

## 6 Cardinal Virtues of a Nazi: A New Type of Man

In briefly outlining the educational program of Hitler, it is not our intention to take issue with that program as such. The reader is merely to get an idea what kind of values and virtues Hitler deemed the most desirable in a young German. This scale of virtues amounts to a reevaluation of those values that are valid in a humanitarian world. It is clear that the product of an education along such lines will be a type of man totally different from what we call a free, upright, honest human being. Hitler's type of man is capable of being obedient, faithful, and silent only within the group, but he is ruthless and ferocious against the outsiders and "heretics." Hitler's man is convinced that he conveys a benefit to people of different creed if he foists his belief on them by threat and tortures. For Hitler, in Max Weber's words, "the ethics of internal and external relations are categorically distinct."

Hitler outlined his educational program in a few sentences:

The folkish State, through this realization, has to direct its entire education primarily not at pumping in more knowledge, but at the breeding of absolutely healthy bodies. Of secondary importance is the training of mental abilities. But here again first of all the development of character, especially the promotion of will power and determination, connected with education for joyfully assuming responsibility, and only as the last thing, scientific schooling.

Thereby the folkish State has to start from the presumption that

a man, though scientifically little educated but physically healthy, who has a sound, firm character, filled with joyful determination and will power, is of greater value to the national community than an ingenious weakling. A people of scholars, when they are physically degenerated, irresolute and cowardly pacifists, will not conquer heaven, nay it will not even be able to assure its existence on this globe.<sup>1</sup>

For Hitler the main goal of education from the cradle to the army was the "healthy body." By the process of physical education the feeling of superiority was to be implanted into the characters of all young Germans. This individual self-confidence was to expand into self-confidence of the group, and later on into national self-confidence. He wrote, "It is precisely our German people, that today, broken down, lies defenseless against the kicks of the rest of the world, who need that suggestive force that lies in self-confidence. But this self-confidence has to be instilled into the young fellow citizen from childhood on. His entire education and development has to be directed at giving him the conviction of being absolutely superior to the others" (618).

It is the highest goal of physical education, continued Hitler, to awaken this feeling of superiority. Only thus is the German people able to abide by the "aristocratic law of nature." Self-confidence and the feeling of superiority in the single individual as well as in the nation created the striving for leadership. In addition every young man must be trained and must discipline himself to unfold his character qualities towards responsibility as leader of a group as well as towards obedience as a servant of a higher leader.

In the first place Hitler valued the superior spirit as the potential source of victory. "For what once led the German army

1. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1939), 613-14, hereinafter cited in the text by page number only.

to victory," he declared, "was the sum of the confidence which the individual and all in common had in their leaders. The confidence in the possibility of regaining its freedom is what will restore the German people. But this conviction can only be the final product of the same feeling of millions of individuals" (618).

Second, self-confidence of the individual was commuted into a strong community spirit which above all pervaded the groups of the Hitler Youth. Only in such groups composed of young Aryans could the herd instinct be propagated which guaranteed unity of action and the mutual enforcing of morale. In these groups there had to be developed on a small scale the herd instinct and the morale which, after generations, would be possessed by the whole German nation. As this spirit came to dominate these groups, the fulfillment of Hitler's ideas would not need to wait. They could be promoted on such a basis until the entire German nation had attained racial purity. From these groups Hitler selected his Special Guards who were trained as the type of the Nordic man and educated in the spirit of the doctrine laid down in *Mein Kampf*.

Finally, the army was to become the "university" for teaching national self-confidence. "Further, strengthened by the confidence in his own force, seized by the strength of the commonly experienced *esprit de corps*," wrote Hitler, "he has to gain the conviction of the invincibility of his own nationality" (621). Physical education and superiority feeling evoked blood-consciousness as well. If the young healthy German felt himself a member of a pure and strong racial community, he would observe the eugenic rules, so that he might contribute to the improvement of the inborn and hereditary qualities of his Nordic stock. Thereby he would help found the basis for a pure united nation.

As of secondary importance [said Hitler] the folkish State has to promote the modeling of the character in every way.

It is certain that the essential features of character are fundamentally formed previously in the individual: one who is egoistic is and remains so once and forever, exactly as the idealist, in the bottom of his nature, will always be an idealist. But between the completely shaped characters there are millions of a type that appear dim and unclear. The born criminal will be and remain a criminal; but numerous people in whom a certain tendency towards criminality exists can still be made valuable members of the national community by proper education; while on the other hand by bad education vacillating characters can grow into really evil elements. (621)

Hitler asserted, "Today the conscious development of good and noble character qualities at school is equal to naught. This, one day, will have to be emphasized in quite a different manner. Loyalty, willingness to sacrifice, and silence are virtues which a great people urgently needs, and their inculcation by education and training in school is more important than many of the things which now fill our curriculum" (623). The family, the school, the group, and the army alike were to teach obedience, which meant being silent, loyal, and willing to bear sacrifices.

Hitler affirmed that "at the head of the military education should stand what had to be attributed even to the old army as its highest merit: in this school the boy should be turned into a man; and in this school he should not only learn to obey, but also acquire the training for commanding later on. He has to learn to be silent, not only when he is blamed justly, but he has also to learn, if necessary, to bear injustice in silence" (620-21). Silence is a national virtue for preserving national secrets, as Hitler repeatedly emphasized. He wrote:

How often one complained, during the War, that our people knew so little how to be silent! How difficult this made it to guard

even important secrets from the knowledge of the enemies! But one should ask oneself the question: Before the War, what did German education do towards training the individual for secrecy? Was not unfortunately even in school the little tattle-tale preferred to his more discreet comrade? . . . Irresponsibly dropped remarks are passed on just as light-heartedly, our economy is constantly injured by a careless giving-away of important methods of production, etc., even quiet preparations for the defense of the country are made illusory as the people have not learned to be silent but spread everything. But in case of war this inclination to talk can even lead to the loss of battles and thus contribute considerably to the unfortunate end of a struggle. Here, too, one has to be convinced that what one has not practiced during youth one cannot exercise during old age. (622)

Hitler insisted,

Of highest importance is the training of will power and determination, as well as the cultivation of joy in taking responsibility. . . .

Unfortunately, even at school one puts more stress upon the 'repenting' confession and the 'contrite abjuration' by the little sinner than upon a frank admission. The latter even appears to many a public educator of today the most visible symptom of an incorrigible depravity, and so many a boy, in an incredible manner, is threatened with the gallows for qualities which would be of priceless value if they were the common good of an entire nation.

As some day the folkish State has to devote its highest attention to the education of will and determination, it has to implant joy in taking responsibility and courage for confession into the hearts of the young from their early years of life. (623, 625)

If one young Elite Guard today would have this courage of confession against Hitler, there would be little time left to "repent"; more likely he would pay for his courage on the "gallows." Here we see the selective character of Hitler's ethics.

With regard to scientific education Hitler had very definite ideas. He declared:

The shortening of the curriculum and of the number of hours . . . will be of benefit to the training of the body, of the character, and of will power and determination. . . .

The second change in the scientific curriculum of the national State has to be the following:

It is a characteristic of our present materialized time that our scientific education turns more and more toward the subjects of natural science only, namely, mathematics, physics, chemistry, etc. No matter how necessary this is for a time in which techniques and chemistry dominate in daily life and represent its symptoms, at least as far as outwardly recognizable, it is just as dangerous if the general education of a nation is always directed exclusively at this. On the contrary, this education has always to be an ideal one. It has to correspond more to the classic subjects and should only offer the foundations of a later training in a special field. . . . The Hellenic ideal of culture, too should be preserved for us in its exemplary beauty. One must not allow the differences of the individual races to tear up the greater racial community. The struggle that rages today involves very great aims: a culture fights for its existence, which combines millenniums and embraces Hellenism and Germanity together. (630-31)

Hitler's ideally oriented counterbalance to one-sided formal education means in essence nothing else but indoctrination of youth with a one-sided racial interpretation of world history from Hellenism to Hitlerism.

Hitler continued, "As the third point, the following has to be considered in connection with scientific education: Also in science the folkish State has to see a means for the promotion of national pride. Not only world history, but the entire culture history must be taught from this viewpoint" (635).

So much for Hitler's suggestion concerning school education. Group education also had to convey respect for history and enthusiasm for historical figures. "The movement," he said, "has to promote respect for the personality by all means; it must never forget that the value of all that is human is rooted in the personal value, that every idea and every

achievement are the results of the creative force of a man, and that the admiration for the greatness is not only a tribute of thanks to the latter, but that it also winds a unifying band around the grateful" (488). It was the talk of the Nazi organization to fill the young man with zeal and fanaticism.

He wrote, "In the ruthless attack upon an adversary the people sees at all times a proof of its own right, and it perceives the renunciation of his destruction as an uncertainty as regards its own right, if not as a sign of its own wrong" (468-69). Only this fanatic will of Hitler's adherents and the newborn German youth will move the German masses to continuous and united action. Besides, the fanatic expression of will and courage to fulfill the German "mission" will impress the foreign onlookers too. "A nation, then, will be regarded as fit for alliance if (in our case) government and public opinion equally fanatically proclaim and advocate the will to struggle for freedom. This, then, is the first presumption for beginning the transformation of public opinion in other States, which, because of their understanding of their very own interests, are willing to march next to the partner who seems to them appropriate to these interests, that is, to make an alliance" (923-24). And "a people's ability to form alliances is far less determined by a dead lot of existing arms than by the visible presence of a flaming will of self-preservation and heroic death-defying courage" (461).

Group training with its strong emphasis on physical education, Hitler claimed, would fortify these values and virtues which were to be characteristic for a new German generation. Certainly many were called but not all were selected to comprehend fully and intellectually the reasonings of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. Some had to carry the idea consciously in its cogent totality; others had to be carried along emotionally. Thus the idea either in one form or the other, had to guide the young soldier to and through the battlefield.

To recapitulate what a young Nazi must have thought as he marched into Poland:

1. The kinship of the blood demands one flag and one Reich for all Germans. The dictate of Versailles that separates German blood from German blood by artificial bounds must be broken.
2. Germany is overpopulated. She cannot feed her people from her own soil. The yearly rising surplus population faces the specter of hunger and starvation in a not far distant future.
3. New lebensraum must, therefore, be conquered—land that can be settled with German peasants. In this way Germany will become a healthy state, able to feed the nation without resort to foreign markets. Thus, freed from the dangers of a lopsided overindustrialized structure she can maintain a happy balance between agriculture and industry.
4. A radical program of racial eugenics will gradually restore to the German nation the pristine purity of the Nordic-Germanic blood. Among Germany's population the Nordics, that noblest group of that great noble Aryan family remains still dominant. Stop bastardization, purge the nation of its inferior stock, promote the Nordic blood—and Germany's strength will increase a thousandfold. Meanwhile the ironclad uniformity of Prussian militarism will give Germany national cohesion, will abate the disunity engendered by the lack of racial uniformity. Thus the march to world domination can start now.
5. Global conquest is not an end in itself. It is the means wherewith Germany fulfills a great "cultural mission" to make the world safe for the creative genius of the Aryan. For the history of culture is the history of the Aryan. By virtue of his intrinsic mental and moral superiority, the Aryan holds the top rank in the hierarchy of races. Today the biological purity of the Aryan is endangered all over the world.

- The international Jew slyly prepares to rule the world. A Nordic Germany must act as the savior of the Aryan world.
6. By mating with bad stock the good stock is lowered. The half-breed loses his fitness to survive in the eternal struggle for existence. If he mixes with inferior races the Aryan squanders his precious biological heritage, his innate superiority. He flagrantly violates the will of nature to breed life towards a higher level.
  7. Fundamental in nature is the aristocratic principle according to which mastery falls to the better and the stronger. But the right to mastery has to be validated by continuous struggle.
  8. The "Creator" has given to the Germans the conditions, the opportunity, and the goals to bring about a greater cultural future. It is the duty of the Germans to fulfill their great mission. Racial purification and ruthless will to and use of power will be ways and means to bring salvation to the world by German rule.

The task that Hitler assigned to every German youth was to build a new Germany in the image of Nordic man, to build a race that was to make the world the sacred abode of Aryan culture. But before the new world could be built, the old, moribund world, afflicted with the sickly notions of pacifism, poisoned by democracy, and emasculated by humanitarian sentiment, had to be burned down. Germany's youth had to feel the moral grandeur of a noble mission. German youth had to learn to die not only for the good and the glory of Germany but also for the creation of a new world. War had to be fought as a holy war for the loftiest ideals. That spirit was to be the fuel that would drive the German war machine, the banner that in time to come would lead the regiments of Hitler's youth over the steppes of Asia and the deserts of Africa.

## 7 The Power of an Idea on the Wane

The war went on. Hitler walked across Europe deep into Russia and Africa. In extending his power over continents Hitler used up his machinery, his natural resources, and above all, his labor reserves—presumably up to a crucial point. Thus today, officials and writers are seeking information and are speculating whether the Nazi grip on the German people is loosening. Stories brought over tell of signs of disintegration, clashes, even mutinies. Rumors of rebellious, bitter scenes taking place in the higher offices in Berlin and at headquarters between military officers and Nazis, between Hitler and his generals, may be well founded. Göring's ardent defense of Hitler's role in the Russian campaign corroborates such a surmise. Hitler's personal irresponsibility and incompetence in military matters are said to be discussed more frankly and anxiously in Nazi ranks. They are becoming apprehensive over the possible exhaustion of human and natural resources. The Russian campaign and the costly hibernation of the German troops in the eastern cold have deepened their worries. Not least, the entrance of the United States into the war reminded the older generation of what happened during the first world war—although this time Hitler and Goebbels declared war on the United States. Indubitably, the long-lasting war, starvation, and loss of life and property painfully affect every individual and every single family. It shakes millions of them into an awareness of what Hitler really did to them.