communists are bashing in each other's heads. . . . Where and when can we talk things over with the leading Communists?"

It was over the issue of radicalism, in fact, that Goebbels in 1926 for a while entertained grave doubts about Adolf Hitler.

On February 15, 1926, Goebbels heard the Fuehrer speak at Bamberg. The little doctor wrote:

"Hitler talked for two hours. I feel as though someone had beaten me. What sort of a Hitler is this? A reactionary? Altogether lacking in poise and assurance. Russian question: quite off the track. Italy and England our natural allies! Terrible! Our task, he says, is the destruction of Bolshevism. Bolshevism is a Jewish creation. We must break Russia. A hundred and eighty millions! . . .

"I am unable to say a word. I feel as though someone had hit me over the head. . . . How my heart hurts! . . . I should like to cry. . . .

"Certainly one of the greatest disappointments of my life. I no longer have complete faith in Hitler. That is the terrible thing about it: my props have been taken from under me. I am only half a person."

A month later, however, Goebbels begins to regain confidence that Hitler, after all, is right. On March 13 he wrote:

"I read Adolf Hitler's *The South Tyrol Question and the Problem of Germany's Alliances*, a wonderfully clear and broad-minded brochure. He's a great fellow, all right—our chief."

His last doubts were dispelled when he heard Hitler speak in Munich on April 13. Here is the story of his capitulation:

"Hitler arrived. . . . He spoke for three hours. Brilliantly. He can make you doubt your own views. Italy and England our allies. Russia wants to devour us. All that is contained in his brochure and in the second volume of *Mein Kampf* which is to appear soon.

"We disagree. We ask questions. He gives brilliant replies. I love him. The social question: he opens great new vistas. He has thought everything out. His ideal: a just collectivism and individualism. As to the soil—everything on and under it belongs to the people. Production to be creative and individualistic. Trusts, transportation, etc., to be socialized. That's something! He has thought it all out. I am now at ease about him. He is a real man. He takes everything into



account. A hothead like that can be my leader. I bow to the greater man, to the political genius."

Goebbels' handwriting is one of the most difficult I have ever deciphered. When I first looked cursorily at these early diaries, the neat German script appeared regular and clear. On closer inspection, however, the Goebbels calligraphy proved anything but easy to read.

It seemed, indeed, like a mirror of the man Goebbels as I knew him: apparently frank and straightforward, with a disarming smile and ingratiating voice, he was in reality a master at hiding his true thoughts behind a mask of urbanity.

In his handwriting, too, he evidently tried to hide something.

More difficult than deciphering Goebbels' handwriting, however, was the translation of his innumerable German colloquial and slang phrases. I could meet the problem only by using equivalent English expressions.

From the beginning of his career as a National Socialist Goebbels was a glutton for work. He spoke night after night, edited his paper, attended to a multitude of details of political organization, and still found time with Gregor Strasser to start the *National-Sozialistische Briefe* (National Socialist Letters) which were soon eagerly read by German workers. Goebbels could truly claim that he and Strasser secured Hitler his working-class following—Hitler himself had appealed mainly to the middle class, the *petite bourgeoisie*, as well as to ardent nationalists of every persuasion.

These *Briefe* were also a powerful weapon in the Goebbels-Strasser fight within the young and uproarious Nazi party against the "conservatives" such as Gottfried Feder, Hermann Esser, and, strangely enough, Julius Streicher. Goebbels was always to be found on the side of the radicals.

The Goebbels-Strasser duumvirate did not last long. At the Nazi party convention of 1926 at Bamberg, Bavaria, Goebbels soon sensed that Strasser and the Fuehrer did not see eye to eye, and decided that his bread was buttered on the Hitler side. He voted with his idol against his friend. Hitler rewarded him on November 9, the anniversary of the ill-fated beer-cellar putsch of 1923, by making him *Gauleiter* for Greater Berlin, a task well calculated to test to the full the abilities of the little doctor, as an organizer, writer, strategist, and political leader.

The capital in those days was known as *das rote Berlin* (Red Berlin). It polled a large communist vote, and the Socialists were the dominating party. That was grist for the fiery doctor's mill. Street brawls and beer-hall fights were the order of the day. In 1927 Goebbels founded a weekly paper, *Der Angriff* (The Attack), which by 1929 became a

bi-weekly and from 1930 onwards a daily. If the Communists hitherto held a monopoly on guttersnipe vituperation, they now had a thing or two to learn from the venomous Nazi editor.

Goebbels' career as a parliamentarian began in 1929, when he was elected to the German Reichstag. A year later he also became a town councillor of Berlin.

Time and again the Nazi organization of Berlin came into conflict with the police and was forbidden. Nevertheless Goebbels managed in 1927 to make his appearance at the Nuremberg party convention with 700 Berlin S.A. Brown Shirts.

Adolf Hitler was much impressed with *der gescheite Dr. Goebbels* (the adroit Dr. Goebbels), as I once heard him call his Propaganda Minister in a Reichstag speech. This young man showed that he possessed something which many an older politician could well envy him: an uncanny understanding of the psychology of the German people. Goebbels was very often wrong in his estimate of foreign peoples; he did, however, know his fellow Germans.

In 1929 Hitler made Goebbels, who was then thirty-two, Reich Propaganda Leader of the Nazi party. "Propaganda has only one object," the new Reichsleiter said on one occasion—"to conquer the masses. Every means that furthers this aim is good; every means that hinders it is bad." He had already given samples of his skill at propaganda not only in his articles and the innumerable handbills and posters he designed, but also in the books, all written before 1930, *The Unknown S.A. Man, Lenin or Hitler?, The Second Revolution, Buch Isidor, and Knorke*.

Goebbels was quite willing to admit that his speeches and writings were usually on the "primitive" side. "Our propaganda is primitive," the Associated Press reported him as saying, "because the people think primitively. We speak the language the people understand."

In his *Battle for Berlin (Kampf um Berlin)*, written in 1934, after he had already become Reich Propaganda Minister, but dealing with his years as *Gauleiter* of Berlin from 1929 onwards, he wrote: "Masses are unformed stuff. Only in the hands of the political artists do the masses become a people and the people a nation."

Goebbels proved to be a wizard as a demagogue. He mixed satire with humour, irony with sombreness, quips in the vernacular with pontifical adjurations. His dark piercing eyes, his straight black hair brushed back, his taut skin made one think of Mephistopheles.

January 30, 1933, brought the accession of Adolf Hitler to undreamed-of power. In the first official announcements the name of Dr. Goebbels was conspicuously absent. Hermann Goering and Wilhelm Frick were the only two National Socialists besides Adolf Hitler in the first Hitler cabinet.

Goebbels could well afford to wait. Hitler had great plans for him. On June 30, 1933, he decreed the establishment of a new cabinet office, that of Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, with Joseph Goebbels at its head, stating that the new venture would be "responsible for all tasks having to do with influencing the mental and spiritual life of the nation, for winning allegiance to the state, its culture and economy, for informing the public at home and abroad about the nation, and for administering all institutions and installations contributing to these ends".

Decree followed decree, expanding Goebbels' powers and functions. There was the Reich Culture Chamber Law of September 22, 1933, channelling all intellectual and cultural life into this one chamber with its six sub-chambers (Reich Radio Chamber, Reich Theatre Chamber, Reich Press Chamber, etc.) and appointing Goebbels as president which, under Nazism, meant dictator. There was the Journalists' Law of October 4, 1933, which made all newsmen servants of the state and subject to license by Goebbels. There was the decree of November, 1936, forbidding all artistic criticism.

Soon Goebbels unblushingly forbade the publication of speeches by cabinet members. He even decreed that nobody could quote past utterances of the Fuehrer without the approval of his Propaganda Ministry.

Goebbels unscrupulously used his vast powers to foster anti-Semitism by fabricating stories about atrocities allegedly committed by the Jews. As World War II loomed on the horizon—and no Nazi besides Hitler himself knew better than Goebbels how certain it was to come—he kept up a constant barrage of stories alleging maltreatment and even torture of German nationals by the populations of neighbouring states.

He thus prepared the ground well for Hitler's war on civilization. Even after his phenomenal rise to power Goebbels never lost sight of the desirability of making himself *persona gratissima* to Adolf Hitler. He could not impress Hitler with a war record like that of Hermann Goering, the *Pour le Mérite* aviation ace of World War I, as he was physically incapable of military service. The Fuehrer, however, laid great stress upon large families.

Goebbels had married the comely and presentable Magda, a woman who by her first marriage to a German industrialist named Quandt already had one son, Harald. It was a matter of common gossip in Berlin society circles that Joseph Goebbels insisted that his wife deliver one baby a year. The offspring consisted of six children at the end of the Hitler regime. Goebbels, coldly calculating that these children would probably not have much chance in a world to which Nazism was anathema, poisoned them all and prevailed upon Magda likewise to die with him.

Before the war, however, the wife and children were quite an asset in Goebbels' bid for Hitler's affection. The children were taught to say nice things to "Onkel Adolf". Goebbels records with pride that the Fuehrer during his private talks usually inquired about Hilde, Holde, and Helga. He apparently knew the three younger children less well. Also, he vowed that after the war he would see that his family devoted itself to his idol even more than before the great conflict.

Such was the Joseph Goebbels of pre-World War II days; such were his powers. The diaries will show that even these powers did not satiate his inordinate ambition, but that he used the Fuehrer's absence at the front to set himself up as virtual dictator in domestic affairs.

I saw Dr. Goebbels for the first time in 1932 during the brief chancellorship of Franz von Papen, when the ban on Nazi party public meetings in Prussia and on the wearing of Party uniforms was lifted by this wily diplomat and politician, who told me he permitted the Nazis to meet freely "so that they might hang themselves by their own words".

The Nazis immediately staged a series of demonstrations all over Greater Berlin, among them one in the famous Sports Palace. In those days the Nazis craved international attention, and the foreign press was assigned good seats on the huge platform, near the speaker's lectern.

What struck me as I heard Dr. Goebbels that first time, and what made me watch him closely thereafter, was the fact that this diminutive man, one of the most versatile spellbinders Germany has had for generations, was absolutely cool and self-possessed, while at the same time he gave the impression of being deeply stirred and carried away by his own eloquence.

His voice, of a deeply resonant quality, seemed to quiver with emotion. His gestures seemed passionate. His general attitude seemed to be that of a man so wrapped up in his fanaticism that time meant nothing so long as he had a message to deliver.

I noticed something else, however: his fascinatingly delicate hands moved in powerful gestures without the slightest trembling and belied the quiver in his voice. His gestures, although seemingly spontaneous, indicated careful planning, for he always threw himself into position for a particular gesture before actually beginning to execute it. Beside him lay a watch which he consulted from time to time by a stealthy glance, clearly showing that he was well aware of the passage of time.

In short, here was a showman who knew exactly what he was doing every moment and who calculated in advance the effect of every spoken word and every gesture. Though Adolf Hitler's raucous voice

grated disgustingly and frequently broke as he talked himself into a high pitch of frenzied exaltation, the hearer nevertheless had the impression that here was a man who believed what he said or at least intoxicated himself into this belief with the sound of his own fulminations. With Goebbels I had the feeling that he would have defended Communism, monarchy, or even democracy with the same pathos and emotion, yes, even the same fanaticism, had his idol, Hitler, chosen to sponsor any of these.

About three years later a German friend told me of attending a party at which Goebbels amused all present by successively delivering a speech on behalf of the restoration of the monarchy, the re-establishment of the Weimar Republic, and the introduction of Communism in the German Reich, and, finally, on behalf of National Socialism.

"I assure you," this friend said, "that I was ready at the end of each speech to join the particular cause Goebbels had just advocated. He had compelling and convincing arguments for each of the four forms of government."

A striking example of Goebbels' capacity for unabashed prevarication was given to the foreign correspondents accredited at Berlin on November 10, 1938, the day after Hitler had given his hordes the go-ahead signal to loot Jewish shops, demolish Jewish property, set fire to synagogues, and arrest innocent Jews. We were asked to come to the Propaganda Ministry late that morning, as Dr. Goebbels wished to make a statement.

Ordinarily at our daily press conference, which was usually conducted by the sectional chief in charge of foreign press matters for the Propaganda Ministry, we sat in armchairs, which made it easy to write. Also, there was always ample opportunity for asking questions. This time we were led into the so-called "Throne Room", a large, ceremonial hall of the Leopold Palace, which housed the Propaganda Ministry. There were no seats. We stood about until it was time for the Minister to appear.

Suddenly he entered with quick, nervous steps, invited us to stand in a semicircle about him, and then delivered a declaration to the effect that "all the accounts that have come to your ears about alleged looting and destruction of Jewish property are a stinking lie (*sind erstunken und erlogen*). Not a hair of a Jew was disturbed (*den Juden ist kein Haar gepruemmt worden*)."

We looked at one another in amazement. In all our journalistic careers no one among us had experienced anything like it.

Only three minutes from the Wilhelmplatz, where the Propaganda Ministry was situated, was Berlin's famous shopping street, the Leipziger Strasse, at the head of which stood Wertheim's, the well-known department store, with its great show windows broken and

its celebrated displays a pile of rubble. Yet Goebbels dared tell us that what we had seen with our own eyes was a "stinking lie".

After a few paralysing moments we had recovered sufficiently from this shock to want to press Dr. Goebbels with questions. He had disappeared. He had used the moment of our consternation to eliminate any possibility of our asking him embarrassing questions.

What Goebbels failed to take into account when he launched this coup was that while all of us truthfully reported his words and, in order to be able to remain at our posts in Germany, refrained from tearing his statement to pieces, we had the previous day sent long eyewitness stories of burning synagogues, demolished shop windows, beaten Jews, and Nazi gangsters moving through the streets and shouting "*Juda Verrecke* [Wipe out the Jews]!"

My wife and I had spent hours the night before watching frenzied Nazis at their work of destruction. Also, some of us had filed stories just before the Goebbels news conference began, describing how we had picked our way to the Wilhelmplatz by making many detours in order not to cut our tyres on the smashed glass from costly display windows that littered the main thoroughfares.

The effect, therefore, of our truthful reporting of Goebbels' statement was quite different from what Hitler's Propaganda Minister had expected.

The whole civilized world was shocked when on the evening of May 10, 1933, the books of authors displeasing to the Nazis were solemnly burned in the immense Franz Joseph Platz between the University of Berlin and the State Opera in the Unter den Linden. I was a witness of the scene.

All that afternoon Nazi raiding parties had been going into public and private libraries, throwing on to the streets such books as Dr. Goebbels in his supreme wisdom had decided were unfit for Nazi Germany. From the streets Nazi columns of beer-hall fighters had picked up these discarded volumes and taken them to the Franz Joseph Platz.

Here the heap grew higher and higher, and every few minutes another howling mob arrived, adding more books to the impressive pyre. At dusk, university students, mobilized by the little doctor, surrounded the bonfire and greeted the first flames with songs, cheers and a war-dance.

When the orgy was at its height, a cavalcade of cars appeared. It was the Propaganda Minister himself, accompanied by his body-guard and a number of fellow torch bearers of the new Nazi *Kultur*.

"Fellow students, German men and women!" he said as he stepped before a microphone for all Germany to hear him. "The age of extreme Jewish intellectualism has now ended, and the success of the

German revolution <sup>of</sup> again given the right of way to the German spirit. . . .

"You are doing the right thing in committing the evil spirit of the past to the flames at this late hour of the night. It is a strong, great, and symbolic act—an act that is to bear witness before all the world to the fact that the spiritual foundation of the November Republic has disappeared. From these ashes there will arise the phoenix of a new spirit. . . .

"The past is lying in flames. The future will rise from the flames within our own hearts. . . . Brightened by these flames our vow shall be: The Reich and the Nation and our Fuehrer Adolf Hitler: *Heil! Heil! Heil!*"

The few foreign correspondents who had taken the trouble to view this "symbolic act" were stunned. What had happened to the "Land of Thinkers and Poets"? they wondered.

Goebbels always played the double role of living a luxurious life and pretending to be simple—the true representative of the common man in Germany. It would not do for the people to read what a gay party he was giving—the drab enumeration of prominent people who attended gave his communiqué the flavour of a stilted official reception.

It is true that at the very beginning of his career as a cabinet minister he forgot for a short while that he had chosen to pose as the outstanding exponent of the proletarian sector of the Nazi movement. A newsreel, *Father's Birthday*, was released showing the private life of the Goebbels family. The Minister made the psychological mistake of permitting a scene to be filmed which showed his children, with a groom for each of their ponies. At some of the showings the audience booed and whistled, and within a few days the newsreel was withdrawn.

He also made a psychological mistake when he prevailed upon his wife, Magda, to become head of a Nazi fashion centre in July 1933. Public ridicule resulted in the closing down of this venture.

Goebbels was quick to profit from these two mistakes. Thereafter he was the simple man who contrasted sharply with his then closest rival, the pleasure-loving, epicurean, spendthrift Hermann Goering. In fact Goebbels even made use of his prerogatives as Minister of Propaganda to forbid the publication of certain pictures of Goering's costly Opera Ball on January 12, 1936. For purposes of window dressing the bemedalled Minister of Aviation had invited to this ball such social luminaries as Ex-Czar Ferdinand of Bulgaria the former German Crown Prince Frederick Wilhelm and his family (one son, Prince Louis Ferdinand, however, refused to attend, as he saw through the manœuvre), Duke Charles Edward of Coburg and

Gotha, Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach, Werner <sup>els</sup> Siemens, and others. Goebbels did not want the German public to know that any high Nazi was consorting with the former German aristocracy and plutocracy. Nor did he want the public to know that the vast Opera House was redecorated in white satin and that more than a million marks had been spent to give lustre to the occasion.

In this connection I recall a so-called *Bierabend* (in other words, a buffet supper with beer, sandwiches, and salads) given in the Propaganda Ministry in honour of provincial journalists from all over Germany who had come to Berlin for what was called a convention, but in reality was an indoctrination week in Nazi news policies. The vice-president, the secretary, and I were invited as representatives of the Foreign Press Association and were the only foreigners present.

We were asked to take seats informally. A functionary of the Propaganda Ministry presided at each round table for eight to ten persons. Fortunately for me I happened to sit down at a table over which someone from the moving-picture division of the Ministry presided, a man who did not know the newsmen. I was careful not to pronounce my name distinctly when all of us in that group introduced ourselves, and was happy to note that the Propaganda Ministry representative regarded me as just another provincial correspondent.

It was not long before he delivered himself of something which, by comparing notes with my other colleagues, I learned was being said in almost the same words at all the other tables.

"Our Minister, Dr. Goebbels, is one of the most modest men I ever knew," his handy man told us. "He hates all pomp and luxury. He is therefore very much embarrassed that he has had to move into a large villa at Schwanenwerder on the Wannsee. But he realizes that as Minister of the Reich he owes something to his official position. After all, he can't receive a distinguished guest like Count Ciano in a five-roomed flat! So he is putting up with the inconvenience of a rather fashionable villa as a national duty."

Goebbels was clever enough to have learned from the newsreel fiasco that a luxurious suburban estate would draw unfavourable comment. What better way of forestalling criticism than letting the men throughout Germany who controlled public opinion through their newspapers know how chagrined he was at having to live in luxury?

Costly parties were the order of the day in Hitler's Third Reich. The beer-hall fighters who had won their way to power and position by brute force considered themselves entitled to the spoils of war, and Hitler approved. Even Goering's sumptuous Opera Ball, however, was nothing, compared with the Venetian Night given by the man of the people, Joseph Goebbels, in July 1936 in honour of the



delegates to the convention of the International Chamber of Commerce.

Peacock Island, charmingly situated in idyllic Wannsee, some fifteen miles outside of Berlin on the way to Potsdam, with its romantic castle erected in 1794 for Frederick Wilhelm III, had been converted into a scene from the Arabian Nights. As we crossed over from the mainland on a pontoon bridge, the path leading to where Dr. Goebbels and his wife waited to receive their guests was lined on both sides with hundreds of the prettiest girls from Berlin's numerous high schools. All of them were dressed in white silk breeches and blouses, white silk stockings, and white leather slippers. Each held a white wand. They bowed as the guests slowly walked several hundred yards to the reception line.

On a beautiful lawn, tables had been set for groups of twelve, ten, eight, and smaller parties. There were some three thousand guests. A sumptuous dinner was served, the like of which we had not eaten in Berlin for years, for these were the days of "Guns before Butter". Fringing the lawn on one side was the longest bar I have ever seen, with eighty attendants at our service to concoct any drink that might be wanted, or to serve champagne without limit. Every lady guest was presented with a statuette from the Prussian State Porcelain Factory.

In another part of the island a gigantic rotunda had been constructed on which the guests could dance, and on which, later in the evening, the ensemble of the civic opera performed a charming ballet and other members of Berlin's artist colony put on a show.

All for the glory of the Third Reich! But the official communiqué for the German press was stilted and drab. The common people were not to know that the days of Augustus the Strong of Saxony and Poland had returned to Germany under the auspices of the tribune of the people, Joseph Goebbels.

During the first year of the Nazi regime the foreign correspondents had hardly any contact with the newly created Propaganda Ministry. Goebbels ignored the foreign press (except for certain satellite journalists), since the majority of the newsmen from other countries on duty in Berlin were critical, to say the least, of Nazism.

Gradually Goebbels realized that such a condition of affairs was untenable; that so long as foreign correspondents were tolerated there must also be some official contact between them and the German authorities. Even unfavourable publicity would be better than no publicity at all. Besides, Hitler might at any time accuse him of having failed even to try to win over the foreign correspondents to an understanding of what he and his movement were attempting to do.

In the spring of 1934, therefore, Goebbels reversed his policy and invited the foreign correspondents as well as the diplomatic corps to a tea-party in Leopold Palace.

Shortly afterwards the Foreign Press Association gave its traditional annual banquet in honour of the German Government, the diplomatic corps, and leaders of German thought. In Republican days most members of the cabinet had attended. The German Chancellor or the Foreign Minister had always delivered an important speech. The Nazis snubbed us. No cabinet member came—only a few minor officials.

In the years of the Weimar Republic it had not been difficult for me to find appropriate words of welcome to our German and foreign diplomatic guests. The leaders of the short-lived German republic were anxious to fit themselves into the pattern of a co-operative, peaceful world.

But to speak on an occasion like this, when the Nazi Government deliberately snubbed us, without risking deportation, was far more difficult. Unwittingly the absent Dr. Goebbels came to my rescue.

Some days before our banquet a representative of *Der Angriff* had been ejected from Rumania. (That, of course, was before Ion Antonescu.) I cannot remember what the specific charges were. In general they were the same as those made—and rightly so—against so many German correspondents abroad after the Nazis took over. Most of these men were now no longer reporters; they were political agents of the Nazi regime.

Goebbels seized upon the occasion to write a scathing editorial, protesting against the eviction. He posed as a champion of free speech and untrammelled inquiry into facts. The foreign correspondent, he held, must be permitted to keep in touch with not only the Government but also the opposition, must have the privilege of writing both complimentary and uncomplimentary things about the country of which he is a guest. In short, Goebbels advocated for his correspondents abroad all those things that we had been permitted to do under the Weimar Republic but which we were being reprimanded and even threatened for doing in the Third Reich.

My speech on this occasion was "Made in Germany". I stated that it was a comforting thing for a foreign correspondent to find that his conception of his duties coincided with that of the country to which he was assigned. I therefore took pleasure in quoting the official German position on this matter.

After concluding the reading of the Goebbels editorial, I said that every foreign correspondent present no doubt agreed with this official Nazi view as expressed by Dr. Goebbels, wherefore I raised my glass

to that freedom of the press on which we were all agreed, and which had been aptly defined in *Der Angriff*.

If I ever saw people look silly, it was those few Nazis present.

Quite by accident I came to hear Goebbels make a pronouncement which put the final touch on Nazi regimentation of the German mind. Among the numerous invitations to public ceremonies which constantly passed over my desk in the Associated Press Bureau at Berlin there was one asking me to attend a meeting of the *Reichskulturkammer* (Reich Chamber of Culture) in the Philharmonic Hall at noon, November 29, 1936. Goebbels was to be the speaker. This meant that we would receive the text of his address via the German News Bureau soon after he had finished. Therefore, why bother to go to the meeting?

Before and after the address, however, the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra was to play. I was willing even to listen to a tirade by Goebbels if I could hear Beethoven and Schubert performed by the Berlin Philharmonic. I hastened to the nearby hall.

Goebbels arose and, in cold, biting language, and without his usual effort to ingratiate himself with his listeners, calmly announced that musical, theatrical, literary, and artistic criticism was hereafter forbidden. The professional press and radio critics were ordered to limit themselves to *Betrachtungen* (reflections or contemplations), which meant that they might write something about the artist himself and his methods of work, possibly even a word or two as to how the musical composition or the play had originated, but nothing to indicate a critical attitude toward either the performer or his work.

The representatives of every sector of German art present looked at one another in amazement. The newspaper critics bit their lips angrily. The last vestige of relative freedom of the press was thus eliminated by the dictum of the Propaganda Minister.

I was glad I had gone. To observe the smugness with which Goebbels addressed the leaders of art and culture in Germany, to catch the malicious glint in his eye as he noted the helpless consternation of his listeners, and to hear the raucous applause of the Nazi party leaders of the beer-hall type who were sprinkled among the writers, musicians, painters, sculptors, and other artists—that was worth coming for.

Strangely enough, my last experience as a free man in Germany had to do with Joseph Goebbels. Stranger still, although Goebbels and I had a mutual aversion toward each other—Goebbels said in his diary entry for May 19, 1942, what he thought of me—my last experience was a gratifying one.

Here is the unusual story. At Hanover there was a close friend of our family, Frau Lotte B., a Jewess. She was arrested and

ordered to be deported to the Baltic States, then under German occupation.

Her husband had been a naval captain in World War I and had a distinguished record. He had taken his son to the United States where news reached him of the November 1938 pogroms. He saw that a return to Germany meant disaster. Therefore he moved heaven and earth to have his wife join him, and actually secured for her a visa to Cuba. Friends in Germany were instrumental in obtaining transit visas through France and Spain.

Although Frau B. possessed the necessary papers for emigration, the Nazis placed her on one of the cattle trains filled with Jews who were to be shipped to some Baltic ghetto—Riga, if I remember correctly.

It was at this stage that friends acquainted me with the situation. I ran from office to office, only to learn that, in the last analysis, Jewish affairs were in the hands of none other than Joseph Goebbels.

If ever it was difficult for me to become a petitioner it was now. I loathed Dr. Goebbels. I hated to ask him for anything. I feared he might ask something of me in return which my conscience would forbid me to do. Yet the thought of this splendid woman being permanently separated from her husband and child and left to perish miserably in a concentration camp would not let me sleep.

For the first and only time in my life I therefore asked a favour of Dr. Goebbels. I reminded him that in the first place the Nazis on assuming power had specifically stated they would treat Jews with a distinguished war record differently from others of their race or religion. Captain B.'s record as a naval hero was beyond challenge. Therefore he was, I argued, entitled to special consideration.

— Secondly, I argued that the purpose of the evacuations obviously was to drive all Jews out of Germany. Then what objection could there be to letting Frau B. start westward for America instead of eastward to the Baltic States? In either case Nazi Germany would be rid of her.

On more than one occasion I have been baffled by the unpredictable workings of the Nazi mind. To my surprise, Goebbels sent me word through Dr. Semler, of the Propaganda Ministry, who had been very helpful to me in this matter, that he would see to it that Frau B. was taken off the ghetto train and allowed to proceed to Spain. He attached no conditions. He did not try to make a deal with me. Dr. Semler told me privately, however, that I had "shamed" him into taking favourable action by my reference to Captain B.'s war record.

Pearl Harbour followed soon after, and four days later, on December 11, 1941, Adolf Hitler declared war on the United States. We journalists were permitted to join the embassy and consulate staffs for internment at Bad Nauheim where we had to wait five months

before being allowed to proceed to Lisbon and there board the New York-bound *SS Drottningholm* which had just brought the Axis diplomats and journalists to Portugal.

On the morning of December 14, just as my wife and I were about to drive to the American Embassy to join the rest of the internees, the telephone rang. It was the Postal Ministry which read a telegram to me from Frau B. stating that she had arrived safely in Madrid.

What was Goebbels' place in the Nazi scheme of things? I remember a talk I had in 1930 with Ernst Roehm, the only man in the Nazi hierarchy who addressed Adolf Hitler by the familiar German "*Du*". He was brought to my office by a Bolivian diplomat, Federico Nielsen-Reyes, who thought it high time an Associated Press representative knew some of the men of the coming regime in Germany. Roehm in turn introduced me to Hitler several months later.

Discussing the various leaders of the Nazi movement, Roehm pointed out that Goebbels often annoyed Hitler by the guttersnipe language used in the *Angriff*. "Goebbels is a special case, and the Fuehrer at first did not know what to do with him," Roehm told me. "He finally decided that, since Berlin was so 'red', Goebbels might as well work off his energies there."

Step by step, moving rather cautiously at first, Goebbels entrenched himself. He took sides against Roehm and was in Hitler's immediate entourage during the crisis of June 30, 1934, when the fate of the regime seemed to hang in the balance. At the same time he seems to have looked for a possibility of securing a berth elsewhere in case the repercussions of the Roehm revolt and the attendant wholesale purges proved too great for Hitler to retain his dictatorship. Coming to Prague soon afterwards to cover a story there, I received an unexpected visit from Otto Strasser, leader of the "Black Front" which for a while played with Hitler and had then broken away from him because he was not radical enough. Strasser at that time claimed that Goebbels was in contact with him and was ready to join the Strasser forces in case Hitler were overthrown.

I believe it is no exaggeration to say that by the time the Goebbels diaries were written the little doctor was the most important and influential man after Hitler, not even excepting the seemingly all-powerful Heinrich Himmler. Goering, the successor-designate to Hitler, was already in eclipse. Himmler had only brute force at his command. He was not a man of exceptional intellect. Nor was he powerful in his own right. His power, like that of Martin Bormann, depended upon Adolf Hitler. His clumsiness in trying to negotiate a separate peace in the closing days of the war shows what was bound to happen to him once he failed to act on Hitler's orders.

Goebbels, on the other hand, undoubtedly had brains. He was vested with more and more authority as time went on, until by 1943 he was virtually running the country while Hitler was running the war.

One indication of the power exerted by Goebbels is his repeated statement that he issued orders to arrest this or that person. The following entry, dated November 19, 1943, illustrates what I mean:

"There is some complaint about the attitude of certain classes of our population toward English prisoners of war. . . . I have given orders that people so unmindful of their honour as to behave thus are to be summoned into court and given heavy prison sentences."

In fact, a careful reading of the diaries makes one feel that Goebbels was a law unto himself, apart from his respect for Adolf Hitler, whose will he obeyed, even though he did not meekly accept an adverse decision but kept reverting to the subject until he had either changed the Fuehrer's mind or found him adamant.

What other personal characteristics does Goebbels reveal in his diaries for 1942-43?

Overshadowing all the rest was his inordinate ambition. Obsessed with ambition, he became a glutton for work—not because he was overconscientious, but because he was driven on by an almost psychopathic lust for power.

To achieve power he needed to be in the know about what was going on around him. Accordingly we find him listening by the hour to the gossip of men who could inform him of the foibles and weaknesses of possible rivals. We find him sticking his nose into everything, even in matters which in nowise concerned him.

I could turn to almost any page of his diaries and find him occupying his mind with such matters as potato rations, how women should do their hair in wartime, Nazi terminology in foreign-language dictionaries, grumbling by the average citizen, requisitioning of copper and pewter ware, the administration of justice, new taxes, houses of ill fame for foreign slave workers, fees for troop entertainers, diet for dancing girls, women in industry, experiments in artificial insemination, an itinerary for Countess Ciano, civilian behaviour in wartime, character of radio programmes, German foreign policy, attitude toward occupied countries, corruption in high places—just to mention a few topics at random.

So ambitious was Goebbels that he refused to take time for necessary rest. Apparently he feared that by being away from his duties for even a fortnight he might miss something of importance in the determining of which he should have a hand.

He writes about trouble with his nerves, about an itch that has become unbearable, about being very tired and badly in need of rest,

about the terrible pain caused by a bad kidney attack, etc. Yet such is his ambition and jealous concern for keeping power in his hands that he refuses consistently to heed his doctor's orders to go to Karlsbad for a cure.

Hand in hand with his overweening ambition went a colossal vanity.

"The Fuehrer told Speer he never once discovered a psychological error in my propaganda," he wrote jubilantly on April 24, 1943.

"I was in top form and used persuasive and pointed arguments," he exclaimed on February 7, 1942. "My articles are as fascinating for Germans as they are for foreign readers," was his comment on April 6, 1942.

A little flattery—and Goebbels was ready to change his opinion about a person. This is strikingly illustrated in the case of King Boris of Bulgaria. Goebbels hated royalty and aristocracy. The Hohenzollerns weren't "worth a hoot", the Italian royal house was "despicable", Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands "surely a sad sight". Quite in keeping with this general estimate was his opinion of King Boris as expressed in his diary for January 25, 1942: "a sly, crafty fellow", who "is said to be playing a somewhat double-faced game".

Then Boris did him the honour of summoning him for a private audience which, although scheduled to last only twenty minutes, stretched out for more than an hour.

Goebbels hears that his articles are "everyday reading" for the Bulgarian monarch, that he uses Goebbels' arguments in talking to his military staff, that Goebbels would have prevented German defeat in 1918 had he then been Minister for Propaganda.

Suddenly Goebbels went into reverse; he now wrote of Boris (see diary entry for March 28, 1942): "He is a real people's king . . . an impassioned devotee of Hitler's genius as a leader . . . sympathetic."

Goebbels was undoubtedly one of the most radical of the Nazi leaders. His early doubt about Hitler, as I have pointed out, revolved about the question whether the Fuehrer saw social and economic problems radically enough.

But this radicalism extends to all fields other than the social-economic. He insists upon a fundamental change in the administration of justice, even to the extent of throwing overboard existing legal concepts and substituting Hitler's supreme will and the "sound common sense of the people" as the basis for legal findings. It is he who suggests to Hitler that he should have the sham Reichstag expressly confer upon the Fuehrer the right to dismiss from office anybody he pleases without a hearing. He wants Hitler to authorize the shooting of enemy parachutists and is disappointed that the Fuehrer does not agree with him.

Above all, Goebbels' radicalism was attested by the fact that he, more conspicuously than any other Nazi leader, demanded "total war". The whole nation must take part in this war, he felt. He therefore opposed so-called "soup money" for civil servants when they had to work longer hours, insisting that the civilian should fare no better than the soldier. He advocated the drafting of women into important war industries—again on the theory that the entire nation must wage this war.

With Goebbels, only a Nazi was a full-fledged human being. However often he may lose his temper over the shortcomings of his fellow leaders, in the last analysis they rank higher with him than non-Nazis. To him the *Waffen-S.S.* is a military element far superior to the regular army. General Sepp Dietrich is admirable because he is the leading general of the *S.S.* troops. Next come Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, Colonel General Eduard Dietl, and Colonel General Heinz Guderian, all of them ardent Nazis. The leftovers from imperial and republican days, men such as Brauchitsch, Manstein, Bock, Busch, Kuechler, List, Halder, Fromm, Stuelpnagel, are either not to be trusted or are inept or lacking in imagination.

Even Party considerations failed to count with him, however, when the interests of his own Propaganda Ministry were involved. He will not permit the Party to establish a general news service of its own. He intervenes when *Gauleiter* Joseph Buerckel tries to set up an independent cultural office. He resents any attempt by the Ministry of the Interior, which is technically in charge of civil-service appointments and at the head of which is one of Hitler's oldest collaborators, Dr. Wilhelm Frick, to have any say about appointments in the Propaganda Ministry; and denies the Finance Ministry its right to be consulted on these appointments on the ground that the budget is involved.

Goebbels was a peculiar mixture of realist and wishful thinker. Despite his vanity he often viewed situations with a greater sense of realism than did some of his colleagues. He saw, for instance, what a mistake it was for the Nazi regime not to drive a wedge between the conquered peoples of the East and the Bolsheviks by promising the Ukrainians, White Russians, and others land for the peasants and religious freedom.

Ardent Nazi though he was, he was acutely aware of the danger to the regime inherent in its leaders' love for good living, even in wartime.

Not because he was humane, but because he was a realist, Goebbels advocated decent food and pay for slave labour. Only by offering food and monetary inducements, he felt, would these forced labourers step up production.



Parenthetically I may add that he was an extreme realist when it came to his own health. When he had his violent kidney attack he preferred to entrust his precious body to the care of Catholic nuns as nurses, spurning the much-advertised "Brown Sisters" of the Nazi regime.

On the other hand Goebbels frequently shows that wishful thinking could easily sidetrack his innate sense of realism. He refused to believe, for instance, because he did not want to believe, that America really had great potentialities for war production. Instead, he poo-pooed American claims and accused President Roosevelt, General Marshall, Colonel Frank Knox, the Secretary of the Navy, and Harry Hopkins of exaggerating American production.

Wishful thinking led him to prophesy that the Allies, on reaching Italy, would indulge in wholesale looting of art treasures, that Italy would never declare war on Germany, that Sir Stafford Cripps would not accept an appointment to go to India, that President Roosevelt was trying to seize India and the French colonial empire, and that Germany proper could never be invaded.

Space forbids dealing in this introduction with numerous other aspects of the Nazi regime on which the diaries cast new light. It will suffice merely to indicate some of them. Totalitarianism is revealed as amazingly inept and bungling, in contrast to the popular notion that authoritarian regimes are at least efficient, however brutal they may be. The Luftwaffe is shown to have been far weaker in the years under discussion than the outside world assumed. The aims and methods of Nazi foreign policy are disclosed with a frankness and cynicism which make National Socialism stand forth as absolutely amoral and immoral, as ready to cheat friend, foe and neutral alike. Hitler's and Goebbels' contempt for other nations and their public men was abysmal. Goebbels gloatingly planned the extermination of all Jews, and the reduction of the Christian Churches to impotence.

The Goebbels diaries are also calculated to cause wide discussion whether Allied psychological warfare was waged with the necessary acumen, and whether the doctrine of Unconditional Surrender did not needlessly prolong the war.

The diaries become almost humorous reading in those passages in which Goebbels feigns moral indignation at certain occurrences in the Allied camp. For instance, he pretends to be sickened on reading about the telegrams sent to Stalin by the "plutocracies" on the occasion of Red Army day—as though this were any different from what the Nazis did during their brief marriage of convenience with the Bolsheviks from the autumn of 1939 until June 22, 1941.

Time and again he assumes a holier-than-thou attitude toward the Western Powers about the alleged falsification or withholding of

news. Yet his diaries are replete with cynical admissions that he has doctored the news and kept the German public in ignorance of important developments.

The Goebbels diaries are by no means merely a vain public official's reflections on his own importance and his non-authoritative interpretations of contemporaneous events. They are the day-by-day record of occurrences in Germany and the world, written by one of the three top men in the Nazi hierarchy, who in the early days of the regime were often called "the Nazi trinity".

Adolf Hitler, of course, was the Number One man. If any further evidence of this is needed, the Goebbels diaries clearly establish this fact.

Next there was Hermann Goering, designated by Hitler as his successor in the event of his death or incapacity.

And finally there was the little doctor, Joseph Goebbels, the third figure in the trinity, whose story is told in the following pages in his own words.

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