



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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Series V: Writings, 1909-1963, undated.

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Reply to article in Cleveland newspaper by Else B. Gerstenberger
("Woman Lauds Hitler's Rule. . ."), 1933.

Mrs. Else B. Gerstenberger has been moved to express herself in public print because she "is very much disturbed by the evident misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the aims and achievements of the political party today in power in Germany and its leader, Adolf Hitler" This stalwart American does not seem to be the least bit disturbed by the dismemberment of all democratic institutions in Germany, the mangling of the Republic, the suppression of all freedom, the extermination of all political parties and the enthronement of one of the most ruthless dictatorships in Europe. Her democratic American heart bleeds only for poor, misunderstood Hitler. It flutters in ecstasy only when she recalls the day that the republican flag was definitely pulled down in Germany. "It was wonderful" she says, "to see the enthusiasm of the Germans when for the first time in fifteen years their old flag so proudly waved over them"

The whole world was shocked at the epidemic of physical violence which swept over Germany after the elections in March. Trained and impartial newspaper men within Germany, like H. R. Knickerbocker, Louis Lochner, Edmond Taylor and Dorothy Thompson, saw and reported infamous acts of brutality perpetrated by the Brown Shirts against their opponents, whether liberals, pacifists, socialists or Jews. They told of wholesale arrests, of Straff expeditions, of unspeakable deeds of cruelty in the notorious "Brown Houses", of huge concentration camps where the political opponents of the Nazis were incarcerated like criminals. The American Embassy at Berlin reported "Considerable physical mistreatment of Jews". But for Mrs. Gerstenberger, in her peaceful haunts in Dresden, the German "revolution" was nothing but a "period of joy and celebration."

Like so many professional propagandists of the new regime Mrs. Gerstenberger repeats the Nazi theme song about a united Germany backing Hitler. She goes them one better. Surveying the whole vast field of human history she enthusiastically proclaims "I am confident that no man in the history of the world has had more loyal

and more enthusiastic support from practically a whole nation than the Nazi leader, Adolf Hitler today". Certainly! By dissolving and outlawing the Communist party, the Social Democratic party, the Catholic Centrist party and every other political party in the Reich, by arresting their leaders, silencing their press and gagging all opposition within his own party, Hitler may be said to have achieved "the loyal and enthusiastic support from practically the whole nation". The Czars of Russia achieved their loyal and enthusiastic support in much the same way....

For the plight of the Jews in Germany this lady has but a reluctant word of measured sympathy. She is persuaded that they have suffered only in spirit. A few Jews may have suffered from the personal spite of some irresponsible individuals but the Government must not be held responsible. "It is not even in sympathy with it".

In this manner the lady gingerly dismisses the whole black record of legal, social and economic persecution of the six hundred thousand Jews in Germany and the numerous laws which have been officially promulgated against them designed to destroy them economically and to reduce them to the position of aliens and helots in a country where many of them and their ancestors have lived for more than a thousand years. The lady, with superb insouciance, passes over in silence the whole shameful story of the hundreds of eminent scholars and scientists who have been driven from their academic posts; of the jurists and lawyers who have been denied the right to practice their professions; of the physicians and surgeons, some of them of international fame, who have been expelled from hospitals and medical schools and the state insurance practice; of artists, musicians, writers and journalists who have been hounded from their positions and have seen their careers ruined; of officials who have been dismissed from all government positions and from the entire civil service; of merchants whose businesses have been ruined by the notorious boycott; of working men who have been denied the right to belong to labor unions which are open to all other working men; of educational opportunities which have been withheld from students and of men and women who have been driven to want and exile and

and suicide - all for the unatonalbe crime of being Jews.

The entire civilized world has protested against these medieval acts of racial and religious intolerance. In the Parliaments of the world and in the Senate of the United States this blind reaction has been denounced. Twelve hundred Christian Clergymen were moved to voice their indignation in a resolution of protest. "Systematically" this protest reads, "they are prosecuting a 'cold pogrom' of inconceivable cruelty against our Jewish brethren, driving them from positions of trust and leadership depriving them of civil and economic rights, deliberately condemning them, if they survive at all, to survive as an outlawed and excommunicated people, and threatening Jews with massacre if they so much as protest. It is our considered judgment that the endeavor of the German Nazis to humiliate a whole section of the human family threatens the civilized world with the return of medieval barbarity".

Bar Association, Medical Societies, The American Association of University Professors and numerous other professional bodies, both here and abroad, have been moved to reigister their sense of outraged moral indignation.

But not a word of protest springs from the lips of this lady! Not an instinctive human cry of outrage! She is so sweetly reasonable about it all.... She simply cannot understand "how the words or deeds of this man (Hitler) and his party can be so misunderstood".....

I wonder if Mrs. Gerstenberger would have remained so sweetly reasonable and so coolly objective if her own husband ahd been a pediatric specialist in one of the hospitals of Germany and, after years of dintinguished service, was suddenly and summarily dismissed from his post, economically ruined and publicly humiliated, for the sole reason of having been born a Jew and belonging to the race of Moses, and Jesus and Spinoza and Einstein...

I am glad that Mrs. Gerstenberger has returned to America. Her long sojourn in Germany has doe her Americanism no good. She needs to brush up on some of the good old American ideals of tolerance and fair play and liberty and brotherhood.

WOMAN LAUDS HITLER'S RULE, NAZI POLICIES

Cleveland Tolls Joys of German People After Visit in Dresden.

Mrs. Else B. Gerstenberger, Cleveland P.-T. A. worker and musical arts leader, here presents the results of eight months of personal observation of changing Germany. This was the fifth sojourn Mrs. Gerstenberger made in the Rhineland.

BY ELSIE B. GERSTENBERGER

Upon my return from an eight months' sojourn in Germany I am very much disturbed by the evident misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the aims and achievements of the political party today in power in Germany and its leader, Adolf Hitler. My sense of fair play prompts me to give you first hand the impressions received by me, an American, while living in Dresden during the past winter and spring.

I can honestly say that I came to Germany with an unbiased mind, and sensed at once that I had arrived at a very interesting period. As it developed I saw during those eight months German history in the making.

Nation Fights Communism.

As the fall elections approached much serious consideration was being given the idea of forgetting party obligations and combining forces to combat communism. As important political parties had had an opportunity to prove their inability to cope with the seemingly hopeless economic conditions and with the gradual growth in power of the Communist party, there remained but one party to turn to, the National Socialist. Its leader, Adolf Hitler, had for years been inspiring a gradually increasing number of voters with confidence in his earnestness and ability to cope with the situation.

The result of the election gave proof of the growing popularity of this leader, and when he was finally recognized by Hindenburg, the much-beloved president of Germany, the joy of the German people knew no bounds. The uncovering of the plot, which was the Communists' death struggle in Germany, for the present at least, called for drastic measures and a fearless leader, and Hitler did not disappoint his followers.

I do not understand how the words or deeds of this man and his party could have been so misunderstood. It is difficult for us Americans, who are so securely situated, to appreciate what it means to be surrounded by enemies. Possibly one must have lived, as I did, among the Germans to understand the feeling of hopelessness to which they have been reduced.

Calls Pledge Above Reproach.

The conditions imposed upon Germany by the treaty of Versailles resulted in taxation of the people to an almost unbelievable extent, in disarmament to a degree which leaves them utterly helpless if attacked, and in a feeling of deepest humiliation. Under such conditions the popularity of a Hitler, who held out to a discouraged nation a ray of hope, can well be imagined. His speeches, broadcast throughout the nation, could not be interpreted by me as those of a tyrant or of a man anxious to precipitate a war.

His pledge, first, to free Germany from communism; second, to lighten the burdens of his people, giving them the opportunity and dignity of self-support; third, to secure for his country equality with the other nations; fourth, to raise the standard of the German youth, encouraging it to develop a better type of citizen; fifth, to encourage home building; and sixth, to live if possible in harmony with the other nations, surely is above reproach.

Citizens Cheer Old Flag.

I wish I could give a word picture of the enthusiasm and whole-hearted joy with which May 1, declared by Hitler to be observed henceforth as Labor day, was welcomed and celebrated. The revolution, about which so much has been written, was anything but the reign of terror and riots you read about. It was a period of joy and celebration. Within 24 hours of the time the Nazi flag was raised at the city hall the whole city was gay with thousands of the Nazi and of the old black, white, red flags. It was wonderful to see the enthusiasm of the Germans when, for the first time in 15 years, their old flag again so proudly waved over them.

After having heard Hindenburg's wonderful address to the youth of Germany and Hitler's inspiring speech to his people, both delivered on May 1, and that of Hitler following our President's message to the countries of Europe, I can appreciate the German people's belief in and loyalty to their government and its Reichkanzler.

As no mortal man is infallible, so it follows that mistakes are bound to be made. To what extent the proportioning of positions in the various professions according to the Jewish population, which I believe to be about 1 per cent of the whole population of Germany, was a mistake I am in no position to estimate, but I am confident, after having read many articles that appeared in our newspapers and periodicals, that there have been gross exaggerations of the facts.

Suffer Only in Spirit.

In Dresden, at least, the Jewish persecution, as it was reported here, did not exist. Neither those who fled immediately after their participation in communistic activities had been established nor the Jewish population which remained suffered bodily harm. In fact, even the day of the boycott of Jewish concerns, which was in retaliation for the falsehoods spread by those who fled and received the protection of the nations harboring them, found those having no reason to flee mingling freely with their fellow Germans in the cafes, on the streets and in the theaters.

That many suffered in spirit with their unfortunate kinsmen and friends I do not doubt. There is a psychology of revolution as there is a psychology of war, and it must be taken into consideration. I believe that much transpired for which the government is not re-

DIVORCE DELUGE SHOWS

....
Powell-Lombard and Richard Dix Show



MARY PICKFORD



CAROLE LOMBARD



JANET

Special to The News.

HOLLYWOOD—Filmdom is dazed!

Her vital statistics are topsy turvy and the expressive greeting of "How've you been?" has been changed to "Are you still married?"

Divorces in the world's most famous colony of celebrities have so outnumbered weddings during the past year that authorities on marital bliss have gone into retirement and are answering no telephone calls.

Stunned by the reports that the film center's most ideally married couple, Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks, were on the verge of complete dissolution, natives had just begun to regain their shaky composure when word came today that William Powell and Carole Lombard and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Dix were ready to call it all off.

"They just decided all of a sudden," said Mrs. E. C. Peters, Mrs. Powell's mother, said without emotion, "that they couldn't agree."

Mrs. Powell left for Reno a week ago and Powell is reported by friends to be out of the city and out of reach.

"Leads Fearful Life."

The Hollywood folks are recalling the lines of "Old-Fashioned Wife," a tune from "Very Good Eddie."

"The modern wife leads a fearful life, it seems to be the fashion—" they state, and the end of the second verse rather fits the Hollywood situation in the belief of some. It goes, dealing with the Lohengrin wedding march phrase, "Here comes the bride—"

"We'll have to change it, I suppose, from 'here she comes' to 'there she goes!'"

The rift between Richard Dix and his wife, Winifred Cee, is a case in point, dissolution experts agree, for Dix says this about Winifred:

"Winifred is the sweetest girl in the world. She will make some other man a splendid wife, but she and I do not speak the same language. She is not interested in motion pictures, while I hate the social life which she enjoys. She deserves only happiness and I hope that she will find contentment."

Film fans are not taking the deluge of separations and divorces as kindly as the stars might wish.

Executive offices of the big companies have received threats from followers of the screen romances.

They declare that unless wholesale divorces and smashups cease, they will appeal to filmdom's czar, Will Hayes, to bring back some semblance of order.

Some observers believe money trouble to be at the root of many of the divorces. Salaries are not what they formerly were, and as a result many stars have been forced to scale down their mode of living. This, commentators believe, has proven irritating.

Others, who seem to know, declare that many of the older women stars have become passe, left the movie lots and are less attractive than they were. New faces to replace them have proven more than many of the staid romantic husbands could stand.

Douglas Fairbanks Jr. and Joan Crawford's decision to call it a day was a bombshell to this gold coast scarcely less shocking than that of his mustached and famous father.

Chevaliers Part.

Another broken romance that shocked the screen colony was that of Maurice Chevalier, French actor, and his wife, Yvonne Vallee, granted a divorce by mutual consent in Paris.

Scarcely less prominent were the divorces secured by Janet Gaynor, noted actress, from Lydell Peck, and Eleanor Boardman, actress, from King Vidor, director.

The comedy combination of Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy also found domestic troubles during the first half of 1933. Mrs. Lois N. Laurel sued for divorce, and a little later Hardy filed against his wife, Mrs. Myrtle Lee Hardy.

Mae Murray, star of the si-

O. K.'S GONDOLA

Settle Tests Stratophere Vehicle; "No Trick at All," He Says.

AKRON, O.—(AP)—Maintaining life aboard the gondola of the balloon which carries him to the stratosphere about 10 days hence will be "no trick at all," Lieut. Com. T. G. Settle declared as he and Frank M. Hobson, civilian engineer for the navy at Washington, crawled out of the gondola shortly after 8 a. m. today after being penned inside for eight hours testing instruments and apparatus.

Both men declared they felt well or better than ordinarily.

They had two containers of liquid oxygen, and to eliminate carbon dioxide they had cloth filled with a special chemical compound which attracts it and combines with it. Every hour samples of the air inside were pumped out and tested for carbon dioxide. Almost no trace could be found.

sponsible, with which it is not even in sympathy. Unfortunately there were those who made use of the opportunity to vent personal spite and to satisfy jealousy. This was substantiated by some of those who had suffered in this manner. Many German citizens expressed a deep regret that the innocent should suffer with the guilty.

Sympathy for the German people under the present government, as expressed in some of the articles I have read, is wasted, as they feel that congratulations are in order. The fact that within a few months the Nazi movement should have grown approximately from eleven and three-quarters to seventeen and one-quarter million members speaks for itself.

Among the many Germans I met, from every walk of life, I found only two who were not in sympathy with the doctrines of Hitler and his party. I feel confident that no one man in the history of the world has had more loyal and more enthusiastic support from practically a whole nation than the Nazi leader, Adolf Hitler, enjoys today.

STATESMAN'S VISIT IN CITY ENDS TODAY

Dr. Soukup, Czechoslovakian
Leader, Will Go to Detroit.

A series of receptions and events given in his honor was to end today for Dr. Frank Soukup, president of the Czechoslovak Senate, who will leave tomorrow morning for Detroit. He has been several days in Cleveland as a guest of Dr. Bedrich Kalda, Czechoslovak consul here.

The European political leader, who heads one of the most powerful parties in Czechoslovakia, was the guest of honor at a formal reception yesterday at Dr. Kalda's home.

He was to be the principal speaker at a luncheon today at the Prague club, 5400 Broadway, attended by Mayor Miller, prominent Czechs, Slovaks and Carpatho-Russians of the community, and others.

Following a radio address over WJAY at 7 this evening, he will speak before the Czech Socialistic organizations at Komensky hall, Melzer ave. at E. 131st st., and at a gathering at Sokol Czech Hall, 4818 Wendell ave.

CITY SEEKS \$9,773

Sues Stadium Contractor for Return of Overpayment.

Suit for recovery of \$9,773 from the American Bridge Co. of New Jersey was filed by the city law department today in federal court.

The petition charges the amount represents money "illegally and wrongfully paid in excess of the contract price" for work done by the company during construction of the municipal stadium. The alleged overpayment was uncovered by state examiners last August.

MOTHER, SON HURT

Injured When Car Is Topped By Hit-Skip Driver's Auto.

A hit-skip driver today put a sudden end to the vacation tour of Mrs. Bernard Kruse, 7908 Maryland ave., and her son, Harold, 15.

Both were severely injured today when the auto Mrs. Kruse was driving was forced off the road and over turned twice on state route 22, three miles east of Oberlin. The driver of the second car escaped injury and fled. Other motorists took the mother and son to Oberlin hospital.

COLONY PLANNED

5,000 Mexicans to Be Repatriated From Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES — (AP) — Rex Thompson, assistant county superintendent of charities, said today plans are under way for repatriation of 5,000 selected Mexican families now living in Los Angeles by establishing a colony on the west coast of Mexico.

He has just returned from conferences with Mexican officials in the states of Sonora, Sinaloa and Nayarit.

Tenn. Officials Acquitted

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — (AP) — A. P. Walsh and J. H. Hesen, former commissioner of finance and treasurer respectively of the city of Memphis, stood acquitted today after a 10-day trial on charges of embezzlement in connection with the disappearance of \$1,772 from the city treasurer's office on Dec. 15, 1932, and a discrepancy in tax collections of \$4,287 in 1927.

lent days, brou Mdivanis" into when she sued Prince David.

Other divorces, actress, from Jan York hotel man, later married C rector); Seraph Alexis Davidoff, Elinor Fair, ac Daniels; Lola L Low Ayres, act Lederer from O Veree Teasdale,